



Interview Strategies with Denise Johnson

Speaker 1: Thank you Dr. Robok. Good morning. How are you doing today? Are we good? Okay, you're going to need more vocal if you're going to go talk to employers. Yeah?

Speaker 2: Good morning.

Speaker 1: There we go. That's what we need to do. What we're going to be talking about today is job search strategies, especially today. Interviewing with me. So what I do on main campus is I'm the Career Services Manager within the Career Center, and I work with students all the way from freshman to post-doc about interview strategies and how to find what they want to do with their lives. So as a student here at USC, you are able to access the USC Career Centers and connectSC accounts, which is our primary database where we list jobs and internships and have networking opportunities. So I'm going to take you through the very end today, how to get into that site if you don't know how to get into that site. We also do have career fairs on main campus every September and every February, and you are more than welcome and more than ... Invited to come to those career fairs. You can look at connectSC and it will tell you what companies are coming. So if there's anything that's in the public health field or maybe it's in hospital or something like that where you'll be able to use your degree, I would encourage you to come because there's a lot of employers that will come looking for health professionals. So it's not just business or writing or entertainment.

So you want to make sure that you're utilizing all the services that you can while you are still a student here at USC. So what we're going to talk about today as far as interviewing goes is basically how to prepare for the interview, and then different types of questions that you may get, what to do during the interview, and then when we're done with the interview, what do you do? And how do you follow up? And after they don't call you and tell you anything, what do you do? Right? We're going to talk about that 'cause that's a big thing with employers. Unfortunately, nobody calls you and says, "Thanks for applying." You don't even get an email. You do for some county positions, but most companies are not going to give you anything. You just go into that HR black hole of resumes and cover letters. Okay? So we're going to talk a little bit about how to get out of that. So bottom line, the purpose for you on an interview, is to search out opportunities. Obviously, right? You want to make sure that you are selling yourself. If you have questions about the job at that point, you can ask them during your interview. We're going to talk about how you would quantify your accomplishments and strengths using the STAR system, which we'll talk about in a couple of slides.

Remember that during your interview, it is a dialogue. It is not a monologue. So don't expect the employer to talk the whole time. You need to actually be participatory and you need to be in the event and talking with them back and forth like a conversation, all right? And bottom line, the purpose of the interview is to land the right job for you. Right? And that's why we want to make sure that you are ready to go, that you've researched the company, that you know a little bit about the fit of the company is, what the culture is, so that you're able to go in and nail that interview. Now, for an employer, their main purpose is to fill a job. That's their whole purpose in life when they post a job



or the recruiter posts a job, is to fill it. So the first thing they're going to be looking for is competency. Do you have the competency to do what the job needs you to do?

Additionally, they're looking at fit. Do you fit with the organization? Do you fit with the team? Company fit, company culture, that has a lot to do with whether or not you're actually going to get hired for a position. And basically what that means is, can you mold right into that company? Hit the ground running? I mean, obviously you're not going to know everything on your first day on the job, but can you blend with that company and work within the confines of what they do and how they do it? Obviously, they're going to clarify their job needs to you. Because unfortunately, sometimes we apply for jobs that have a particular job description. And when you get into the interview, it's a totally different thing. Right? They go, "Oh, yeah. Well, you're going to be doing this. You're really not doing this. You're going to be doing X, Y, and X." And you're like, "Okay. I wouldn't have applied if I had known I was doing that." Right?

So that's an opportunity for you to clarify. And it kind of helps you from being assessed improperly. And when I say that, I mean they want to make sure they have the right position for the right person so that you can come in and do the job. Some of these employers might also ask you to do an assessment prior to the interview. And if that's the case, then you just go online and you do the assessment. Sometimes they are kind of personality assessments, sometimes they might be different ideas of do you fit with the company culture? How do we do that? So even if you're being asked to do that, or if they ask you to do a video ... Some employers are asking people to do video screens prior to the interview so that they know if they want to bring in physically in person, especially if you're applying say for a job up in San Francisco or northern California or another state. They're not going to fly you out. They're going to ask you to do something either on Skype, which is scary, or on video, which is scary. Right? Because you have to make sure that wherever you are for either the Skype, maybe a phone screen, or a video screen that where you are is professional.

I don't know if you all have dedicated offices at home where you work. Usually most students use couches, or the bed and that's where your laptop is and that's where you work. And so if you do have a Skype interview or a video screen, please try to make sure that you're in a professional area. That you look around you and you see what's behind you on the walls. Because if you've ever Skyped, you know that we can see what's behind you. So we don't want inappropriate things behind you for the employer to be like, "No." I did a Skype interview once for a candidate, and although it was professional and he was dressed professionally, it was only from the waist up because there was a big mirror behind him. And he was not dressed professionally from the waist down. In fact, he just had on pajama bottoms with his suit jacket and his tie, everything was great. But I was like, "Really? Really? And you didn't look at the mirror behind you. Really? It's right there." I was like, "Okay." So unfortunately we didn't fill that position with him.

