

Interview Prep, Beyond the Basics

To secure a position, you often need to go beyond the basics.

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STUDENTS AND EMPLOYERS INTERVIEWING IN HOOD HOUSE INTERVIEW ROOMS.
Wear business attire. Bring multiple copies of your resume. Prepare answers to questions. Don't be late! These are the basics. But to secure a position, you often need to go beyond the basics.

Here are **5 tips** to help you put your best foot forward:

- **Be a S.T.A.R. Rehearse like it's an oral exam!** Use the S.T.A.R. method to structure your answers and ensure you have specific examples: S- Situation you were in, T- Task you were asked to complete, A- Actions you took, and R-Result you achieved. Write down your answers (short bullets) to interview questions as if you were prepping for an exam. Practice and read your answers aloud until they sound natural and fluid; do this repeatedly.
- **Know your resume and the job description.** Review your own resume before the interview. Be able to defend, explain, and elaborate on anything that is on your resume. Make sure you read the job description to know what the employer wants and be ready to explain how you can do the job. It is always a good idea to save the job description too; often the description is pulled off the site and when you go back to find it before they interview, it may be gone.
- **Type up 10 to 12 questions to bring to the interview.** – Research the company and job. Generate thoughtful questions that demonstrate you have done this research. Also, include questions about the job (*What are characteristics of successful candidates who have done this job before?*) and the interviewer him/herself when appropriate (*Could you share some background about your career path?*).

Bring this list of questions to the interview. When they ask if you have questions, open your padfolio and show the list. This will demonstrate you are prepared and serious about wanting the position.

BONUS TIP: When you have pretty much used up all the questions, but the interviewer keeps pressing you to ask questions, you can say, *Thank you for answering all my questions. I have learned so much more about the company and the job. My only other question is, what are the next steps in this application process?*

- **Don't try to guess answers when you really can't! Go to what you know!** There is virtually no way to know with 100% certainty what you will be asked in an interview. You may get questions you just can't answer. Don't try to fake it. Go to what you know. For example, *"I am not sure how to calculate depreciation on an asset, but I know companies own assets which are carried on their books. I did learn how to do discounted cash flows and NPV calculations.*

So, I am confident I could learn how to calculate depreciation on assets for your company.”

- **E-mail thank you note within 24 hours of the interview.** In some industries, decisions are made quickly. Although hand-written notes can be a nice touch, often they reach managers/decision-makers too late. Emailing **and** following up with a short hand-written note is the safest way to say thank you.

Send thank-you notes as e-mails to all the people whom you interviewed with, individually, and to your HR/recruiter contact who helped you get the interview. Each note should be personalized, highlighting something you learned from that person and reiterating briefly your relevant qualifications and interest.

BONUS TIP: Don't forget to get business cards from all the people you meet at the interview. If you do not have their e-mail addresses, try to figure it out on your own, or ask your HR contact for assistance.

Each interview situation is unique. For more interview prep help, be sure to see your [CaPS Team at your college](#). You can "stop in" during [Career Drop-In Hours](#) or make an appointment with your CaPS team via Handshake: <https://unh.joinhandshake.com/>

- WRITTEN BY:

[Megan Turnbull](#) | Career and Professional Success, Paul College of Business and Economics | megan.turnbull@unh.edu

PHOTOGRAPHER:

[Jeremy Gasowski](#) | Communications and Public Affairs | jeremy.gasowski@unh.edu | 603-862-4465

STUDENTS



University of New Hampshire

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