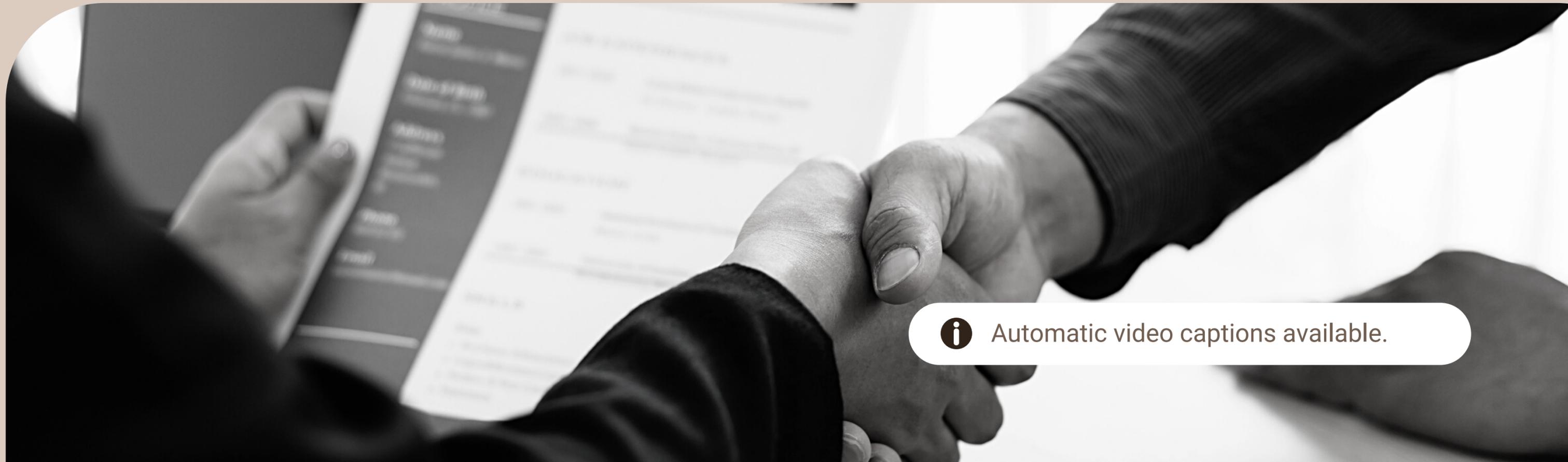


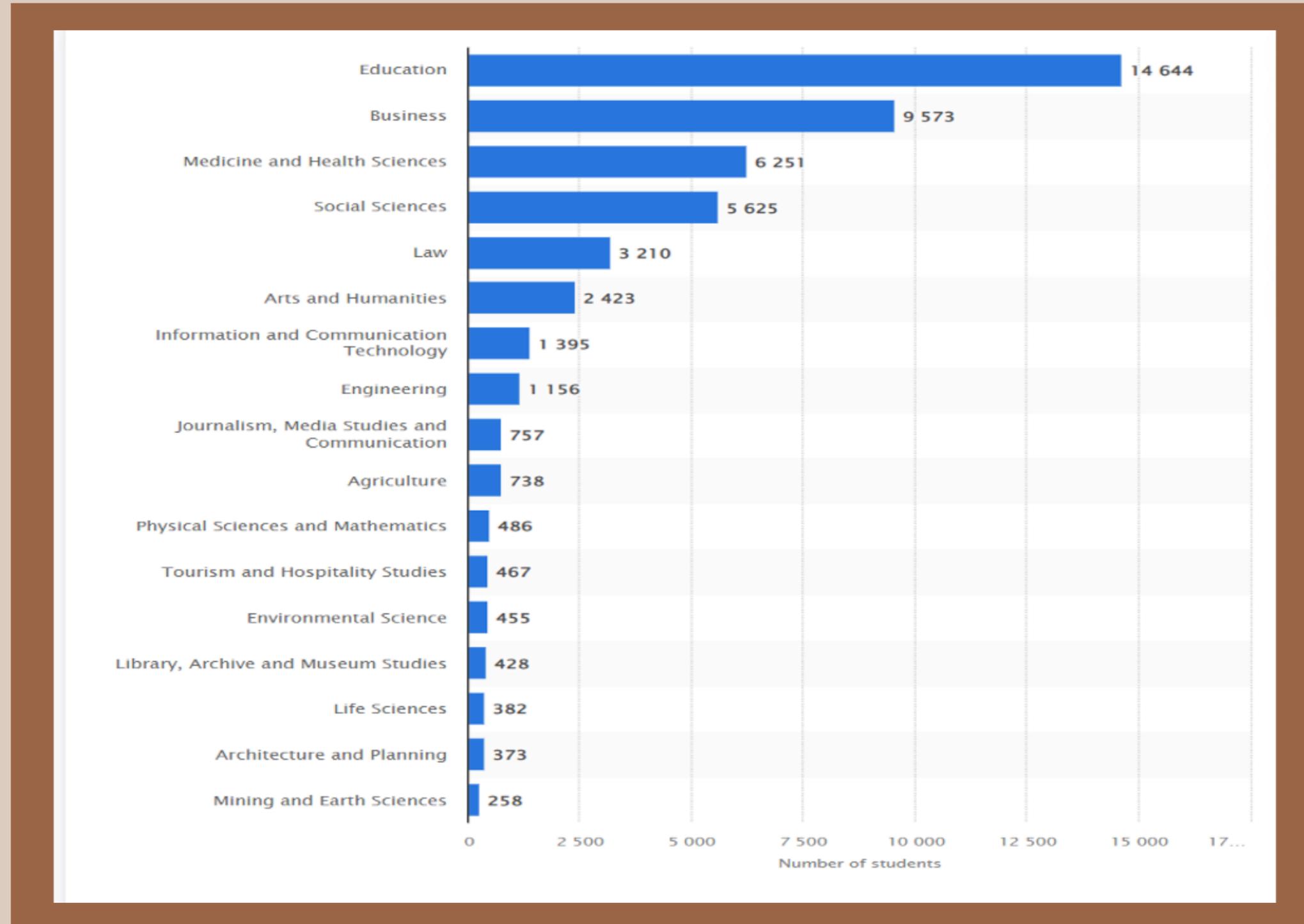
# Preparing for Job Interviews

Unite the World with Africa Foundation



Automatic video captions available.

Every year across Tanzania, there are over 50,000 graduates searching for jobs. The graph below shows the number of graduates in 2020 across professional employment fields.