Okay? Whole package has got to be there, all right? So before you're going in for your interview, you always want to make sure that you think about how you are going to be valued. What are you going to bring to the organization? 'Cause you know that's going to be a question. What are you going to bring? What kind of value are you going to add



to my corporation or organization? So you want to make sure that you know that. Also take a look at everything about the company. Look at the news. Look at LinkedIn. Google them. Do they have a website? I would hope so. If they don't have a website, don't work for them. Okay? There's a lot of jobs on main campus where students come in and say, "They don't have a website." And we say, "Don't do that then." There's no website? Do not apply. Don't do that. See what they're doing on social media. Do they trend? Is there anything about them on social media? Who are their competitors? Just so you know A, who's competing with them, but again where else can I apply. Right? So you want to make sure you have all that information.

I want you to make sure that before the interview, you are role playing some interview questions. We do have some resources on the connectSC website for you to do that. I'm going to show those. We actually have a mock interview module where you can actually go into connectSC and you can pull up a mock interview, and the system will allow you to record it and watch it back. So you not only can see what you look like when you interview, but you can hear what you sound like during the interview process. And that's a huge thing. And I'll show you how to get there when we're done. Finally, before the interview, you always want to make sure that you do have a couple of questions for the interviewer. Even if you have question and they answer them during the interview, you still have to come up with something. Because if you don't have any questions for me, I'm going to assume that you're not interested in my company nor the position. So at that point, it would become perhaps maybe even some personal questions.

"Why do you like working for the Los Angeles County of Health?" Let them answer.

"What do you find challenging about your position?" Just so you can actually have some conversation at the end of the interview. Questions about any of that before we move on? Okay. Wonderful. When you're getting ready to do the interview, please make sure that you have multiple copies of your resume. Hopefully you brought those today. They do not have to be on perfect resume paper. If you did that, wonderful. All right. That's great. But they don't have to be. Make sure, though, that when you're ready for your interview, that maybe the day before or a couple before that you actually drive it so that you know what it's going to take at the time of the interview. As a recruiter, I've had people come into my office 15 minutes late for an interview and they were lucky that I actually did the interview 'cause they're late. But I have people saying, "Oh, well it only took me 10 minutes to get here when I drove it."

I'm like, "When did you drive it?" "Like, last night at 10:30." Well, of course at 10:30 at night downtown LA from USC is probably only going to be 10 minutes. But on a Wednesday morning at 9:00, it's probably going to take you 45. So know when you're going to be there, 'cause you cannot be late. Cannot be late for an interview. All right? You want to arrive about 15 minutes early. If you get there really early, like a half an hour early or 45 minutes early, sit in your car. Walk around outside, do something. Do not enter the building 45 minutes early for an interview. All right? Because then it makes the interviewer or the person that is going to be recruiting you, whomever is going to be talking to you, feel like they have to rush so that they can see you, even though you're really early. So, I would just hang outside, hang out in your car, if there's maybe a Starbucks local or something where you could go, a little café. Sit there for a



while, look at some of your materials, and just try to relax and breathe. Okay? But you never want to be more than 15 minutes early. Okay?

When you're in the interview, clearly in order to get further interviews, because more companies and organizations do at least two interviews now. You have a phone screen maybe, then you have an in person interview, and then you'll get a second interview with other people that are actually at the company to make sure there's fit. And then you'll get either the offer letter or the thank you for interviewing but we're going with someone that's more qualified. Sadly. Okay? Dress appropriately for the interview. You can always ask when you get that interview, "Is this business professional? Or is this business casual?" If you have any doubts about any of that, always wear a suit and be done. It's better to be overdressed than to be underdressed for an interview. Obviously, arrive in good time.

Make sure you have positive body language. When you meet with people, the first thing they may do when they call you back into the conference room for the interview is shake your hand. All right? If they don't ... Like, if you go to shake someone's hand and they don't do anything, just go, "Oh, okay great." And pull your hand back. Because there are some people that are becoming kind of germaphobe-y. And they don't want to touch other people, especially in HR. So you want to make sure that if you go to extend your hand and the person you're interviewing with doesn't extend their hand, don't be like, "Oh, sorry." Just be like, "Oh, okay. Hi." All right? And they will introduce themselves and will walk back to the interview room. When you're in the interview room please make sure that if they have chairs that swivel that you don't swivel. Okay? If there's arm rests on the chairs, use the arm rests. If it doesn't have anything on the chair, try to make sure that you're sitting flat back into the chair because if not, sometimes if you sit in the middle, you have a tendency to roll your shoulders forward and slouch. And this is not attractive in the interview process.

