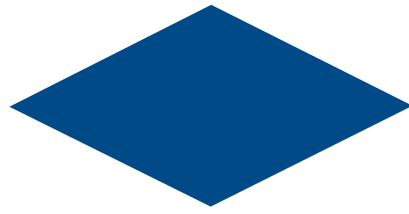
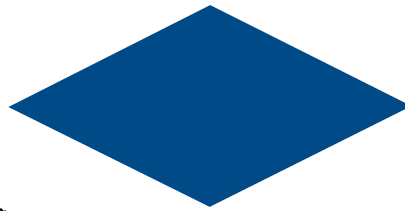




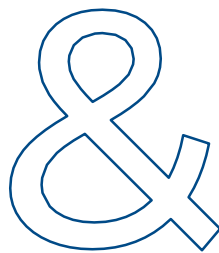
JOHNSON & WALES  
UNIVERSITY



# INTERVIEWING GUIDEBOOK



EXPERIENTIAL  
EDUCATION



CAREER  
SERVICES

**HIREJWU**  
powered by *Handshake*



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## DID YOU KNOW?

At least 55% of employers are already using video interviewing software as part of their hiring process. We can help you prepare. Contact an Experiential Education & Career Services advisor today!

# JWU Interview Preparation Checklist

1. Dress appropriately starting from the hair to the feet. Be professional, confident, and look your best. First impressions are lasting impressions.
2. Get adequate rest the night before! The evening prior to an interview is not the time to go out and celebrate an event!
3. Conduct research on a company by exploring their website and following them on social media. Check their news feeds, and look for news announcements such as new products, stock prices, or new hires.
4. Utilize LinkedIn and research the individuals who will be interviewing you. Look for commonalities or information about the company on their LinkedIn profile.
5. Provide a firm handshake while looking straight into the interviewer's eyes and smiling at them.
6. If you buy new clothes for your interview try them out not try them on! Can you sit comfortably? Do your shoes hurt? You don't want minor discomforts distracting you or the interviewer during the interview.
7. Bring a pen, notebook and several copies of your resume.
8. Never say anything negative about anyone you have worked with or for in the past.
9. Display interest, enthusiasm, passion, and confidence without appearing overly eager or desperate for the job.
10. Watch your body language. Maintain good posture, leaning slightly forward indicates interest. Maintain eye contact without staring.
11. Don't focus so much on what you want to say that you lose track of what the other person is saying.
12. Don't jump in to fill in the words when someone pauses in the middle of their sentence. This is where you need outstanding listening skills.
13. Avoid poor communication skills paying special attention to dictation and grammar (such as using slang words or inappropriate language).
14. Do not discuss salary on the first interview. If salary is important, research online what the industry average pay is. Consider taking the job for the experience and not the money.
15. Ask for the interviewer's business card so you can send a written personal thank you note, email or both.
16. Practice interviewing with *Big Interview*, or through a mock interview with an advisor in EE&CS. Discover mannerisms such as nervous habits like head scratching, playing with a ring, failure to maintain eye contact, or speech patterns like uhs, ums and you-knows.
17. Do not forget to clean up your digital dirt! The Vegas rule of "What happens here stays here" does not apply!
18. Know why you want to work for that company.
19. Know what relevant skills you have to offer.

# Interviewing Tips

## What Interviewers Look For

- Positive attitude
- Appearance: physical appearance, neatness, posture, & dress
- Maturity: social behavior and emotional stability
- Sociability: ability to work and get along with others
- Self-Expression: ability to express thoughts clearly, concisely & effectively
- Motivation: initiative, drive, enthusiasm, energy, & desire to succeed

## Phone, Video and Interview Tips

- When scheduling your phone or video interview, ensure that you are in a quiet environment
- Answer the phone with a smile and speak clearly
- Be prepared to answer the same in-depth questions that would be asked in an in-person interview
- Have your resume handy as a reference
- Listen carefully
- Take a moment when answering a question to provide a thoughtful answer
- Center yourself in the frame of the video, and look straight into the camera while answering the questions

## Tips for Conveying Confidence

- An interview is centered on the subject you know best—YOU!
- Know your strengths and own your weaknesses
- Don't over verbalize; be brief, to the point
- Be positive
- Keep your doubts to yourself
- Don't worry about failure
- Trust yourself to react properly
- Preparation is the key to overcoming nervousness
- Combat nervousness by relaxing your muscles and getting enough sleep the night before the interview

