Interviews are not Q&A quizzes or inquisitions. Always prepare for internship, employment and graduate school interviews. If possible, meet with a counselor to prepare prior to any interview.

**DO dress appropriately!** This means a suit for men and women, unless otherwise specifically instructed by the interviewer. Ironed shirts or blouses, polished shoes, hose, blazers and appropriate attire project an “interview ready image.” Invest in your wardrobe now to receive payoffs (offers) in the future. Some on campus events, such as employer information sessions are “business casual” or even “come as you are.” Contact the Career and Internship Center for details regarding specific events.

**DO always check in advance regarding interview specifics.** Send “confirmation and clarification” emails to whomever invited you to or is coordinating your interview. Confirm where and when you will be first meeting. Clarify the agenda and schedule if you wish, so you will not be surprised when your interview day arrives. Find out how many people you will be interviewing with, how long the entire process might take and, specifically ask, “are there any questions I should think about or materials you recommend I read prior to my interview?” Via this communiqué you can also uncover whether case study or other interview techniques will be involved.

**DON’T interview without researching!** Find out as much information as you can about an employer, their industry, and, most critical, the job or internship prior to the interview. Effective research shows interviewers that you can independently gather in depth information (more than presented in a job posting), that you truly want this position, and provides “focal points” upon which field, function (job) and firm focused answers to queries are built.

**DO review typical interview questions.** Most interviews will be “conversational,” when interviewers ask fairly typical interview questions. Some are “behavioral,” when interviewers query and probe about past achievements, seek details regarding behaviors (and skills) involved in these undertakings, and when interviewers ask candidates “what would you do in this situation” questions. Occasionally, particularly for consulting firms, interviews are “case studies,” when candidates are asked to analyze specific situational cases and problems. Case interview techniques are addressed with counselors and are detailed in many publications in our Goldberg Resource Library area.

**DO follow up immediately with thank you emails and other supporting communiqués.** Follow-up communiqués and, after, conversations, even after an offer, must be sincere, focused and strategic. A counselor can assist you with follow-up correspondence and with negotiation and “education,” strategies after an offer.

**DO bring copies of your resume and other documentation.** Bring a copy of other documentation such as a reference list, unofficial transcript, writing sample, or project findings. And, definitely, bring extra copies of resumes and cover letters to share when appropriate. If you see your interviewer doesn’t have a resume, politely offer one. It’s better for you and for the interviewer if you both share that common reference point during discussions.

Career and Internship Center professionals are ready to coach you through this specific step and, by appointment, conduct role-play interviews. The following **Pre-interview Worksheets** should be referenced and used prior to all interviews. They focus on internship and post-commencement jobs, as well as research options. Medical and health professions, graduate school, as well as finance and consulting interview materials are also available for you to review and use.
Internship and Job Pre-Interview Guide and Worksheet

This Guide and Worksheet focuses on general internship and post-bac employment interviews. Special ones for medical and health related professional and graduate programs; for graduate schools, and for teaching and counseling opportunities are also available. Below is a list of potential questions. Attempting to memorize answers can do more harm than good, so, please use the list to stimulate thoughts and inspire you to share ideas effectively during interviews.

- Why are you interested in this particular internship/job?
- What academic achievements are you most proud of?
- Why did you choose your major and how does it relate to your goals?
- What classes did you find most stimulating, and did they nurture internship or job-connected skills?
- What are your greatest strengths and weaknesses?
- How would you describe yourself and how would others describe you?
- How would you characterize career related success?
- What are your three most significant employment or co-curricular achievements?
- When did you use persuasive skills or sales talents?
- What are your long-term career/academic/research goals?
- How have your academic experiences prepared you for a career, and what are your future academic goals?
- What would you do differently with regards to academic, co-curricular, and practical experiences?
- What was your most difficult decision to date, and how did you go about making it?
- What research projects have you found most rewarding, and why?
- What do you think it takes to succeed in the internship you are being interviewed for?
- What lessons have you learned from your “failures” or “mistakes”?
- Are your grades fair reflections of your academic abilities and intellectual potential?
- What concerns do you have with regard to this internship/job and our organization/school?
- How would you describe this opportunity to friends and family members?