So you ought to make sure that you are sitting tall. I mean, I don't want you to sit like a robot. But I do want you to sit tall and be able to feel confident in the answers that you're giving. Expect the unexpected. I have done interviews where the fire alarm went off and we had to leave. Okay. Did I continue the interview? You betcha. What a great opportunity to see what you do when there's something that's not in the norm of an interview. How do you react? And then you've got to definitely ask questions. So that's the key. Ask questions. Be involved and be part of and aware of that organization. Okay? One of the things that you probably will need today is what we call a focus statement or an elevator pitch. And basically what that is, is it's a brief summary of your background, and usually it's used to tell people a little bit about yourself. Sometimes in the interview process, the first question you always get is, "So tell me about yourself." That doesn't mean a 5 minute diatribe about this is where I went to high school, this is where I went to undergrad. No.

What this basically ... All you need to talk about is where you're from, where you are now, and what you're doing or what you've done, and then where you're going. So if someone said, "So, tell me about yourself." You're going to put those three things together and move forward. So what it looks like is this. You're going to have your name. You're going to talk about your field of interest or what you're studying or things



of that nature. You're going to have positive body language when you talk to them about this. And you're going to use it for multiple situations. When you're networking with people ... You know, like when you go out to talk to the employers. You're going to say, "Hi. I'm Denise Johnson. I'm currently a 1st year masters students in the public health program here at USC. Last summer I interned at the Department of Health Services for the county of Los Angeles where I did X, Y, and Z. I'm really excited to be talking to you today about your leadership training program in this because I'm very interested in going into this industry once I'm done with school." Boom. Okay? You don't need to stand there and just blah, blah, blah. Okay?

Try to figure something that you want to get out so that they can understand why you're here. Plus, in the interview setting, it will calm you down. Because this will be one thing that you will always say. I don't want you to technically memorize it, but I want you to be able to speak it freely. Okay? Because you never ever want to memorize questions for an interview, or memorize the answers. 'Cause that just causes a lot of issues, especially if you get nervous and you forget. And then you look at the ceiling and you're like, "What was I supposed to say?" Just speak. It's conversation. I don't want you to wing it. I want you to kind to prepare and know what you might get asked, but this is a great way to start having that conversation about why you want to work for a particular company. Okay?

Traditional interview questions that you might get are going to be, "Tell me something about yourself." Or, "How did you hear about our company? What do you know about the position that you're applying for? What are your strengths and weaknesses?" I really don't like that question, but you get it. So if you have to answer that question in an interview, try to pick a weakness that doesn't have anything to do with the job. Okay? So when I was hired for my current position at USC, they asked me what my weaknesses were. And my first answer was chocolate and the second one was ice cream. And they said, "No, no. Seriously. What are your weaknesses?" And I'm like, "Those are them. Seriously." And they were like, "No, in the workplace. What's a weakness?" And I said, "Well, you know what. I can manage a budget, I've managed up to 35 million dollar budget, but I can't do stats. I can't do that kind of math. Logarithms, all that kind of stuff. If you need me to do some data analytics, that's not my best thing. But I can recruit people, I can look at resumes, I can talk to people. These are things that I do great." They were like, "Super. It has nothing to do with the job, so not a problem."

But you're never going to say a weakness is getting up early. Getting to school on time is a weakness because you're never going to get a job. No one's going to hire you if you can't get to the office by eight. Okay? So just be prepared for some of those. The other one you usually always get is, "Why should we hire you?" That question you need to really dig deep, and this is what students and most people in general have a hard time answering because you are trying to tell them why you are so amazing that they need to hire you. And you can't say something like, "Oh, I know you're looking at some really strong candidates." No, no, no, no, tell me about you. What about you? "I'm the strongest candidate for this position and I really want this job. I know I'd be able to bring you great value in this company. I'm going to do X, I'm going to do Y, I want to do Z. I want to be able to take it to the next level." Whatever it is. But you need to show me some passion, and you need to tell me that you want the job. All right?



I had a great interview with a candidate once and I asked him why he wanted to work in Career Services, and this is what he said verbatim: "I have a lot of passion for working with undergrads and I think that my energy level is really great for the office. And I think I'd be a good hire." Just like that. And I thought he was kidding. And I was like, "No, no, really. Why do you want the job?" And he repeated it and I went, "Oh." No. Not going to work in our office. Not going to happen. Because our company culture, our office culture is not deadpan. It's just not the way it is. So, one of the things that you need to do within that research is look at company culture. What do they do in the office? All right? I used to recruit for Disney back in the day and I would hire for many different departments, many different areas, and a lot of different areas have different requirements. I wouldn't hire someone in Imagineering that was bouncing off the wall because that's not what you do as an Imagineer. You're creating stuff, you're more serious. They're doing all this stuff. So I would get someone that would work them.