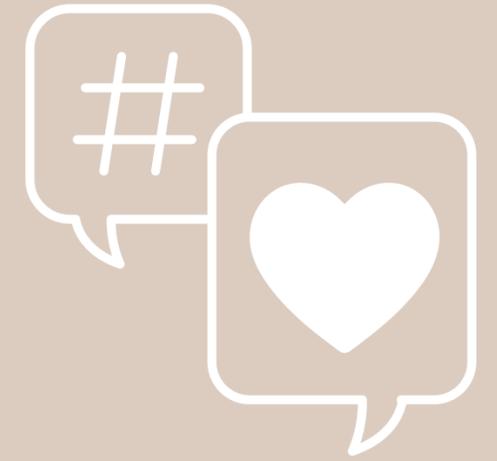
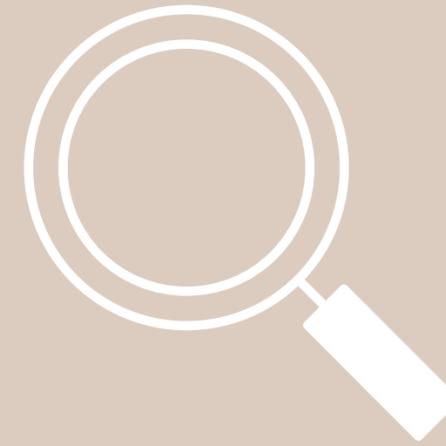
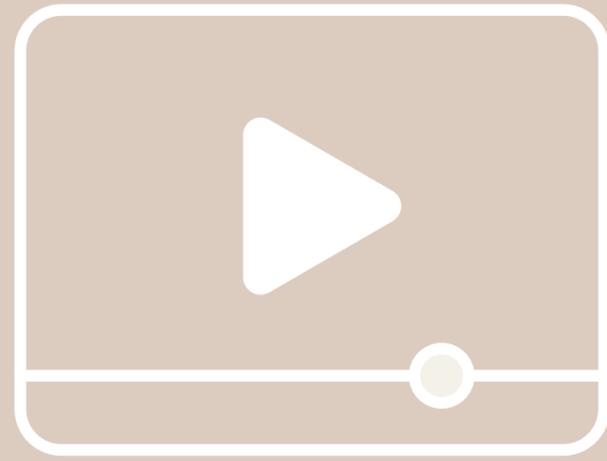
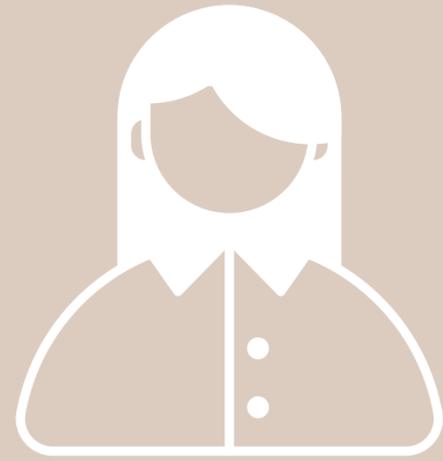


How will **you** stand out from the thousands of other graduates in the applicant pool?

# So, you've applied for the job. \* \* \*

## Now what?

- ▶ Job interviews are the **most important** way for employers to learn about who you are and if you are a good fit for the business/organization.
- ▶ Interviews are an opportunity for employers to ask applicants questions and have a guided conversation to gain information and insight into a new hire.
- ▶ Through **your responses, actions, and tone** during the interview employers gain insight into how you will perform in the position and how you will work and succeed -- or fail -- within their team dynamic.



# Types of Interviews

There are many different ways that employers may decide to interview applicants. It's important you know what to expect for any situation!

# Virtual Interview



## Phone Interview

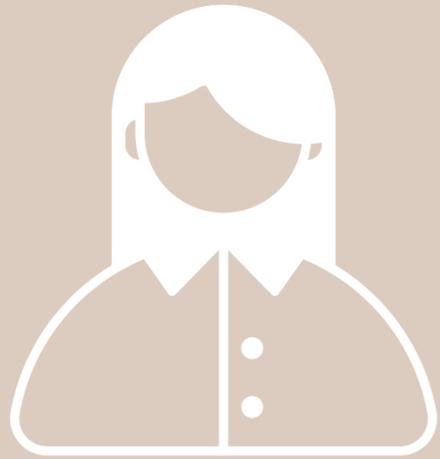
An employer may call you (planned or unplanned) over the phone to narrow down an applicant pool.



## Video Conference Interview

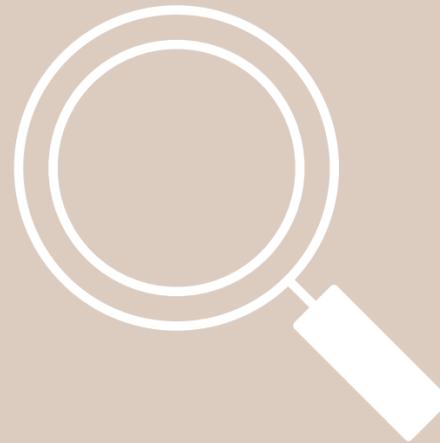
This is much more common in the post-pandemic world. Video conferences are conducted the same as usual interviews, just over technology from anywhere in the world. Be sure you have good lighting, connection, and angles for your camera.

# In Person Interview



## Solo Interview

The most common method that comes to mind when you think of an interview. This gives interviewers an impression of your attitude, tone, body language, and professional style.