To maximize use of this list, after you review all general queries, identify a “top five” that relate to the specific internship or job (field, function and firm) you will be interviewing for. Then, conduct a practice session, having a friend or family member ask the five questions. Remember, there are no “right” answers to particular questions. Responses during an interview must seem well conceived, yet conversational, not memorized. Think of this interaction as a conversation, not an inquisition. Thus, it is best to complete this exercise aloud, even if you are doing so alone. Never “practice” via actual interviews with firms you have no interest in. It’s better to conduct role-play interviews to generate advice about your performance. Identify key concerns and build confidence. Don’t over-analyze each role-play or real interview. The questions you might ask potential employers during an employment interview or during a pre-interview information conversation, include:

- How would you describe the internship/job in terms not presented in the posting or description?
- What specific qualities are you seeking in a candidate?
- What type of person would most likely succeed in these roles?
- What should I expect of myself over the first few days and weeks on the job, and what would others expect of me?
- How will my performance be judged, and by whom?
- What characteristics does it take to succeed within this organization and within this position/internship?
- What are the best things about the internship/job and, the most challenging requirements of the position?
- Who would have highest expectations, or be the one(s) who would be most difficult to impress?
- What goals do you have for the person who will serve in this internship/job?
- What project would you expect to be completed first, and what would be involved?
- If I was lucky enough to get this offer and I accept, what advice would you give me for my first day and first week?
Each interviewer has a personal “style,” but there are some identifiable “techniques.” The “Behavioral Interview” allows interviewers to “quantify” and “objectify” a traditionally subjective process. It is based upon principles: that past behavior is the best predictor of future behavior; more recent behavior is the best predictor of future behavior; and trends in behavior are better predictors than isolated incidents. Therefore, the interviewer will present “what did you do when” scenarios or ask you to identify past incidents when you used certain behaviors to achieve a task or reach a goal. Prior, interviewers have determined desired behaviors so they will use a pre-established “checklist” to determine if you have qualities associated with those required to succeed in a particular job. Be prepared for and don’t become “rattled” by open-ended question. Bring resumes with you to the interview to share, and one with notes and highlighted for you to use. Definitely use it during telephone interviews. Don’t take notes during a formal behavioral or traditional “employment interview.” Don’t memorize answers to questions, but do be prepared to expand upon anecdotes you identified as illustrating related behavioral qualifications. Behavioral questions include:

- Describe when you faced problems at work that tested your coping skills. What did you do?
- Give an example of a time when you had to be relatively quick in coming to a decision.
- Tell me about when you used communication skills in order to get an important point across.
- Tell me about a job experience when you had to speak up and tell others what you thought or felt.
- Give me an example of when you felt you were able to motivate co-workers or subordinates.
- Describe a situation in which it was necessary to be very attentive and vigilant to your environment.
- Give me an example of a time when you used your fact-finding skills to gain information needed to solve a problem; then tell me how you analyzed the information and came to a decision.
- Describe the most significant written document, report or presentation you’ve completed.
- Give me an example of a time when you were able to communicate successfully with another person, even when the individual may not have personally liked you.
- Specifically, what did you do in your last job in order to plan effectively and stay organized?
- Describe the most creative work related project you have completed.
- What did you do in your last job to contribute toward a teamwork environment? Be specific.
- Give an example of a problem you faced on the job and how you solved it.
- Tell me about a situation in the past year when you dealt with a very upset customer or coworker.
- Describe a situation in which others within your organization depended on you.