Now in our marketing and creative department, I want a bouncing off the wall person. All right. And I did hire a person once for a marketing position that when she came in, she was completely energetic. She was really great. I knew she'd be a super fit, so we hired her, and I put her in that department. And then two weeks later, I got a phone call from the hiring manager that said, "The gal that you gave us, I don't know what happened, but she's in her office all the time. She doesn't participate in anything that we do. She attends creative meetings, but she doesn't give us anything. I just don't know what's happening. So can you talk to her?" So I said, "Sure." So I called her in, and I said, "So and so told me that there's a little bit of lack of creativity on your part in some meetings and I'm just wanting to get your feedback." And she said, "They're really loud. And they always have energy." And I went, "Excuse me?"

And she said, "No, they always have energy and they're bouncing around the office." And I went, "But when you had your interview, you had energy and you were bouncing around my office in your chair. That's why I hired you." I said, "Is there something wrong? Is there something different?" She said, "Well, my friend told me that I had to be totally outgoing in order to work at Disney." And I said, "So the person in the interview is not who you really are?" She was like, "No, I just ... I was told I had to be that way." And I said, "Well, you don't have to be that way. But whatever you present at the interview is what I hire. And I needed someone that had that energy for that job. But I can't use you in that job." So she panicked, "Am I going to get fired?" I said, "No. I'm just going to find you a job in Imagineering where you can go and do your stuff and be a quiet person with the rest of the quiet people that are in that department." And she went, "Oh, okay. Good."

So we're going to hire what we see. So if you think you have to be like, "Oh, I have to be like this all the time." You're going to have to be that way on the job every day. So you need to represent who you are, the way you are. Done. In the interview process. Don't try to be someone that you're not, 'cause it's just going to get ugly. We don't want to do that. You may get some behavioral questions, and those are always the best. Right? Behavioral questions, basically we ask them to see what you did in a prior situation because basically prior behavior indicates future behavior. So we're going to ask you questions like, "Tell me about a time when you handled multiple research projects. How did you handle it?" And you're going to answer us. This is when you're going to use the



STAR theory, anything that's behavioral. And I think it's on the next slide, but bottom line, when you look at the STAR theory. S-T-A-R, the S stands for situation. Situation you were given or what you were in. The task is the T, and that's what you were asked to do or to complete. The A stands for action, and that's the action that you took to get whatever it was to get done, done. And the R is the result, this is the result that I got.

So whenever you're asked anything about, "Tell me about a time, give me an example, describe a moment, describe an event ..." That's a behavioral questions. And you just say, "Certainly," and you go right into the STAR theory. Okay? And that's the easiest way, because on your resume, you want to look at situations that you can actually do that already prior to the interview. You all have instances on your resume where you are working within a group or you had a project or you had a deliverable or you had a deadline or you had to plan an event. How did you do that? And those are the stories that you're going to tell them to answer their questions for interviewing. Okay?

These are the best questions. These are the illegal questions. Okay? You should never be asked a question about race, religion, age, military service, sexual identity, any of that stuff. Okay? Sometimes employers will try to get around it. Sometimes in December, or if you have an interview in January, some recruiters will say, "Oh, did you have a great holiday season?" "Oh, yeah," and you talk about it. Or, "Oh, did you have a good Christmas or Hanukkah?" And you could say, "Yes, the holidays were great for myself and my family." Or whatever. Don't identify as ... And that's something we do as humans, 'cause we're like, "Oh, let me tell you. This is what we did." And you tell them everything. No. But you also can't say, "That's an illegal question. You can't ask me that." Okay? Because that means your interview is pretty much over, right? So you can't ever say that.

So basically, you're just going to try to talk about things because sometimes there are issues that people have had in your position prior to you being interviewed. And they need to make sure that the position or that situation is not going to happen again. When I went on an interview, one time I got a question, they said, "Do you have kids?" And I went, "What?" And he was like, "Do you have children?" And I said, "I don't see why having children would do anything to affect my job." And he goes, "Well, no. I need to know. I can't hire unless I know." And I said, "Well, then I guess I can't have this position 'cause I'm not going to answer that question. It has nothing to do with my job." He goes, "Well, it is if you're late taking them to school every day." And I said, "Oh, did you have an issue with that in the past?" He was like, "Yeah, the gal that was here before you used to drop her kids off and then she wouldn't come in until 10:00."

I'm like, "Well, that's a big problem because most schools start at 8:00 or 8:30, so I don't know what she was doing for an hour and a half." But I said, "You know, doesn't matter. I'm a professional person. If I do have children, if I don't, they would be at school on time and I would be here. Or I would make a flexible alternative schedule with you." I said, "You know, personally ... I shouldn't tell you this, but I don't have children. But when I do have children, if I need to get a flexible schedule, then that's what we'll talk about. Maybe I'll work from 9:00 to 6:00 instead of 8:00 to 5:00." "Oh, that sounds pretty good." I'm like, "Yeah, uh-huh." So you kind of have to know a little bit about what they might ask, but you also have to be confident enough to be like, "Not



answering that, but not in a way that is going to not get you the job." Okay? But you want to make sure that you are aware of some of those things. Okay?

