On-Campus Interviews Guide

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This guide will help you to be successful in your On-Campus Interview (OCI) experience. Career Services is dedicated to helping students find fulfilling employment/internship opportunities and making sound career decisions. Providing On-Campus Interviews is just one of the ways in which we help students reach their goals. Please read through this entire guide, as it contains very important and helpful information.
Overview

The OCI program provides current UCSB students the opportunity to interview with employers during the fall, winter, and spring quarters. Most employers are seeking to fill their full-time jobs and internships. To view the current on-campus interview listings go to Handshake, career.sa.ucsb.edu/students/handshake, under the “On-Campus Interviews” tab.

All students participating in the OCI program should represent themselves and their institution in an appropriate and professional manner, whether in person, over the phone, or virtually. Students should also present accurate and truthful information throughout the entire recruitment process.

Who is eligible for OCI

Participants in OCI must be currently enrolled for the full-time/permanent employment interviews, graduating no later than August. A few employers interview sophomores and juniors for summer jobs/internships, usually in the accounting or technical fields. For those employers only, juniors and sophomores are eligible to interview. You are eligible to participate in these interviews if you are:

- a currently enrolled student
- a graduate student completing requirements for a Master’s or PhD

Apply for OCI

Register on Handshake, career.sa.ucsb.edu/students/handshake. If you are already registered, you’ll need to upload a resume. This will enable you to sign up for open schedules or submit your resume for pre-select schedules. Employers will conduct one of two types of schedules:

- **Pre-Selection**: With this option, you upload and send your resume to be reviewed by the employer. They will then select the resumes that best suit the requirements for the job. The employer sends an email to the students selected for interviewing. Students will then sign up in Handshake for an interview time slot that is most convenient for them.

- **Open Sign-ups**: An open sign-up is open to eligible students who meet the employer’s criteria. The applicant will upload and send a resume and will be able to sign up for a specific interview time slot.

Prepare and Practice

The interview is all about communication! Communication is the means by which you as an applicant will be advertising who you are, the skills and assets you offer your potential employer, and reasons why you are the right candidate. Your communication allows you to make a lasting impression.

Keep in mind that employers not only value knowledge and skills in your discipline, but place importance on written and oral communication skills. They expect you to know about the working world and have the ability to communicate clearly about your field as well as the unique aspects of what you have to offer their company/industry.

- We strongly suggest that you sign up for a mock interview with a career counselor so you can practice and receive feedback. To make an appointment call 805-893-4412.
- We also have several interviewing videos on our website to help you prepare and to provide you with tips: career.sa.ucsb.edu/resources/video-hub.
- Review the following three pages for tips on how to prepare and practice. These pages also contain frequently asked interview questions.
The 3 Ps of Job Interviews

Preparation

• Know yourself
  » Be ready to explain why you are interested in this particular position.
  » What skills, abilities, values, strengths and accomplishments do you bring to the job? These can be transferable skills and strengths.
  » Share your enthusiasm for joining this profession and what you can contribute.
  *Don’t forget to review your resume (applicable/transferable skills used and knowledge gained from your educational training, work/internship/volunteer experience, community involvement, leadership experience, etc.)*
  
• Know the position requirements, the company, and the field
  » Thoroughly review the job description and qualifications including duties and responsibilities as well as the required skills.
  » Research the company’s goals and mission, products and services, organizational structure and culture, clients, growth and future direction, and current challenges.
  » What are some of the hottest topics and trends in your field of interest?
  » Conduct employer research and make a link between your academic preparation, interests, and work experience with the target position.

• Know the STAR Method and prepare for some potential interview questions
  » Review the attached list of 50 Common Interview Questions and generate possible answers.
  » Develop 10–15 sixty second personal stories related to skills, strengths, and accomplishments.
  » Use the Situation Task Action Results (STAR) mnemonic to help you develop and deliver your answers to interview questions.