Email a few days before an interview to confirm your meeting and, when possible, arrange "informal conversations" with persons who attended the specific graduate school, or who works at the firm. Verify and clarify logistics, particularly for “callback interviews” after initial on-campus or phone sessions. Know how many people you will be seeing and what to expect of your visit. Pre-interview research does not have to be completed covertly, so specifically ask “Is there information I should be reading, or can you provide me with a very detailed job description prior to my interview?” Also ask “Are there particular questions I should be thinking about prior to my interviews?” To build interview skills, practice with a friend, family member or, most importantly, a Career and Internship Center counselor. These professionals can target graduate school questions as well as those that are more employment focused. Don’t memorize. Be yourself. Take a copy of your resume with you to the interview, with key points and achievement anecdotes clearly noted or highlighted. Cite by example and refer to your resume, stating “as noted on the resume” when appropriate. Don’t be shy! Cite achievements with pride. Interviewers have limited time to get to know "you." Don’t think there are "right" answers. When asked a "technical question," if you don’t know the exact answer, talk the interviewer through how you would go about finding out the correct procedure. Ask questions when invited. Also, you should ask one or two questions early in the interview to gain clarification regarding job responsibilities. This will help throughout the conversation.

Each interview will be somewhat different, but you can use one technique to prepare for all discussions. Before each interview complete the Pre-Interview Preparation exercise. This will organize your thoughts and clearly identify what to highlight during the exchange. Using these notes, you will be focusing interview power specifically on the job search or graduate school target associated with the specific conversation. Review your notes prior to and use them during the interview. Don’t be distracted by this “resume worksheet,” but do refer to it during your discussions.

When an interviewer refers to your resume as a point of reference to inspire questions, do the same by stating “as you can see on my resume.” Never interview without a copy of your resume. Bring extra copies with you in case you unexpectedly meet additional interviewers or your interview does not have one. In response to questions, do state or allow your internal voice to focus your thoughts on the phrase “thinking about the this internship/research effort.” These words verbally or internally preceding your response do “connect” past achievements and general qualities to “job specific requirements.”
Internship and Job Pre-Interview Worksheet

3 INTERNSHIP /JOB REQUIREMENTS AND ROLES

Note 3 requirements or roles of the position you will be interviewing for.
Review, then briefly summarize a detailed job description. Also review general field descriptions (i.e. public relations, financial services, investment banking), to understand context in which internship or job functions exist. What 3 roles and responsibilities will be most significant for this internship? What will you be doing and what skills are required? The more clearly and concisely you can describe a position, the more likely you will receive an offer.
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3 QUALIFICATION CONNECTIONS

Focusing on the job/internship description cite 3 key points that make you qualified for the position in question.
Review your resume qualification summary, as well as cover letter. Then identify three key points you wish to focus on. Identify a past internship, course, or projects that are most relevant to the job/internship. “Connections” are qualities you possess and expressed or achievements that match qualifications required. In general, you are completing the statement “Thinking about the internship my three key assets are . . . ” or “Thinking about this job, the three key points I want to raise during this discussion are . . . “
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3 STAR (Situation, Tasks, Actions and Results) EXAMPLES

Note 3 anecdotes that illustrate your capabilities to STAR on the job.
Stories should support the three Qualifications Connections, linking skills used to take goal directed actions and, ultimately to achieve results or finish a project. First, broadly describe the situation. Then, identify specific task, actions, and results associated with your accomplishments. Be prepared to cite by example, tell anecdotes and describe past behaviors that predict future performance potential.
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3 EMPLOYER QUESTIONS

List 3 questions you would like to ask the interviewer.
Ask one question in the first 5 minutes of the interview in order to use response as the discussion progresses. Prepare a list of additional questions to ask during and at the end of the interview session.
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Research Experience Pre-Interview Guide and Worksheet

Soon, you will interview for research experiences (projects) associated with natural sciences, engineering, medicine, as well as social science or the humanities. Read this document, and then complete the targeted Worksheet. If you have questions, contact the Career and Internship Center. In addition to general individualized counseling, we offer specialized services, guidance and coaching, including role-play interviews, for students focusing on finding research experiences. Below is a list of potential questions. Attempting to memorize answers can do more harm than good, so, please use the list to stimulate thoughts and inspire you to share ideas effectively during interviews.