The topics to avoid during the interview are usually the questions that you want answered first. Right? What is the salary? What are you going to pay me to do this job? You can't ask that question. Don't ask about benefits, or sick time, or vacation. Don't ask about professional development or what kind of perks do we get or any of that kind of stuff. We don't ask about that. The person that talks about salary first loses. So if in an interview someone says, "Well, what is your salary range?" And you can respond with something like, "You know, what salary's really important to me, but I'd like to find out more about the position first to make sure that we're a good fit." Or, "I know that you're going to pay what's fair and equitable in the industry." Okay? Or, "You know what, I just graduated from my master's program so I have more experience now than I did originally, so once we determine that I am the candidate you choose, we can talk about it." Okay? The only issue with this is on salary ... On applications, it always asks for salary. If you can write, "Negotiable." Do that.

Okay? I've had some students say that they can put dashes in the boxes and it just comes up empty.

Speaker 2: [inaudible 00:25:12]

Speaker 1: Employers will still ask for your salary history, but you have to phrase it by saying, "As an undergrad," or "As a masters student, I didn't work. I was making \$10 an hour. But I know that after I graduate with my degree I will be making much more than that." Okay? They're not going to pay you \$10 an hour, and if they do, then you don't work for them. You try to negotiate it up, or you just say, "No." Okay? One of the things you also have to be aware of is, what is it going to cost for you to live? I'm not going to say you're all going to move to Manhattan Beach, my a Maserati, and expect six figures on your first job out of college. Or out of a master's program. Some people do, though, it makes me laugh. I'm like, "Good luck with that." But you need to know ... Do you have student loans that you have to pay back? What's that payment? Do you live in an apartment where you don't have a washer and dryer and you have to go to a laundromat or you have to go to the place and wash all your clothes and you need quarters? Do you do Starbucks every morning? That probably will stop.

What is your budget? What is your rent? What is your car insurance? What is that going to cost? And then how does that work within your salary? Okay? You need almost triple what you would pay in a month in a salary in order to live and not have to shop at the 99 cents store constantly. Okay? Not that they don't, 'cause they have some great produce, but you don't want to be there forever, you know what I'm saying? So make sure that you're aware of those things. Hopefully you'll use some type of web resource like maybe payscale.com or Glass Door. They will also give you some information on salary. But the other thing that you could do up to this is maybe do some informational interviewing where you actually talk to someone that has a job that you think is interesting and you can flat out ask them that question. What is an entry level salary for a public health professional right out of school?



Not like, "What do you make?" 'Cause I'm not going to tell you that, but I will say, "Oh, typical range is somewhere between 45 and 56 thousand." Okay? And whenever you ask for salary or you want to give salary, you always want to give them range. Don't blurt out, "45 thousand." Okay? Because my hiring budget might be 60, but you said 45. So I'm like, "Yes." 15 thousand in salary savings for the company, that looks good. I don't get the bonus, I don't get it. But it saves the company money, okay? So you always want to give a range and then that range is a workable range, and then you'll probably come up with something that's equitable for both parties involved. Okay?

All right, so during the interview that is the time where you are going to be ... Giving a Disney logic term, "on stage." Right? This is your first impression. You are happy, you are smiley, right? You are an active listener. Again with the handshake, if they give you an opportunity to shake somebody's hand, please shake their hand, but don't like grab it with your other hand. Okay? And if you ever shake hands with a female professional, please don't treat her like she's the Queen, okay? I did ... I got this last week, actually. I went to shake a student's hand and he went like this. And I was like, "Okay. That's not going to get you a job my friend. You need to shake my hand." He was like, "Oh, okay." I don't want you to kill me and like bring me down, but don't do this, and don't limp wrist it. Shake my hand. And be like, boom. But don't be like, "Oh, nice to meet you." I don't need to vibrate. Just, "Thank you." And we move on.

Okay? So just kind of know that going forward. At the career fair today you may have employers that may not want to do that, because they're going to see a lot of you today. One of the keys is if there's hand sanitizer on their table, they'll shake your hand. They will immediately do this. 'Cause that's what happens, they bring tons of hand sanitizer and they use it. Okay? They're health professionals, y'all, just like you. Like, "No, I don't want germs." Okay? So be aware. If you're in a particular industry, make sure you use those terms in the interview. Make sure that you're utilizing what you are talking about in the industry. You wouldn't say, "Oh I went to the emergency ... This person came into the emergency room and had this." You would say, "The patient presented with this." Because that's the language that you would use in that particular industry, so make sure that that happens.

Always be courteous, always smile. Try not to use filler words in the interview process. The killer for most people in the interview is when I say something like, "Tell me about yourself." And you go, "Uh, okay, um, uh, yeah. Uh. I'm Denise Johnson ... " And then you go into it, but you've already had uh, yeah, uh, yeah, mm-hmm. Okay? That's really not professional and it comes at a time when typically we want you to be interacting with people in the office, you might be interacting with the public or other people. So you need to try to remain professional in your language. We had someone that actually interviewed for a position when I was recruiting, and part of the stuff that we do in our office is when we hire new people in, they have to present. We give them a question to present on, and they present to our staff because a big part of our work space is presentations.

