Interview experience in the room............

Introductions – In 2/3’s:
- interview experience
- formats
- challenges
- reflections
UCL CAREERS ESSENTIALS PROGRAMME

SUCCEEDING AT INTERVIEWS

DAVE CARTER

UCL Careers Consultant
Careers essentials – this week

- **Careers Essentials: Interview Success**
  - 24-Oct-2017  13:00 - 14:00

- **Careers Essentials: Improve your CV**
  - 25-Oct-2017  13:00 - 14:00

- **Careers Essentials: Practice aptitude and other psychometric tests**
  - 25-Oct-2017  15:00 - 17:00

- **Careers Essentials: Better Cover letters, application forms and personal statements**
  - 26-Oct-2017  13:00 - 14:00

- **Careers Essentials: Find and fund a PhD**
  - 27-Oct-2017  13:00 - 14:00
Interviews: what we’ll look at today……

1. typical formats and questions
2. how to make an impact
3. answers videos clinic
   1. first impressions
   2. motivation
   3. competency
4. further resources and support
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Talks and workshops slides, resources and recordings

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The Origins of Interviews (video)
Interview scenarios

- unstructured
  - ‘walk through CV’
- structured (using job analysis)
  - competency
  - strengths
  - technical/ case
- single interviewer v panel
- single v multi-stage

Source: ISE - 2017
Preparation: Interview Questions

- Interviews are won or lost at the preparation stage.
- 3 out of every 4 interview questions are generally predictable.
Preparation: Interview Questions

3 out of every 4 interview questions are generally predictable
Types of Questions

Back in your 3’s:

- You have been asked to devise a list of questions for use in the telephone interview process for the Foundation for Education Research (UKFERA).
- In pairs, look at the job advert and devise 5/6 questions for the first-round interview in the order you would ask them in a 20 minute interview.
- Try and use a variety of ‘types’ of questions:
  - biographical, motivation, sector awareness, competency, strength…….
UK Foundation for Education Research

The Role:
An opportunity has arisen for a researcher to carry out qualitative research in relation to a Department of Employment and learning funded initiative. The focus of the research is to understand more about the impact of technology in relation to the raising of educational standards, skills development and social inclusion.

Person specification:
educated to minimum degree level. Experience of conducting qualitative research desirable
interpersonal skills including listening, the ability to empathise, persuasion and diplomacy skills
project management skills, the ability to work to deadlines
resilience and the ability to use your initiative to find ways round challenges
an interest in technology desirable but not essential
UKFERA sample interview questions

- Tell me a little bit about yourself (biographical)
- Describe 3 things that specifically interest you about this opportunity in relation to both the role and UKFERA (motivation)
- Describe a technology innovation that you feel has significantly enhanced the educational learning experience (sector awareness)
- Can you give me an example that best demonstrates your ability to carry out credible qualitative research? (competency)
- Can you give me an example where you have had to choose very carefully how to communicate some information to someone? (competency)
- Do you give up easily? (strength)
- Do you have any questions for us?
Interviews Performance: The Primacy and Recency effect

The Perfect Interview – Max Eggert, Random House Business Books

[Graph showing the primacy and recency effect with Interviewer and Interviewee performance over time.]
First impressions – make them count
Video answers clinic

Role: Compliance manager at sports-injury clinic

Biographical question: Tell me about yourself

Compare and contrast.................
Making an impact

what we say (7%)

how we say it (38%)

unspoken signals (55%)
Making an impact

- make eye contact, smile and be enthusiastic
- stay alert
  - sit upright, ‘lean in’ to the interview
- slow your movements and breathe....
Motivation Questions: Video answers clinic

Role: Commercial Manager

Motivation question: Why do you want to work for us?

Compare and contrast..................
...My experience in consultancy and business development.....to help expand the portfolio of clients at TCG

Attraction is impressive growth especially in commercial areas of business like consultancy......

Circle of motivation

1 - Core reasoning

2 - Relevance to the OPPORTUNITY backed up by evidence

3 - Relevance to YOU backed up by evidence

...Lots of bespoke project work with clients such as the NHS/ London Deanery.......
Why are you interested in our organisation ....and how does that relate to you?)

- What does the company do?...products, services, clients
- What are their USP’s? what have they done recently?
  - projects/ news items/ what does the press say about them?
  - perceived strengths - how do they differ from competitors?
- What are their values (and how do they connect to yours)?
- What is the organisational culture?
  - who have you talked to?
- What research have you done? What are your sources?

Answer must pass the BLIND TEST
Competency Questions: Common requirements

Figure 10: Key graduate skills gaps

- Managing up: 50% (50% employers training hires, 4% graduates have this skill)
- Dealing with conflict: 71% (10% employers training hires, 10% graduates have this skill)
- Negotiating/influencing: 92% (11% employers training hires, 11% graduates have this skill)
- Commercial awareness: 79% (15% employers training hires, 15% graduates have this skill)
- Business communication: 66% (20% employers training hires, 20% graduates have this skill)
- Self-awareness: 86% (29% employers training hires, 29% graduates have this skill)
- Problem-solving: 69% (63% employers training hires, 63% graduates have this skill)
- Interpersonal skills: 88% (68% employers training hires, 68% graduates have this skill)
- Teamwork: 79% (82% employers training hires, 82% graduates have this skill)

Source: ISE - 2017

Competency questions: Video answers clinic

Role: Assistant events manager

Biographical question: When have you worked well within a team?