• Develop a brief list of questions for you to ask the interviewer(s)
  » Sample Questions to Ask Employers:
    • What are some typical career paths of employees in your organization? What is a realistic time frame for advancement along these paths?
    • What characteristics best describe a successful person at your company?
    • Please describe the training and/or professional development opportunities offered by the company.
    • How are trainees evaluated?
    • What are some typical first-year assignments?

Practice

• Mock Interviews; schedule with a counselor or use an online service.

• Prepare beforehand and practice your responses.

Presentation (Day of the Interview)

• Be professional and enthusiastic.

• Punctual and well dressed (see pg. 6).

• Be prepared for all types of questions.

• Conclude strongly by asking meaningful questions and summarizing your positive points.

• Follow-up with a thank you letter within 24 hours after your interview.

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**STAR Example**

*Please describe the most challenging team experience you have encountered?*

**Situation or Task:** I was involved in a group project last quarter for a class where our team had to create a business plan. Group members varied appreciably in their skills and motivation to complete the project, and each member was delegated tasks and deadlines for completion, including progress updates every week. One group member had fallen far behind and our group’s success and grade were in jeopardy.

**Action(s):** Being the group leader and the one responsible for delegating the project components, I reached out to the group member who was no longer keeping pace. In talking with him, it became clear that he had an entirely different understanding of our objective and how it would be achieved. This realization, however, was important since his unique viewpoint actually helped better inform our group’s approach in creating the business plan.

**Results:** As a result, our group became more cohesive, which helped us produce a successful business plan and made the group experience more enjoyable.
50 Common Interview Questions

If you look at this list very carefully, you’ll see that employers are actually only asking a handful of questions—far fewer than fifty. They want to know how you, a Gaucho, can add value to their team. They want to know if you have a clear idea of what your strengths are and how those strengths might help them solve their problems. If you can identify and talk confidently about how you can do this, you can answer any of these questions with Gaucho grace and power. The staff at Career Services is here to help you face the interviewing challenge so, don’t hesitate to ask us questions about these questions.

1. Tell me about yourself.
2. Tell me about your experience.
3. What is your most important accomplishment?
4. How would you describe your ideal job?
5. Why did you choose this career?
6. When did you decide on this career?
7. What goals do you have in your career?
8. How do you plan to achieve these goals?
9. How do you personally define success?
10. Describe a situation in which you were successful.
11. What do you think it takes to be successful in this career?
12. What accomplishments have given you the most satisfaction in your life?
13. If you had to live your life over again, what one thing would you change?
14. Would you rather work with information or with people?
15. Are you a team player?
16. What motivates you?
17. Why should I hire you?
18. Are you a goal-oriented person?
19. Tell me about some of your recent goals and what you did to achieve them.
20. What are your short-term goals?
21. What is your long-range objective?
22. What do you see yourself doing five years from now?
23. Where do you want to be ten years from now?
24. Do you handle conflict well?
25. Have you ever had a conflict with a boss or professor? How did you resolve it?
26. What major problem have you had to deal with recently?
27. Do you handle pressure well?
28. What is your greatest strength?
29. What is your greatest weakness?
30. If I were to ask one of your professors (or a boss) to describe you, what would he or she say?
31. Why did you choose to attend your college?
32. What changes would you make at your college?
33. How has your education prepared you for your career?
34. What were your favorite classes? Why?
35. Do you enjoy doing independent research?
36. Who were your favorite professors? Why?
37. Why is your GPA not higher?
38. Do you have any plans for further education?
39. How much training do you think you’ll need to become a productive employee?
40. What qualities do you feel a successful manager should have?
41. Why do you want to work in the _____ industry?
42. What do you know about our company?
43. Why are you interested in our company?
44. Do you have any location preferences?
45. How familiar are you with the community that we’re located in?
46. Are you willing to relocate? In the future?
47. Are you willing to travel? How much?
48. Is money important to you?
49. How much money do you need to make to be happy?
50. What kind of salary are you looking for?