- Why are you interested in conducting research?
- What academic achievements are you most proud of?
- When did you decide you wanted to be a doctor/dentist?
- Why did you choose your major and how does it relate to your goals?
- What classes did you find most stimulating, and did they nurture your interest in research?
- What are your greatest strengths and weaknesses?
- How would you describe yourself and how would others describe you?
- What are your three most significant employment or co-curricular achievements?
- What clinical experience have you had?
- What are your long-term career/academic/research goals?
- Where do you see yourself in ten years?
- Where else have you applied? Why do you want to go here?
- Do you have any specific research topics in mind and how did you choose these?
- Have your academic experiences prepared you for a career in research, and what are your future goals?
- What would you do differently with regards to academic, co-curricular, and practical experiences?
- What was your most difficult decision to date, and how did you go about making it?
- What research projects have you found most rewarding, and why?
- What do you think it takes to succeed as a student researcher or as a professional researcher?
- What lessons have you learned from your “failures” or “mistakes”?
- Are your grades fair reflections of your academic abilities and intellectual potential?
- What concerns do you have with regard to a career in research?

After you review all general queries, identify a “top five” that relate to the specific research experience or program you will be interviewing for. Then, conduct a practice session, having a friend or family member ask the five questions. Remember, there are no “right” answers to particular questions. Responses during an interview must seem well conceived, yet conversational, not memorized. Think of this interaction as a conversation, not an inquisition. Thus, it is best to complete this exercise aloud, even if you are doing so alone. Never “practice” via actual interviews with firms you have no interest in. It’s better to conduct role-play interviews to generate advice about your performance. Identify key concerns and build confidence. Don’t over-analyze each role-play or real interview. The questions you might ask potential employers during a medical or health professions graduate program interview or during a pre-interview information conversation, include:

- What type of person would most likely succeed within this research setting?
- What should I expect of myself over the first few days, weeks and months as research assistant?
- How will my performance be judged, and by whom?
- What characteristics does it take to succeed as a student researcher, technician, or assistant here?
- What obstacles should I avoid my first weeks or months and how can I enhance my potential to succeed?
- What advice would you give a student just starting a research experience here?
- What quality or asset of this program is most likely “hidden,” but should be more evident?
Each interviewer has a personal “style,” but there are some identifiable “techniques.” The “Behavioral Interview” allows interviewers to “quantify” and “objectify” a traditionally subjective process. It is based upon principles: that past behavior is the best predictor of future behavior; more recent behavior is the best predictor of future behavior; and trends in behavior are better predictors than isolated incidents. Therefore, the interviewer will present “what did you do when” scenarios or ask you to identify past incidents when you used certain behaviors to achieve a task or reach a goal. Prior, interviewers have determined desired behaviors so they will use a pre-established “checklist” to determine if you have qualities associated with those required to succeed in graduate school. Be prepared for and don’t become “rattled” by open-ended questions. Additionally, be prepared to answer general questions about the field of research and issues in the field. Bring the resume with you to the interview and offer it to the interviewer. If he/she declines, don’t be concerned. Don’t memorize answers to questions, but be prepared to expand upon anecdotes you identified as illustrating related behavioral qualifications.

Behavioral and Ethical Questions include:

- Describe when you faced problems that tested your coping skills. What did you do?
- Give an example of a time when you had to be relatively quick in coming to a decision.
- Tell me about when you used communication skills in order to get an important point across.
- Give me an example of when you were able to motivate others.
- Give me an example of a time when you were able to communicate successfully with another person, even when the individual may not have personally liked you.
- Do you have an opinion on controversial research within our field?
- How do you feel about stem cell research?
- Do you understand confidentiality issues associated with research?