So this person gave a presentation, and I'm a tick maker just on the word "um." It bothers me. And this person in 20 minutes said "um" 123 times in 20 minutes. I was like ... I can't have someone going "um, um" every other word. It would drive ... It drives me



crazy, and I can imagine it would drive other people crazy. So be aware of some of those fillers. Sometimes it is nervousness, but you have to breathe, all right? If they offer you water in an interview, take it. It's a great way to kind of stall when they say, "Oh, tell me about a time when you had to do ... " And you're like, "Okay ... I was working on a group project once ... " And you go into it. But it gives you a couple of seconds to be like, "What am I going to use for that?" Okay. Water is a great thing. Okay. It's a beautiful thing. But you have to make sure that you are on the whole time that you're in the interview process.

Clearly don't record ... Don't memorize your answers. Always use the STAR theory. Try not to be longer than two minutes. If you work through the mock interview module on our connectSC website, it will time out at two minutes so you get used to what two minutes sounds like ... Or how long it is. Because two minutes is actually a really long time to talk. It's really long. It may not seem that long, but it is. Obviously, you want to ask open ended questions. See, he's all happy. Most people don't care if you have facial hair, just trim it, if you have. If you're a gentleman and you have it. During the interview process, too, don't be touchy with your body. Okay, ladies, sometimes we have issues with this. We just do it because it's a habit and we play with our hair, we do groom-y things. You can't do that in an interview. Guys, you should never be playing with your hair, ever. Okay?

And the only reason I say that is because I had an appointment with a recent grad from 2016 in December who couldn't get a job. And this guy is amazing, he was a 3.91 GPA, he was a finance guy, and he could not get past the first round interview. And I kept saying, "Gabe, I don't understand. On paper you're amazing. You're totally smart. What's going on?" He's like, "I don't know." I said, "Come on in. Let me see what you do in the mock interview process. We'll do it, whatever." So we do this interview, and I kid you not, every 30, 35 seconds he would go like this with his head. And I went, "Okay, maybe he has dry scalp, I don't know." But he kept doing it and I went, "Okay, that's just not ... " So at the interview, I was like, "Okay, what is wrong with your hair?" And he goes, "What do you mean?" And I go, "You're talking and you're playing with your head and it just looks really crazy." And he goes, "Oh, I'm doing that?" And I said, "Yeah." I go, "Why?"

He goes, "Well, my hair used to be really thick and it was very, very short." It was like a buzz cut. He goes, "And I cut it all off and I just like how it feels on my fingers." And I said, "Well, that's a great thing to do in your apartment, but in the job interview, when you're trying to work for a Fortune 500 company that has ... I don't even know how much company, and you're going to be handling accounts of like 5 million dollars and up, nobody wants to work with someone that's like, 'Okay, where do you want to put all your money?'" I said, "It just looks crazy." And he went, "I didn't realize I was doing that." I'm like, "If you're doing that with me, you're doing that in your interviews. And no one's going to hire you because they're just not. So the next interview you go on, you need to either sit on your hands or not ... You know, keep your hands on the arm rest of the chair and just talk. Fight that urge to touch your head." And he was like, "Okay." And then about a month and a half later he actually had a job. And I know it was because he was doing funky stuff and funky gestures.



All right? So please make sure that you're kind of human in the process, but that you're not talking with your hands all the time or you don't do strange stuff because people don't want that in an office right up front. Maybe you get kind of crazy with your hands later, but in the interview process, you have to be as professional as possible. Okay? All right, so next. Before you leave the interview, you need to know a little bit more about the job and responsibilities of that job, so you have to ask if they don't tell you. What is my first priority when I first get hired with your company or your organization? Ask them that. Plus, you're forecasting yourself already into that job, right? What am I needing to produce the first year that I'm here? What are your people in your organization measured on for performance appraisals and things of that nature? 'Cause you want to know. What am I going to need to do for that?

Sometimes they ... We always say the tenure of the last person in the job, and that's kind of a touchy subject or question to ask because you can say something like, "Where did the person that had this position before me go?" And what you want to hear is they got promoted. Right? Or, sometimes they'll say, "You know what, they left the company, there was another opportunity." Okay. And usually, they're not going to say anything negative. And if they just say, "Oh, it just didn't work out." Then you're like, okay. It's probably not a personality fit. Okay. 'Cause that's why a lot of people leave positions is because the culture or the personality is just not the right fit, and that's why people leave. Okay? Always ask them, what is the next step? Typically in the interview process, the interviewer will say, "We're going to be interviewing through Friday. And hopefully by next Wednesday we'll make a decision and then we should reach out to people for second rounds on Thursday." Okay, great.