This current list of 50 Questions printed with permission from CollegeGrad.com
Behavioral Based Questions

Most often asked by employers during interviews with college seniors

1. Tell me about a stressful situation that you experienced. How did you handle this situation?
2. Describe a situation in which you had to take a risk. What was the outcome?
3. Describe the most creative work-related project which you have carried out.
4. Tell me about your role in a project team. What did you do to contribute toward a teamwork environment? Be Specific.
5. Has anyone asked you to do something unethical? What did you do?
6. Give me an example of a time in which you felt you were able to build motivation in your co-workers or subordinates at work.
7. Give me an example of a time you successfully calmed down an irate customer. Now tell me about a time in which you were unsuccessful.
8. Tell me about a time when you had to deal with a personality conflict with a boss or co-worker.
9. Describe an unpopular decision you had to make, but made it anyway.
10. Give me an example of a time when you set a goal and were able to meet or achieve it.
11. Tell me about a time when you had to go above and beyond the call of duty in order to get a job done.
12. Tell me about a time when you had too many things to do and you were required to prioritize your tasks.
13. Give me an example of a time when something you tried to accomplish failed.
14. By providing examples, convince me that you can adapt to a wide variety of people, situations, and environments.
15. Give me an example of a time which you had to be relatively quick in coming to a decision.
16. Relate a personal story in which you persuaded someone to do something that initially did not appeal to him or her.
17. Describe a time in which you took initiative rather than waiting to be told what to do.
18. Tell me about a time when you made a mistake and learned from it.
19. If I asked someone about your leadership style, what do you think they would say about you?
20. Give me an example of a problem, issue or concern that you handled in a unique, creative way.
Interview Dress

Given that first impressions can greatly influence a hiring decision, the manner in which you present yourself during an interview can make a big difference in your ability to advance further into the interviewing process.

Always present a neat, well-groomed, and professional appearance during interviews. Specifically how you dress may depend upon the job for which you are applying; however, don’t assume one setting is necessarily more casual than another. It is probably best to stick with a suit regardless of where you are going, UNLESS you have received specific information to the contrary.

Masculine

**Jacket:** The sleeves should taper, gradually ending just over the wrist so the shirt cuff extends about 1/2 inch beyond the jacket sleeve.

**Tie:** Your tie should be darker than your shirt and should not extend below the belt. Wear 100% silk (or similar looking) in solid colors or small patterns.

**Shirt:** The button down collar offers a more casual look than the more formal business style of a point collar. Choose a good fit, neatly pressed. Best colors include white or pale blue. Always wear an undershirt.

**Suit:** A suit is always first choice, but if unavailable, a navy jacket or blazer with black or navy buttons and gray or beige pants are acceptable.

**Pants:** The pant leg bottom in the front should touch the front of the shoe and angle towards the back of the shoe to fall just above the heel. Pant cuff or no cuff is a personal choice.

**Color:** Choose dark colors, such as navy or gray (black is often considered formal). Suit should be a solid color or subtle pinstripes.

**Fabric:** Choose a light wool or rayon fabric with some weight, in a solid color or subtle pinstripes.

**Shoes:** Best choice is a conservative style with laces. Best shoe colors are black, brown, or burgundy and should match your belt. Wear with a new shine and dark socks over the calf.

Feminine

**Hair:** Style your hair so it’s not falling into your face.

**Make-up and Jewelry:** Avoid bright colors and excessive amounts. Light shades of lip coloring and nail polish are recommended. Jewelry should be small and conservative. Only one ring per hand and one earring per ear, small studs preferred.

**Blouse:** Wear a neutral color such as white or beige; avoid bright colors and large prints. Do NOT wear a low-cut or see-through blouse.

**Color:** Choose conservative colors such as black, navy, gray, camel, or brown in a flattering cut.

**Suit:** A business dress or skirt, worn with a jacket, or tailored pantsuit is acceptable. Make sure the skirt length is just at knee length, either right above or right below the knee.

