THE INTERVIEW

The employment interview is one of the most important events in a student's life. In a normal thirty minute interview, you will have five minutes of hello's, and five minutes of good bye's, leaving you twenty minutes to sell yourself properly. Here are some things you can do to make it a positive experience.

Before the Interview:
1. Make sure you know where the interview will take place and what time. Leave in enough time to arrive at your appointment before the scheduled time. Use these extra minutes to relax and refresh yourself. DO NOT BE LATE. (To be on time is to be late.) Make a habit of either using a pocket calendar, or writing your appointments down where you can always refer to the time and place they are scheduled
2. Get the name and pronunciation of the company correct.
3. Always do your research on the company and the position for which you are interviewing. There are a number of publications which will assist you in finding the information necessary to make you comfortable in your interview. Among the most helpful are:
   b. Moody's Manuals
   c. Fitch Corporation Manuals
   d. MacRae's Bluebook
   e. Standard and Poor's Corporation Records
   f. Poor's Register of Directors and Executives
   g. Dun & Bradstreet Reference Book
   h. Peterson's Guides to Corporations
   i. Company annual reports

The placement office and the public library are the most logical places to find these sources.

During the Interview:
1. *Sell yourself* In answering questions, illustrate your personal qualities and strongest abilities with examples from your past. Don't leave an interview without telling the interviewer at least two (2) outstanding characteristics about yourself, i.e., "I am the senior class president" and what you accomplished in that position, i.e., "As president of the senior class, I directed the activities of the largest Prospective Student Seminar in the history of the college". Be sure you are honest.
2. *Watch your non-verbal communication.* Sit straight, appear poised and confident throughout the interview. Have pen and pad with you so you can take notes. (Write down the name, title, and address of the recruiter for your follow-up communication.) Be sure you are dressed appropriately (See Chapter 3, The Winning Image.).
3. *Answer Questions.* The interviewer's job is to find out if you would "fit in" their company. They do this by asking questions (see next page). Have answers prepared for these typical questions, but do NOT memorize these questions or your answers. Be natural in your responses.
4. *Ask Questions.* Demonstrate to the interviewer you are serious about the position by asking questions based upon your research of the organization. A few good questions are: What industry trends will affect the company? What makes your company different from its competitors? How would you describe your corporation's culture?
FREQUENTLY ASKED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What are your long range and short range goals and objectives, when and why did you establish these goals and how are you preparing yourself to achieve them?
2. What specific goals, other than those related to your occupation, have you established for yourself for the next 10 years?
3. What do you see yourself doing five years from now?
4. What do you really want to do in life?
5. What are your long range career objectives?
6. How do you plan to achieve your career goals?
7. What are the most important rewards you expect to be earning in five years?
8. What do you expect to be earning in five years?
9. Why did you choose the career for which you are preparing?
10. Which is more important to you, the money or the type of job?
11. What do you consider to be your greatest strengths and weaknesses?
12. How would you describe yourself?
13. How do you think a friend or professor who knows you well would describe you?
14. What motivates you to put forth your greatest effort?
15. How has your college experience prepared you for a business career?
16. Why should I hire you?
17. What qualifications do you have that make you think that you will be successful in business?
18. How do you determine or evaluate success?
19. What do you think it takes to be successful in a company like ours?
20. In what ways do you think you can make a contribution to our company?
21. What qualities should a successful manager possess?
22. Describe the relationship that should exist between a supervisor & those reporting to him/her.
23. What two or three accomplishments have given you the most satisfaction? Why?
24. Describe your most rewarding college experience.
25. If you were hiring a graduate for this position, what qualities would you look for?
26. Why did you select your college or university?
27. What led you to choose your field or major study?
28. What college subjects did you like best? Why?
29. What college subjects did you like least? Why?
30. If you could do so, how would you plan your academic study differently? Why?
31. What changes would you make in your college or university? Why?
32. Do you have plans for continued study? An advanced degree?
33. Do you think that your grades are a good indication of your academic achievement?
34. What have you learned from participation in extra-curricular activities?
35. In what kind of a work environment are you most comfortable?
36. How do you work under pressure?
37. In what part-time or summer jobs have you been most interested? Why?
38. How would you describe the ideal job for you following graduation?
39. Why did you decide to seek a position with this company?
40. What do you know about our company?
41. What two or three things are most important to you in your job?
42. Are you seeking employment in a company of a certain size? Why?
43. What criteria are you using to evaluate the company for which you hope to work?
44. Do you have a geographical preference? Why?
45. Will you relocate? Does relocation bother you?
46. Are you willing to travel?
47. Are you willing to spend at least six months as a trainee?
48. Why do you think you might like to live in the community in which our company is located?
49. What major problem have you encountered and how did you deal with it?
50. What have you learned from your mistakes?
After the Interview:

Follow-up. A follow-up thank you letter is VITAL. This will show the employer that you are interested, that you have good follow-up skills, and that you have written communication skills, all characteristics of a professional. And considering that most interviewees omit this step, it will certainly put you in a select category in the interviewer's mind. You should use the letter to express your appreciation for the interview opportunity, restate your enthusiasm for the position, and point out a reason you feel you would be a good match for the position/organization. The thank you letter should not be long.