So if Friday comes and you still haven't heard from them, then you're going to follow up and say, "We had an interview last week and I know that I was told they would follow up on Thursday with those candidates moving forward. And I just wanted to know what the status was." And they may say something like, "Oh, we haven't even been able to do that. We've been so slammed at work. We haven't even talked about people yet. So we're hoping in the next couple of weeks." So it just gives you a follow up timeline. Because we always get in the Career Center, "I had this interview and it's been a month and I haven't heard anything." And we go, "Did you follow up?" And they go, "No." You have to follow up, okay? If they tell you, great. If not, always ask. Get a business card from everybody that you interview with so that you can write an appropriate thank you note that is personalized for the conversation that you had with them. And when you ask for the business card, you can always ask it in such a way where you say when they ask you, "Do you have any more questions?" You can say, "No, I don't have any more questions at this point, but could I get a business card so in case I do have a question I can email you?" Rather than going, "Can I get a business card?"

Okay? Ask for it. Don't try to be really suave and just take it from their holder. Ask for it. Come out and ask for it. We're going to give you ... That's why they're on our desk. We're not ... They're not on our desk because I want to keep them. Take them. Totally take one. If you're in my office, and you go, "Can I get a ..." I'm like, "Take a business card." Right? That's what we do in the interview process. That way you get the names right. You get the spellings right. You get titles right. You can always ask HR before the interview all the questions you need to know about the setting of the interview. Is it a



panel interview? Is there going to be more than one person? Who am I interviewing with? How long is the interview? Will there be lunch involved? If you go for a second round and they're going to be there all day, you're probably going to have a lunch interview. So what I tell students with that is, make sure that in your bag whatever you bring, you got some ... Maybe a protein bar, maybe some granola bar. Because when you go to lunch, you're really not going to eat. 'Cause you're going to be talking.

So if you do have a lunch interview, you want to make sure that you can order something you can eat with a fork. Burgers, not a good thing. Not a good thing. Fork, okay? Follow the direction of your interviewer, but at no time do you ever, ever, ever order alcohol. People have done it, it's crazy. Don't do it. Even if your interviewer orders it, which would kind of send me a red flag. I'm like, "Oh, you're drinking at lunch. That's not a good thing." Don't order it. Okay? If you want ... If they take you out to dinner after you get hired and you're already in the company and everybody's making toasts and stuff, beautiful. But don't do it in the interview process. 'Cause I had someone do that when I took them on a lunch interview at Disney. The Mouse does not do that. Ever. So, don't ever ...

It was like ... The first time it actually ... Four years actually got to have a lunch because I knew the interview was over when she ordered her drink. I was like, I can eat my salad, it's great. I can eat it. Because we just talked. Because the interview, in my brain, the interview was over. Because I can't hire that, okay? So just be aware of what's going on, okay?

When the interview is over, one of the things that you are going to do because you're a human person is that you're totally going to critique the interview and go, "Oh, I should have said this. Oh, this was a better answer." Don't do that. Think about what did we talk about? Is this is a company that I can see myself working in? And if so, how do I make sure that they know that I'm passionate, that I want to be there? Or is this something that I learned from and it's really not where I want to be? All right? Even if it's not really where you want to be, you do want to send a thank you note to the people that you interviewed with within 24 hours of the interview. If you want to send an email, that's amazing, go ahead and do that. We like, personally, as recruiters little hand written notes. Don't go out and buy a card. Don't write me a letter. Just get a little note that says, "Thank you for meeting with me yesterday. I really enjoyed our conversation and learning about the position. I really enjoyed learning that you value your colleagues. It seems like a great place to work and I hope I'm able to join your team. Sincerely, your name."

All right? Sometimes, I have had people that have brought the thank you notes blank. Don't write them out before hand, 'cause you don't know what you're talking about. So don't pre-write anything. Have brought them maybe in the car and then they go out to the car, and they write thank you note, and they bring that back in and give it to the reception and say, "Hey can you give these to these people for me?" Or you could mail it? 'Cause if you mail it, it gets there between like one and two days. If the reception person at the front has been helpful for you, write a thank you note to that person, too. 'Cause I guarantee you the hiring manager will know probably before everybody else does in the company that that person got a thank you note from you. Okay? Because



most people overlook the reception person. Please don't ever overlook that person, because it could be someone that's really important and you don't know it. Right?

I used to work for a small startup semi-conductor company in [inaudible 00:41:05], and it was small enough so that all of the directors broke ... We gave the receptionist her lunch break every day. Everybody had a day. The president had a day, I had a day, the VP of Manufacturing had a day. And on my day, they were doing some interviews in the engineering department. So I'm at the front desk, answering the phone, and a candidate came in and he was like, "Hey, honey, can you get me some water?" And I went, "Sure." And I went and got water and I wrote a big, "No hire" on his resume. Right? In front of me. Gave him water. And then he proceeded to pull out his cellphone and talk on his cellphone and I kind of went, "Don't like you." Okay? And he had no idea who I was. He had no idea that I was that I was the Director of HR. He had no clue. No clue. And I'm like, that's good that you don't have a clue. Okay?