**Fabric:** Choose a light wool or rayon fabric with some weight, in a solid color or subtle pinstripes.

**Shoes and Hosiery:** Do not wear open toe or extremely high heels. Shoe color should coordinate and remain in neutral, such as navy, black or taupe. If you choose to wear hosiery, make sure it’s in a color similar to your skin tone.

Dress for Success...Dress to Impress

Take the time to make sure you have a good, neat haircut and short, clean nails. For men, facial hair should also be well-trimmed and tidy looking.

Make sure your suit is tailored to fit you (take it to a tailor 2 weeks before your interview).

Have a dress rehearsal 2 days before your interview. Ask for help when you are shopping for your outfit. Let the salesperson know you are looking for a timeless interviewing suit and tell them your budget.

Iron your shirt and check your outfit for stains or tears before you put it on. Do not get your haircut minutes before your interview. This will result in tiny hairs all over your neck and suit jacket.

Do not show up to with distracting piercings (ex: nose rings, eyebrow piercings, huge ear holes).

Do not arrive in an ill-fitting, wrinkled, stained, or torn shirt or suit.

Do not wear cologne or perfume.
The Interview

On the day of your interview, go directly to the Career Employment area at Career Services (Bldg. 599) and plan on arriving approximately 10-15 minutes before your interview. (You do not need to check in, but can go straight to the waiting area). Have a seat and wait to be called by the recruiter. Remember while you are waiting to remain professional at all times - employers are taking notice.

Do

• Arrive 10-15 minutes early
• Remain professional while you are in the waiting area
• Offer a solid handshake and thank the employer for interviewing you
• Exhibit positive body language (good posture, proper eye contact)
• Act enthusiastic about the company and the job
• Offer examples of your skills and answer behavioral questions using the STAR method
• Listen carefully to each question and ask the interviewer to repeat if you did not understand
• Answer questions concisely and thoroughly
• Ask questions during the interview
• Collect a business card from the interviewer
• Close the Sale: After you’ve asked all your questions, and they ask if you have more, thank them and deliver a strong final statement. Here’s how:
  » “No, you’ve answered all my questions. I want to thank you for your time and information. I am excited about the (state the position title) with (state the company name), and am confident if selected that I could do an excellent job based on my academic preparation and strong work experience. I hope you give me serious consideration for this position and I look forward to hearing from you.”

Don’t

• Arrive late (if you are running late, call the front desk at 805-893-4412 ASAP so we can let your interviewer know). The interviewer may choose to interview you for a shorter period, interview you later in the day, or cancel your interview.
• Forget about your interview and “no show”- See “no show” policy on next page
• Use OCI for practice; only interview with companies you are seriously interested in
• Speak about anything unprofessional in the waiting area as many companies will bring greeters
• Ramble in your responses to the interview questions
• Use filler’s like “uhm” “uh” “ya know”
• Bring your cell phone or skateboard into the interview
• Forget to follow up
After the Interview

Make sure you collect the contact information for each person you interacted with during your interview. Get their business cards from them directly. At the end of your interview, ask the interviewers about their timeline for filling the position, and about their preferred method of communication following the interview.

Send an email or hand-written, personal “Thank You” note within 24 hours of the interview. These letters give you an opportunity to reemphasize your interest in the position and to show your appreciation. This is also an opportunity to remind the reader of important points you made during the interview, or to mention something you may have neglected to discuss. The letter should be brief, typically 2-3 paragraphs.

Sample Thank You Letter

1234 Campus Road
Goleta, CA 93117
March 10, 20xx
Ms. Camille Cooper
Human Resources Manager
Best Company
4321 Main Street
Santa Barbara, CA 93101

Dear Ms. Cooper,

Thank you so much for interviewing me yesterday. I really appreciated hearing about the widgets Best Company produces as well as the opportunities for advancement and career paths in your company.

