

Qualities Key for Admissions

Communication/Interpersonal skill
Lab/tech/comp/quant skills
Strong work ethic
Initiative/work independently

Overcome adversity/problem solving
Analytical/critical thinking skills
Flexibility/adaptability
Ethical consideration/decision-making

Academic/discipline specific preparation
Above and beyond visibility/achievement
Research/scholarly interest

What does the interviewer really want?

- Will you be able to succeed in this program?
- Do you have the motivation to make it through?
- Can you justify why you want this degree?
- Are you a good fit for this program/school?
- Will you work well with faculty and other students?
- Do you have the right credentials and preparation?

Anticipating Questions

About You

- Probing application materials
- Open ended (“tell me about yourself”)
- Describe your academic preparation.

Role Playing/Scenario Questions

- How would you pitch a product/service to a client who knew nothing about our organization?
- If you strongly disagreed with a co-worker or classmate about a project you were working on, how would you handle the situation?

Behavioral Interviewing Questions

- Give me an example of a time when you:
 - Faced an ethical dilemma.
 - Made a mistake.
 - Overcame a challenge.
 - Took initiative.
 - Took a risk and failed.

Discipline/Department/School Specific Questions

- Why have you chosen to pursue this degree at our college/university?
- What do you read to stay current in this field?
- What are some of the challenges currently faced by professionals in our field?
- What characteristics do you think are important for success in this program?

Ways to Prepare and Practice for Interviews

- Discuss interviewing tips with a UCS counselor
- Sign up for a mock interview with a UCS counselor
- Attend UCS Interviewing workshop
- Use UCS InterviewStream interview tool to practice and watch your answers online
- Participate in UCS Mock Interview Day with employers
- Write out anticipated tough interview questions with answers
- Critique verbal answers and non-verbal behaviors with a friend

Using the STAR Technique to Create “Plug and Play” Interview Content

Use the STAR technique to describe powerful, relevant, and detailed examples of your experiences:

Situation/Task

- What was the specific activity you were to accomplish or what problem were you solving?
- Who was involved?
- Where and when did this occur?

Action/activities

- What steps did you take to complete the job or solve the problem?
- How did you go about completing the steps?
- How did you involve or manage others during the process?
- Why did you take these particular steps?
- Did you consider alternatives and what were they?

Results/outcomes

- Did you accomplish the job the way it was originally defined?
- Was the result an improvement? An innovation or change?
- Did you improve or maintain good interpersonal relationships as a result of your actions?
- Did you create new relationships that might have future value?
- What were the benefits of your actions for the organization or for other individuals?
- What lessons did you learn?
- What core skills did you acquire?
- What did you learn about yourself? How did you grow from this experience?

Remember to weave the research you have done on discipline, department, school into your presentation to create more quality content and to give yourself credit for your investigative work!

Also remember that the questions you ask along with prefacing statements made before asking questions (i.e. rationale for why you are asking something) also are good interview content!

After the Interview

- Evaluate your performance and look for ways to improve by asking yourself:
 - Did you cover points you intended to cover?
 - What questions were particularly difficult to answer?
 - How did the interviewer’s personality affect your performance and why?
 - Did you ask the interviewer high quality questions based on in-depth research?
- Send thank you letter immediately (email is acceptable).
- Follow up by phone or email when the recruiter does not respond by stated date, if appropriate.