When you come into the lobby and you're ready for the interview, turn off your phone. If there's magazines on the table that are like company magazines and stuff, read a magazine. Focus your thoughts, think about how awesome you are, and how you're going to get this job and you're going to kill this interview, and you're going to be amazing. Don't play on your phone. Don't call people. Focus on the interview because there could be things where I've heard of people that kind of have doors that are darkened windows, but they can see out but you can't see in. And people will actually stand there and watch you and see what you do while you're waiting. Okay, that's a little bit ... For me, but I've heard that happen. So be aware. Okay. People do weird things for interviews, so just need to be aware of that. Okay?

So, if you're done and you get a second round, please make sure that you tell them or ask them who I'm going to meet with? Who am I meeting with for this? How long is it going to be? Where are we going to meet? Basically, be really prepared to answer salary questions at a second round interview, 'cause they're going to ask. And just give them the range, try not to give them a number for as long as possible. Hold off as long as you can. And then just make sure you're giving them ranges. You're still answering positively, you're showing your professionalism and you're confident. All right?

The best part for the interview is to continue to always practice. Know what you're going to talk about, know where your strengths lie, know what you did really well at a job. We're finding right now that some employers are actually asking the tell me about the time that you failed? In an interview process, and you're all hyped up about I'm amazing, I'm awesome, and now I have to fail. So come up with something that is not related again to the job, whether that's maybe you didn't do well in a class or you hoped a group project would have gone better. And it wasn't really a failure, but it didn't ... It wasn't up to your standards. Okay. But don't say, "Uh, I've never failed." 'Cause we're going to be like, "You failed." Even if you didn't make your junior high basketball team, that was a failure. And if that's the only thing you've ever failed at, you can say that. But don't say, "Oh, I've never tried anything new. I've never failed." 'Cause then we're definitely not hiring you. Okay? So just come up with something that is relatable, but that's not going to kill your chances.



This is the mock interview website that I'm going to take you to really quickly. Bottom line, when you get into connectSC, this is the main page of the Career Center's website. So what you're going to do is you're going to into connectSC right here, you're going to log in as a student. When you get in there ... Oh, I have to log in again. Kick me out. So once you get in, it's going to open up to your homepage. And then on your homepage, over here on the left, you're going to see jobs and internships. You're going to see a public profile that you don't need to complete because we want you to utilize LinkedIn. That is a much better way to network than this public profile through connectSC. But you're going to go down here to resources, and in the resources tab you can click on the mock interview module and this will open up. And you can take one of forty-one pre-arranged interviews. Or you can create your own mock interview. And what that'll do is you could click on behavioral questions and then you would be able to add behavioral questions to the list of questions that you're going to get asked.

It will tell you, "This is a 20 minute interview." Awesome. Okay? When you go through this, the screen splits. The person is on this side asking you questions and you're over here, and then it will record it and you will be able to watch it back. Okay? That's one of the things that you can do. The other thing that we have for you as far as resource, both here and abroad is if you go to online resources and handouts, on the second page we have actually four pages of workshops for you, handouts for you, information. If you go to page to, you're going to find something called Going Global. And what Going Global does is it offer career guides and city guides for both domestic and international students. So if you want to work in Los Angeles, you can click on the US City Career Guides, it'll open up and you click on Los Angeles 'cause you want to be here. And it will give you information on LA. It'll give you job search opportunities, it'll give you top companies and industries. If you're an international student, you can look on [inaudible 00:46:20] companies in the metropolitan area. And it'll tell you these are the companies that have applied for visas in the last year.

So you don't have to walk around and people and go, "Do you sponsor? Do you sponsor? Do you sponsor?" It's all right here. So you go, okay, American Cambridge Institute, they sponsor. California Institute of Technology, they sponsor. So then you would go to their website and see if there's something or a job that's open that you would want to do and would want to apply for. Again, the same thing happens if you want to go to another state. You would just click again on the city career guides, you go back to it and you can find any other state.

To come in to see us on main campus. Once you graduate, you are actually able to use the Career Center for up to three years. So if you need some assistance or there are something that aren't happening, or you have some questions, you can always come in and see us. You are more than welcome to come in to main campus for any of our career fairs. So that you can go into the even tab up at the top and click on fall career fair. Boom. We also have an alumni career fair usually in march, at the beginning of march during spring break. That way all the undergrads are gone, so it's just alumni. We have a veterans career fair, so if you're a vet, we have a career fair for you too. That also happens in march. But there's a lot of events that go on for our alumni as well as our current students, so you want to make sure you utilize everything that we can offer you in the Career Center. Okay?

Any questions on interviewing off the top of your head? No? Great, thank you so much for your attention. Have a great day today.