## Behavioral Interview

This interview centers on questions such as "tell me about a time when," "describe an experience when," etc. These interviews reveal a candidate's emotional intelligence, personality, and character.

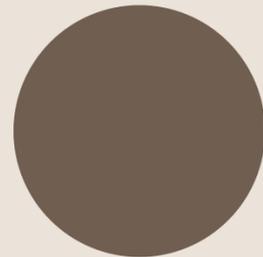


## Selection Interview

This may be a series of many interviews for candidates to be evaluated on their qualifications and ability to fit in.

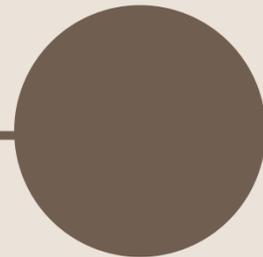
# The Interview Process

## Before



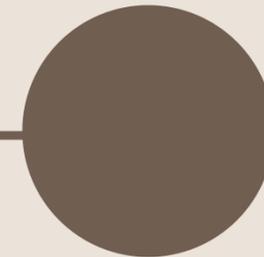
Prepare and research.

## During



Present yourself well.  
Know what to say, when  
to say it, and how to show  
how amazing you are.

## After

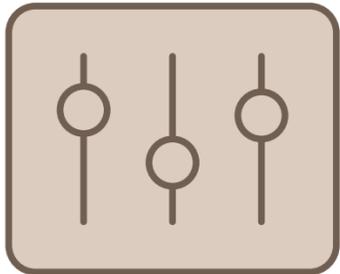


Send a thank you note  
and follow up for next  
steps.

# Before an interview

## Practice, practice, practice

- Look for common interview questions and prepare confident answers.
- Ask a friend or teacher to conduct a mock interview so you can practice.
- Be open to constructive criticism and feedback on how to improve.



## Be a detective

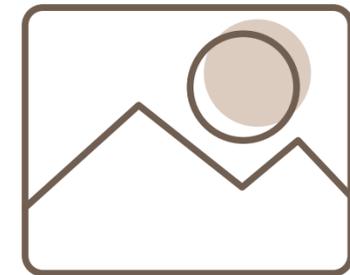
- Become an **expert** on the company (read through their entire website and social media outlets) and research the interviewer who you'll be meeting with.
- **Know the job description inside and out.**
- Understand the company's mission and values, so you can demonstrate by example how you would be a great fit.



# Before an interview

## Plan your day

- How will you get to the interview location? How long is your journey?
  - For in-person interviews arrive 10 to 15 minutes early.
- If it is a virtual interview, do you have a reliable WiFi connection? A quiet space where you won't be interrupted?
  - For virtual interviews log into the meeting three minutes early.



## Prepare stories and questions

- Know the STAR Interview method for telling personal stories.
  - **Situation.** Set the scene
  - **Task.** Describe the specific problem you were facing.
  - **Action.** Describe the specific solution you came up with.
  - **Result.** Describe exactly how your solution was effective.
- Make sure to prepare at least three questions to ask the interviewer at the end of the interview to demonstrate real interest.





# **Before an interview: Deciding what to wear**

**Dress code: business professional**

**Your physical appearance is the very first  
impression you make. Make sure it's a good one!**

# Men:



## Dress Shirts:

- solid colors, preferably white
- long-sleeved, tucked in, and buttoned all the way up
- wear an undershirt

## Tie:

- Conservative pattern
- Hang to belt line

## Blouse:

- Solid color or white

## Suits:

- Keep skirt within 3 inches of knees

## Belt:

- Leather – match color and finish of shoes, small buckle

## Socks and Dress Shoes:

- Dark colors that match attire (no white socks)
- Over the calf, so no skin is ever visible
- Shine shoes (no scuff marks)

# Women:



## Makeup:

- Conservative and natural looking – less is more

## Nails:

- Neutral polish or none at all
- Remove cracked or peeling polish

## Hosiery/Socks:

- Flesh toned nylons or dark trouser socks
- No “runs”
- Required with skirts

## Shoes:

- 1-2 inch heel or nice flats (no open toe)
- Match color to outfit

# Interview outfits

## DO

## DON'T

### Business casual

This interview look would be appropriate for these industries: IT, startups, teaching, entry-level government positions, environmental engineering, aerospace (non-management), architecture, health-care/life-sciences research, social media, advertising/PR and retail.