Hypothetical Situation questions include:

- If you found a factual error when reviewing research paper or presentation drafts, what would you do?
- If you had difficulties completing an assignment in time, what would you do?

Verification is a key to pre-interview preparation. Call a few days before any interview to confirm your meeting and, whenever possible to arrange an "informal conversation" with someone who attended the specific graduate school. Identify logistics of the day. Know how many people you will be seeing and what to expect of your visit. Pre-interview research does not have to be completed covertly, so specifically ask “Is there information I should be reading?” And, you might also ask “Are there particular questions I should be thinking about prior to my interviews?” To build interview skills, practice with a friend, family member or, most importantly, a Career Center counselor. Don't memorize. Be yourself. Take a copy of your resume with you to the interview, with key points and achievement anecdotes clearly noted or highlighted. Cite by example and refer to your resume, stating “as noted on my resume” when appropriate. Don't be shy! Cite achievements with pride. Don't think there are "right" answers. When asked a "technical question," if you don't know the exact answer, talk the interviewer through how you would go about finding out the correct procedure. Ask questions when invited. Also, you should ask one or two questions early in the interview to gain clarification regarding job responsibilities. This will help throughout the conversation.

Each interview will be somewhat different, but you can use one technique to prepare for all discussions. Before each interview complete the Pre-Interview Preparation Exercise. This will organize your thoughts and clearly identify what to highlight during the exchange. Using these notes, you will be focusing interview power specifically on the graduate school target associated with the specific conversation. Review your notes prior to and use them during the interview. Don't be distracted by this “interview worksheet,” but do refer to it during your discussions.

When an interviewer refers to your resume or your past history as a point of reference to inspire questions, do the same by stating “as you can see on my resume or as noted in my original email, or cover letter.” Never interview without a copy of your resume to use as a reminder of your qualifications. Bring extra copies with you to offer interviewers or others you might meet. In response to questions, do state or allow your internal voice to focus your thoughts on the phrase “thinking about this research experience.” These words verbally or internally preceding your response do inspire you to “connect” past achievements and general qualities to “specific requirements.”

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Gwen M. Greene Career and Internship Center

Our goal is for you to articulate and attain your goals

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3 PROGRAM QUALITIES

Note 3 qualities of the particular research experience you will be interviewing for.
Review the department's website and researcher's profile or biography in detail, and then briefly summarize “general” as well as “unique qualities” of the natural, medical, social science or humanities research you will be doing. What traits would be required to excel in this setting and needed to succeed in any special research roles? What skills as well as attitudes would be required to succeed here? The more clearly and concisely you can describe the program's key characteristics as well as unique offerings, the better.

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3 QUALIFICATION CONNECTIONS

Focusing on the research experience, cite 3 key points that make you qualified.
Review your resume qualification summary. Then identify three key points to focus on during your conversation. Identify courses, projects or volunteer experiences, and reveal academic, intellectual, practical and “motivational” qualifications to excel within research support roles. “Connections” are qualities you possess and expressed, or achievements matching program qualifications. Simply, you are completing the statement “Thinking about what it would take to succeed as a researcher assistant here, my three key assets are . . . ” or “Thinking about becoming a student researcher, three key points I want to raise during this discussion are . . . “

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3 STAR (Situation, Tasks, Actions and Results) EXAMPLES

Note 3 anecdotes that illustrate your capabilities to STAR in this research setting.
Stories should support the three Qualifications Connections, linking skills used to take goal directed actions and, ultimately to achieve results or finish a project. First, broadly describe the situation. Then, identify specific task, actions, and results associated with your accomplishments. Be prepared to cite by example, tell anecdotes and describe past behaviors that predict future performance potential.

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3 INTERVIEWER QUESTIONS

List 3 questions you would like to ask the interviewer.
Ask one question in the first 5 minutes of the interview in order to use response as the discussion progresses. Prepare a list of additional questions to ask during and at the end of the interview session.

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