I am more convinced than ever that Best Company is the place I want to be. I think my organizational and customer service skills would make me a great fit for your entry-level administrative position. And I am excited about becoming a wholesaler and working directly with your customers as my training progresses. Please let me know if I can provide you with any additional information that would make you confident about my fit with your company.

Sincerely,
Josh Jimenez

No Show Policy

Signing up for an interview and then failing to show up or cancel 24-hours in advance will suspend your eligibility for campus interviews. If you need to cancel an interview, you must do so at least one working day ahead of the engagement. You may end this suspension by writing a letter of apology or email to the interviewer and providing a copy to the Career Services On-Campus Interview staff. Note that a second “no show” will disqualify you from participation in the On-Campus Interview Program.

OCI is not for practice

Please refrain from using On-Campus Interviews (OCI) for practice! Instead, sign up for a mock interview. Employers spend hundreds and sometimes thousands of dollars to send recruiters to UCSB to interview our students. We are ready to help you to practice interviewing without occupying the seats we reserve for students who have authentic interest in the employers using our program. Ask about our books, videos, lists of questions and our “mock” interview service. It hurts UCSB when students use real campus interviews for practice.
Student Guidelines: Job + Internship Offers

UCSB Career Services supports both employers and students in the hiring process. We assist employers in maximizing their recruiting results and we assist our students in making informed career decisions. In order to project the utmost professional image to employers and to successfully participate in recruiting activities, we strongly urge UCSB students abide by the following guidelines:

- At all times in the recruitment process, represent yourself and UCSB appropriately and professionally.
- Recognize that not all offers are negotiable, even in a competitive market. Be realistic about your expectations and conduct appropriate research before approaching an employer.
- Do not hoard offers. If you are interested in a particular offer, let the employer know immediately.
- Notify organizations on your decision regarding their offers in the agreed-upon time-frame. If you need more time, you may contact the organization for a possible extension. However, it will be the employer’s decision whether to grant that request for more time.
- Accept an offer only after careful consideration.
- Ask an employer for more time if needed. Only accept an offer if you are 100% sure!
- After accepting an offer, withdraw from the interview process with other companies. If you are holding pending offers, you are expected to immediately notify these organizations of your final decision.
- Do not renege after accepting an offer, except in cases of extreme personal emergency.
- Accepting a job offer, either verbally or in writing, is an agreement to work for an employer.
- Rejecting an offer after having previously accepted (for any reason) is a serious recruiting violation and is subject to significant repercussions such as losing your On-Campus Interview program and Handshake privileges (each circumstance will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis). After such unprofessional behavior, you may also ruin your chance to work for certain companies permanently and you may also affect future Gauchos if the company chooses not to recruit at UCSB due to your actions.

Additional Information:

We also want to make sure that you are aware of the following information to ensure that you are not feeling pressured or unprepared when making a sound career decision:

- Make sure that you have the conditions of your employment/internship offer clearly defined in writing (job duties, salary, bonuses, benefits, starting date, work location, etc.). If a formal offer letter does not follow a verbal offer, follow up with the employer immediately and request this document.
- Understand the implications of “exploding offers.”

Described above are examples of employers attempting to pressure you into accepting their offer immediately, thereby lessening the opportunity for competing offers. Examples include:

- An employer requires candidates to accept offers within a very short time (24-48 hours)
- An employer extends offer to candidates that exceed the number of openings available, and tells candidates that they will be hired on a first-come, first-serve basis
- An employer gives signing bonuses only to candidates who accept offers immediately

We ask that employers who recruit with UCSB give all students a minimum of two weeks to make their decision. We also ask employers to abide by the specific guideline outlined here: career.sa.ucsb.edu/employers/hiring-ucsb-students/job-offer-policies.

If at any time in the recruitment process, you have questions, are unsure how to proceed, or are experiencing undue pressure to make an employment decision, please make an appointment with a career counselor ASAP! We are here to help you navigate this process, make the best decisions, and act in a professional manner.