Detail adds interest but doesn't distract

Sweater and pants fit well

Casual, yet polished

Pants are appropriate length for heels

### Business professional

This more formal interview look works for these industries: health-care management and sales, hospital administration, biotechnology, banking, personal financial services, academic administration, hospitality, pharmaceutical sales and aerospace management.



Blouse color, collar style go well with the suit

Minimal jewelry

Jacket not too short, not too long

Tip: Check yourself in the mirror before leaving the house

Could wear heels rather than flats to increase formality

Necklace too large

Tip: Avoid any bright or patterned clothing that may be distracting

Too tight

Cotton capris: too casual

Too informal; this would be a better outfit for shopping at Pike Place Market (with different shoes)



### Meet the experts

Local career experts Lisa Quast, CEO of Career Woman, Inc., and Josh Warborg, district president of Robert Half International, provided critiques of these outfits.

"Appropriate attire depends on the industry and company in which you will be interviewing, the geographic location and time of year."



Quast

"Suits in conservative colors, such as black, gray or navy, paired with light, solid-colored shirts are a safe choice."



Warborg

## THE MEN'S INTERVIEW DRESS GUIDE

### TECHNOLOGY / START UP



### CREATIVE / DESIGNER



### SALES



### GOVERNMENT



### HEALTHCARE / DOCTOR



### FINANCE



BOWS-N-TIES

# Before an interview: Deciding what to bring

## In a professional bag/briefcase/purse, pack:

- 6 copies of resume (CV)
- 6 copies of cover letter
- Notebook and pen
- List of References
- Water bottle

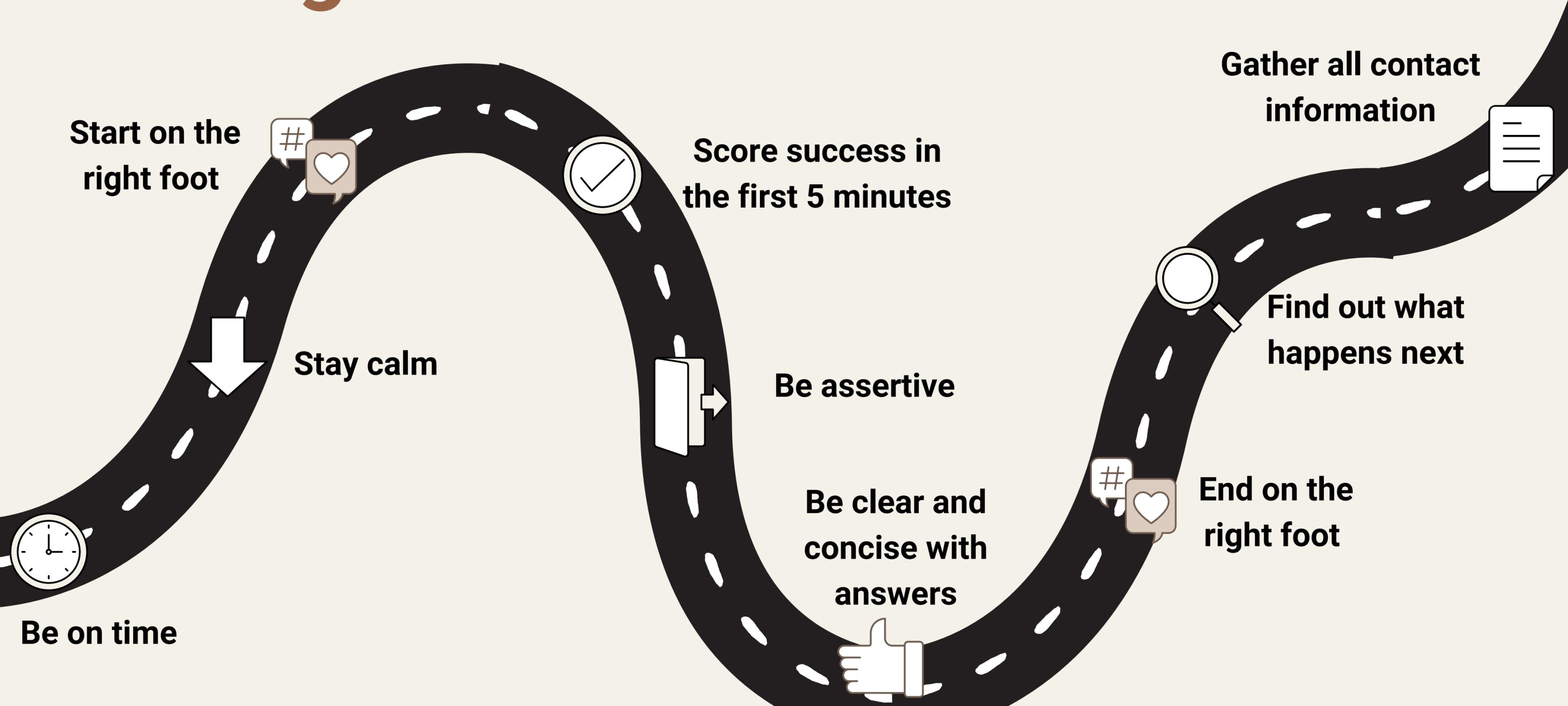
*\*Keep your cellphone in your bag and on silent.*