Compare and contrast.................
Competency answer structure

STAR

 Situation: what’s the setting/ background to the story
 Task: what was the task/objective?

 Action: what did you do? – emphasis here

 - what did you have to think about
 - what was your approach/ steps involved
 - how did you overcome any problems you encountered
 - pick up on ‘active’ verbs – eg planned, negotiated, listened

 Result – what was the outcome? What learning did you acquire?
Typical competency question scoring

Describe how you have achieved a goal through influencing the actions or opinions of others in a team.

High scores: 3 & 4

- evidence of steps taken to understanding other people’s concerns
- researching position and presenting with credibility
- adaptability to change position/ argument
- persistence and grit to continue in the face of opposition
- ability to negotiate and compromise where necessary
- successful outcome/ reflection
Interviews preparation

Evidence required:

- Research ability, an analytical approach to work and problem-solving skills
- Communication skills including presentation, persuasional and diplomacy skills
- Team working and interpersonal skills
- Organisational skills to meet deadlines and work under pressure
- Commercial awareness

Examples

- Degree/thesis/tutorial presentations
- Student society/part-time & voluntary work/careers workshops
- Summer internship
- Elected Postgraduate rep
- Fund raising for local charity
- Student football team
Your job – Prepare and deliver

Carefully rehearsed spontaneity !!
Practice makes perfect
The job hunting process

No. No. No. No. Yes (interview, No) No. No. Yes (interview, No) No. No. No. Yes (interview, Yes, assessment centre, No) Yes (interview, No), Yes (interview, Yes, assessment centre, No), Yes (interview, Yes, assessment centre, No) Yes (interview, Yes, assessment centre, Yes – JOB OFFER
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![Diagram showing the primacy and recency effect in interviews](image)
Interview – Candidate questions

Areas to avoid:
- salary and remuneration and other benefits (eg holiday entitlement)
- information publicly available (website/ recruitment literature) or covered during the interview

Role:
- more detail about what the role involves, who the roleholder reports to
- challenges of the role, level of responsibility and how that may grow

Personal (use judgement):
- why do you enjoy working at X
- what are some of the most interesting areas of work you have been involved in

Development:
- training and development opportunities, how work will be appraised and opportunities for advancement
- support mechanisms eg mentors/ buddy systems

The organisation:
- organisational structure and how the role sits within this framework
- challenges/ initiatives/ projects that the organisation is currently working on and future initiatives

The process:
- what are the next steps and opportunities for feedback during the process
- when they expect to be in a position to advise on whether candidates have progressed to next steps
Final tips

creating an impression
- be on time & dress appropriately
- know who you’re meeting & be pleasant to everybody
- assume no knowledge on behalf of interviewer

if it seems to be going wrong
- keep calm if interviewer is aggressive/ doesn’t seem to like you
- try not to panic – unlikely to fail on one question

closing the sale
- thank them and have some questions for them
- make sure you know what the next step is

afterwards
- review performance & ask for feedback
- invest ahead of time for later stages
Interview resources – search ‘UCL Careers Essentials online’

The ‘Circle of Motivation’ structure

One of the most important models that can be utilized when answering motivation questions is the ‘Circle of motivation’ which we first came across in the Applications forms section.

As we learned, this model encourages the candidate to give 3 layers of persuasive evidence:

1. Core reasoning in answer to the question - what is the key ‘pillar’ of your argument
   “I’m attracted to Ernst & Young’s client base and reputation especially in relation to……”

2. Relevance to the opportunity backed up by specific evidence - arguments that allow you to differentiate yourself by using specific evidence drawn from the research you’ve undertaken into the organisation/role opportunity:
   “……and am extremely excited by the thought of working for prestigious brands such as Continental and L’Oreal……”

3. Relevance to YOU backed up by evidence - arguments from your own personal background to re-enforce just why the core argument is so relevant both to this opportunity and to your interest
   “……Having had the opportunity to undertake an internship period with L’Oreal where I was working into a brand managers within healthcare and cosmetics, I’ve been following your recent campaign for the L’Oreal Paris brand with a great deal of interest especially…….”

And remember, the circle of motivation can be utilised multiple times within the same answer to justify a number of core reasons for the interviewee’s interest.
Interview resources
www.ucl.ac.uk/careers/information/interviews
1to1 coaching

**Current students:**
- CV/ Application coaching - 15 minutes (Mon – Fri) lunch/ early evening
- Short guidance – 20 minutes (Mon – Fri)
- Long guidance – 60 minutes on referral from short guidance
- **Interview coaching** – 60 minutes (on condition ‘real’ employer interview)

**Recent graduates:**
- Grad appointments – 30 minutes (Mon – Thu) inc. lunchtime/ early evening/ phone/ skype (recommended use especially if 1st Graduates coaching session)
- CV/ Application coaching – 15 minutes – same service as for current students
- **Interview coaching** – 60 minutes (on condition of ‘real’ employer interview)

**Booking**
- Online: up to 7 days in advance: MyUCLCareers account
- By phone: (call 020 3549 5900 after 9.30am)/ in person – Student Central/ 4th floor.
Questions?
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<th>10-title lunchtime talks including:</th>
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