P.O. Box____ (6 spaces from top)
Morehouse College
Atlanta, GA 30314 (2 spaces)

Date of Writing (2 spaces)

Representative's Name (2 spaces)
Title
The XYZ Company
City, State Zip Code

Dear Mr./Ms. ______:

I appreciated the opportunity to meet with you yesterday, and enjoyed learning more about the sales position with your firm.

My enthusiasm for the position and my interest in working for XYZ Corporation were strengthened as a result of the interview. I think my education and work experience fit nicely with the job requirements, and I am sure that I could make a significant contribution to your organization.

Again, I am very interested in this position, and in working with you and your staff. Please feel free to contact me at (404)555-1212 if you need any additional information.

Thank you for the interview and your consideration. I look forward to a positive response.

Sincerely,

(Brian J. Williams) (Typed name)

BJW/ (initials of writer, who also typed letter)
THE SECOND INTERVIEW

When you are invited to the home office for a second interview, you can be sure that you made a good first impression, and the firm is interested in learning more about you. This visit will give you an opportunity to see the workplace, meet other personnel, and ask more questions. The employer will also be able to evaluate you in the work setting, and have other employees meet and evaluate you. Remember, everyone you meet will be forming an opinion of you and will be asked to share this opinion with the decision maker(s). A job offer is not usually made during the second interview, but would be extended by letter within a few weeks of the on-site visit.

Good preparation will help you have a successful on-site interview. You will need to...

1. Refresh your interviewing skills.
2. Look up additional information on the employer, their products, locations, etc.
3. Review your notes made after the first interview—specifically who you met, and the details of the position you discussed
4. Take along extra copies of your resume, reference sheets, and any data or documents you might need
5. Understand the travel particulars. For information on traveling to the site, see the Travel Tips section on the following page.

P.O. Box_________ (6 spaces from top)
Morehouse College
Atlanta, GA 30314

Date of Writing (2 spaces)

Representative's Name (2 spaces)
Title (2 spaces)
The XYZ Company
City, State Zip Code

Dear Mr./Ms. _________: (2 spaces)

Your letter dated September XX, suggests that I visit you at 9 a.m. on one of these three dates October 27, 28, or 29. I prefer Tuesday, October 27, and will be in your office at the suggested time.

Please send me any information on your company that you feel will help me during my upcoming visit. Also, I will need to know the travel arrangements.

Thank you for inviting me, and I look forward to my day with your organization.

Sincerely,

{Handwritten name} (4 spaces)

Brian J. Williams (Typed name)

BJW/ (initials of writer, who also typed letter)

Acknowledgment of Second Interview—Sample Letter—DO NOT COPY!
Job Offer Acceptance - Sample Letter

P.O. Box 0007
Morehouse College
Atlanta, GA 30314
March 1, 199X

Ms. Jane Klein
Sales Manager
XYZ Company
1700 South Way
Birmingham, AL 35020

Dear Ms. Klein:

I am writing to confirm my acceptance of your employment offer dated February 20, for the position of marketing representative trainee at the starting salary of $33,600 per year. I am delighted I am to be joining the XYZ Company in Birmingham. The work is exactly what I have prepared for and hoped to do. I feel confident that I can make a significant contribution to the corporation and I am grateful for the opportunity you have given me.

As we discussed, I will report to work at 8:00 a.m. on July 1 and will have completed the medical examination and drug testing by the start date.

I look forward to working with you and your fine team. I appreciate your confidence in me and am very happy to be joining your staff.

Sincerely,

Brian J. Williams

cc: B. McLaurin, Morehouse College

Job Offer Rejection - Sample Letter

P.O. Box 0007
Morehouse College
Atlanta, GA 30314
March 1, 199X

Ms. Jane Klein
Sales Manager
XYZ Company
1700 South Way
Birmingham, AL 35020

Dear Ms. Klein:

Thank you very much for offering me the position of marketing representative trainee with the XYZ Company. I appreciate your discussing the details of the position with me and giving me time to consider the offer.

You have a fine organization and there are many aspects of the position which are very appealing to me. However, I believe it is in our mutual interest that I decline your kind offer. This has been a difficult decision for me but I believe it is the appropriate one for my career at this time.

I want to thank you for the consideration given to me. It was a pleasure meeting you and your fine staff.

Sincerely,

Brian J. Williams

cc: B. McLaurin, Morehouse College