## Do not bring:

- Gum/candy
- Drinks other than water
- Friends/family
- Accessories or items you will fidget with
- A bad attitude

*What else do you think you should or shouldn't bring to an interview?*

# During the Interview



**Start on the right foot**

**Stay calm**

**Score success in the first 5 minutes**

**Be assertive**

**Be clear and concise with answers**

**Gather all contact information**

**Find out what happens next**

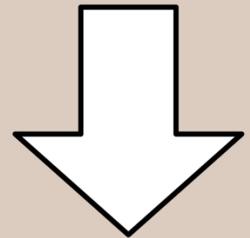
**End on the right foot**

**Be on time**

# During an interview



**Be on time:** Take into account traffic and how long it will take to arrive 10 minutes early, just in case.

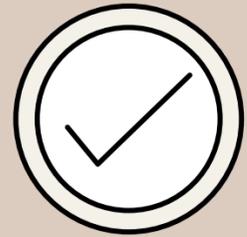


**Stay calm:** Before and throughout the interview, stay calm! Body language speaks volumes. Give yourself time to calm your nerves and go into the interview with confidence. Take a deep breath if you feel nervous.

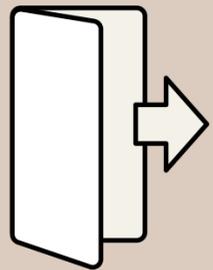


**Start off on the right foot:** As you enter the interview, make a positive comment. For example "I've been really looking forward to meeting with you today."

# During an interview



**Score success in the first five minutes:** Most interviewers make up their minds about a candidate in the first five minutes. Have a strong answer for the "tell me about yourself" question.

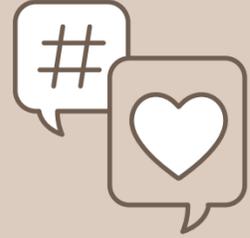


**Be assertive:** You have the power to use questions to show interviewers what you want them to see. Your strengths, skills, and key selling points are your responsibility to sell; don't wait for topics to magically "come up."



**Be clear and concise with answers:** Make your answers clear, concise, and to the point. To direct your answer, start with "The two traits I would like to highlight are..." And use the STAR interview method. Let your strengths shine!

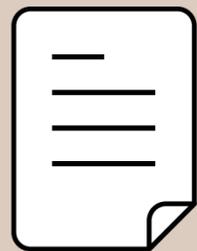
# During an interview



**End on the right foot:** Thank the interviewer for the opportunity to meet with him/her and close with why you would be a good fit for the position.



