Interviewing Skills Workshop

Sponsored by Women@SCS
Tonight’s Program

✦ Dinner!

✦ Meet the organizers

✦ Interviews in a Nutshell (Job Fair, Pre-screening, Resumes)  
  Margaret Schervish

✦ In Person Interview (Discussion and Advice from Experience)  
  Kempy

✦ Speed Interviewing Practice

✦ Feedback from Recruiters (Tips and Advice)  
  Carol Young

✦ Negotiation Case Studies

Monday, January 31, 2011
Interviews in a Nutshell

Margaret Schervish

Monday, January 31, 2011
The Interview Process

- Resume
- Job Fair (EOC)
  - Date: February 10, 2011
  - Time: 12-6pm
- On campus interviews
- Phone interviews
- In person interviews
- Negotiate
What Kind of Interview?

Industry:  
- Internship  
- Full time?

Research:  
- Academia  
- Industry

Interviewer  
Interviewee

Are you the right person for the job?  
Is this the right job for me?
What Kind of Interview?

Industry:
- Internship
- Full time?

Research
- Academia
- Industry

Interviewer

Interviewee

Are you the right person for the job?

Is this the right job for me?
Interviewer Hat

- Will you be able to do the job well?
  = your skills and experience
- Would you make a good colleague?
- Are you really motivated to do the job?
  = evidence that you really want it
- Will you fit into the organization?
  = what kind of person you are
Resume Overview

- LaTeX resumes are impressive
- Include GPA if >3.0
- Include citizenship
- ONE page
- Have Kevin Collins at the Career Center review your resume
- Some interviewers like to ask “Tell me about something that’s not on your resume”!
Resume Proofreading

- Have a native English speaker read over your resume
- Consistency check (are all your bullets the same? date/title consistency)

Have Kevin Collins at the Career Center review your resume!
Career Fairs

- Decide ahead of time which companies to talk to
- Rehearse 30 second “elevator pitch”
  - Sound interested and interesting
- Ask questions
  - What do you work on?
  - Would interns be able to work on any projects related to ___?
- Next step in the process?
Elevator Pitch

Volunteers?
Phone Interviews

- If possible, use a landline
- Sometimes awkward – can’t see reactions
  - Smile! They can’t see it, but your voice changes.
- Similar questions to in-person interviews
- Technical questions
  - Some use Google docs to see your work
  - Explain everything you write and think
In Person Interview

Kempy

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Before the Interview

- Research the company
- Know what position you’re applying for
- Brush up on technical skills
- Prepare responses to questions:
  - Why do you want this job?
  - Why should they hire you?
- Always have a question ready to ask the interviewer
Right Before the Interview

- Get enough sleep the night before!
- Brush your teeth, comb your hair, and use the bathroom
- Arrive early
- Dress for the job
  - Bank on Wall Street? Wear a suit.
  - Laid-back tech company? Jeans and a nice shirt.
- Be polite to all those you encounter (including the desk attendant!)
- First impressions: body language & mannerisms
The Interview

- Be positive!
- Technical questions
  - Coding
  - Algorithms
  - Design
  - Programming language
- Some behavioral - be prepared!
- Ask questions to clarify the problem
- Think out loud and use the whiteboard!
- Don’t be afraid to ask for help
- Start with the simple solution
What You Want to Know

- Who will I be working with?
  - Team size
  - Organizational structure
- Ability to move around in the company
- Future career prospects
- Training and support
- What happens next?
- When will I know your decision?
- Don’t ask about salary, working hours, holidays etc!

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Things to Avoid

✤ Arrogance
✤ Criticizing others
✤ Being negative
✤ Being too familiar or unprofessional
✤ Smoking/eating/chewing gum!
✤ Arguing with the interviewer
✤ Asking about salary or inappropriate questions
✤ Any other points…………….?
After the Interview

- Thank you note or e-mail to interviewers
- Follow-up with the recruiter
  - Don’t be too pushy
  - But don’t let them forget about you
Resources

- Glassdoor.com and Vault.com
  - Interview questions and answers
  - Salary information
  - Employee reviews
- Programming Interviews Exposed: Secrets to Landing Your Next Job
- Women@SCS website
- TartanTrak
- Career Center
Classic Industry Questions

- General:
  - What would you say has been your greatest failure?
  - What is your preferred role in a team?
  - Tell me about a recent project.
- Technical:
  - Write the pseudocode to reverse a linked list. What is the run time? Now, make it faster.
  - Write a heap. Let’s use it to do heap sort.
- Puzzle:
  - Four people need to cross a rickety rope bridge to get back to their camp at night. Unfortunately, they only have one flashlight and it only has enough light left for seventeen minutes. The bridge is too dangerous to cross without a flashlight, and it’s only strong enough to support two people at any given time.
  - Each of the campers walks at a different speed. One can cross the bridge in 1 minute, another in 2 minutes, the third in 5 minutes, and the slow poke takes 10 minutes to cross. How do the campers make it across in 17 minutes?
Speed Interviewing Practice

- You have 2 minutes to answer a question
- Move on to the next interviewer (your left)
Interviewing from Experience

- Discussion and Advice from Experience
- What was easy?
- What was difficult?
- Questions or concerns
Feedback from Recruiters

Carol Young
Negotiation

- Teams will be given a situation to negotiate
- Choose a team representative to make your case to the interviewer
Negotiation

Teamwork

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Negotiation Discussion

- What was hard?
- What was easy?
- Questions or concerns
Salary

• Don't talk about salary too soon
• It is best to discuss this after they have offered you the position and before you have accepted it.
• If asked about salary right away, change the subject. Try, “I don’t want to box myself in terms of salary right now. If you don’t mind, I’d like to focus on the value I can produce for your company.”
• Do your research and prepare to negotiate. Before you go into the interview, know the going rate for your experience and position. Websites such as Salary.com can give you a good idea of your salary range.
Take home message
Thank You for Participating!

If you have any questions about this workshop please contact:

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Go do some magic!