**Find out what happens next:** Ask the interviewer what you should expect going forward and who you should contact about the status of your application.



**Gather all contact information:** Collect the full name and title of your interviewer. Ask for a business card or ask the receptionist (needed for your after-interview thank you note).

# After an interview



# After an interview

**Take a moment:** Think about the highlights, the lows, and what you feel should be reinforced to the interviewer.

**Write a thank-you note:** Send an email ASAP thanking the interviewer for his/her time. Reinforce your suitability, ask questions, and address any concerns that may have come up. Drive home your excitement for the position!

**Send along any supporting documents:** In your thank-you note, or in a follow-up email, send along any required documents such as your resume, references, or forms from the company.

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# After an interview

**Contact your references:** Let them know that you've just interviewed for a position. Tell them about the position and how the interview went.

**Connect with the company and interviewers on social media, ESPECIALLY LINKEDIN:** This shows your interest and grows your social network. If the company reciprocates interaction, it shows their interest in you.

**(If necessary) Make a follow-up call:** If the company gave you a specific time frame, work within that if it has been some time. This radiates enthusiasm and tenacity.





**Answering frequently asked  
interview questions**

# 1. "Can you tell me a little bit about yourself?"

This question should be your **elevator pitch**. Nearly every interview starts out with this question, so it's important to have a high quality answer.

Talk about where you've been, where you are, and where you're going. Be sure to sprinkle in your strengths and what will help you shine in this position.

Include what you enjoy outside of a career environment to ensure a holistic response, such as your hobbies, favorite music, and what makes you, you!

## 2. "Why you?"

This is your opportunity to show that you paid attention to the job description.

Show how your strengths and skills seamlessly align with the job requirements and with the company's values.

Keep your answer concise, confident, and to the point.

### **3. "Why do you want this job?"**

Show your knowledge about the company and your appreciation for the company's mission, values, culture, products, etc.

The more specific you are, the better. Once again, show how you are a good fit for the company and that the position was "made for you."

Show how you can be the answer to their problems!

### **4. "How has your experience prepared you for this role?"**

Here is your time to expand on your resume and reveal more experience you may not have included on your resume.

Pick experiences that align with the position and those that you know you will want to talk about, before the interview. Make sure they match the job description requirements.

## 5. "What is your greatest strength?"

BE HONEST. Interviewers hear "I'm hard working," "I work well under pressure," all too often. Share your true strengths and use this opportunity to show how your specific strengths make you the best candidate for that specific job.

Use stories to "**show**" your strengths rather than just "tell" them. The interviewer wants proof to back up what you're saying.

Keep this concise; use tools to keep yourself on track with your answer.

## 6. "What is your greatest weakness?"

BE HONEST. Interviewers hear "I work too hard," "I get too invested in my career," all too often. Sharing your true weaknesses and sharing **how you are working to improve and apply those traits for good** is much more authentic and valuable.

Once again, show rather than tell. Use the STAR method here to show your positive twist on your weaknesses.

# Other common interview questions

- How do you think a friend or professor who knows you well would describe you?
- What do you know about our organization?
- What led you to choose your field or major study?
- What are your long-term/short-term goals and objectives? When and why did you establish these goals and how are you preparing yourself to achieve them?
- What do you think it takes to be successful in an organization like ours?
- Think about your favorite product. Now think up five better names for it.
- Tell me about a time when you had to lead a project or guide a team to complete a task?
- How do you determine or evaluate success?
- What major problem have you encountered and how did you deal with it?
- Give me an example of when you had trouble balancing multiple priorities and how you handled it. Follow up: What did you learn from it?
- Tell me a story that highlights any of your strengths.

# Practice!

In pairs or groups, practice answering interview questions.

Switch roles after asking/answering a few questions, so you get comfortable answering some common interview questions.

# Remember

*You will not get every job. You are going to make mistakes. There are going to be better candidates sometimes. It is okay! Not getting the job is how you learn and grow.*

"Do what you can, with what you have, where you are."

- Theodore Roosevelt

**U N  T E**

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