## What Not to Do

- Don't forget to bring your Reference sheet to an interview (make sure you get permission to use your references!)
- Don't be overconfident and boastful
- Don't act desperate to get the job
- Don't show a lack of enthusiasm/interest
- Don't chew gum; smell like smoke
- Don't emphasize salary or location over interest in the job
- Don't glorify your past experience
- Don't speak negatively
- Don't expect too much too soon; be prepared to take an entry-level position
- Avoid discussing politics and religion

## – CAREER CLOSET –

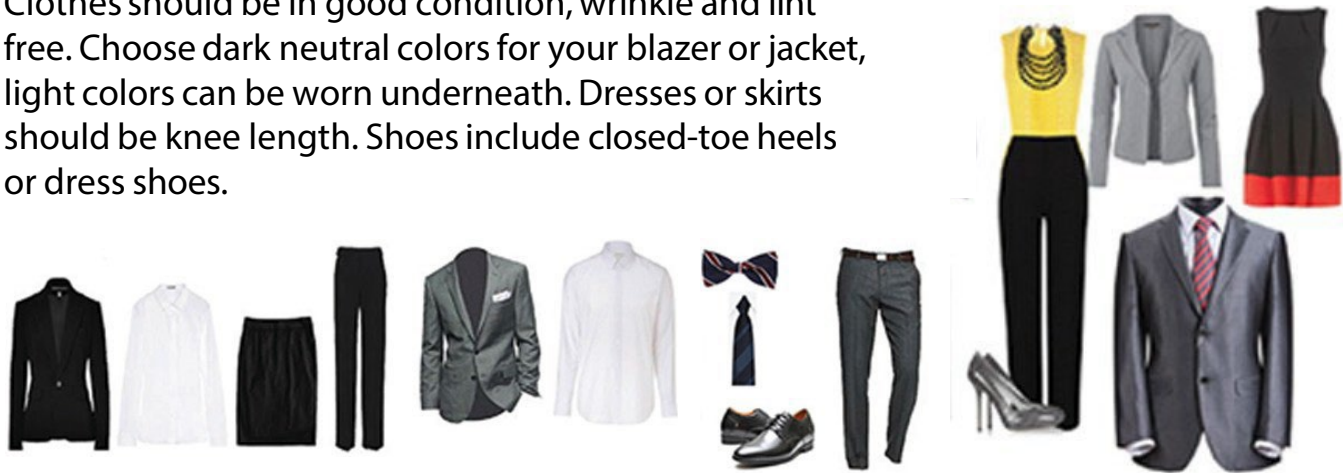
Need help with professional attire?  
Visit our **free** career closet and we'll help you  
look your best!

# Professional Dress and Grooming

Professional appearance is a critical part of your professional image. How you look tells an employer a lot about your personal pride. We recommend you dress for your interviews in business professional attire as noted below.

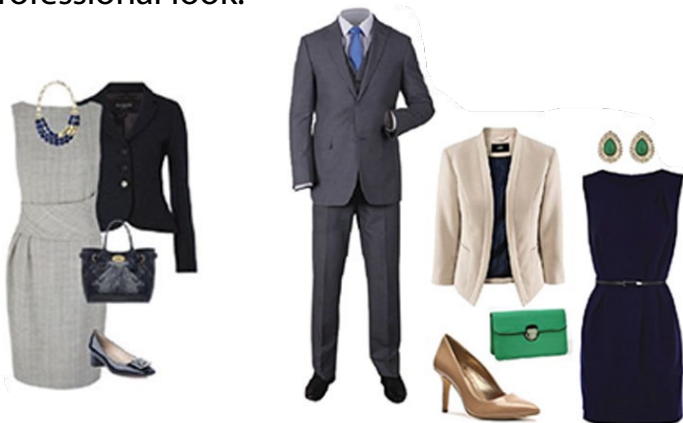
## BASIC WARDROBE STAPLES AND ACCENT PIECES

Clothes should be in good condition, wrinkle and lint free. Choose dark neutral colors for your blazer or jacket, light colors can be worn underneath. Dresses or skirts should be knee length. Shoes include closed-toe heels or dress shoes.



## FINISHED LOOKS

Accessories like earrings, watches, purses and ties can be matched with shoes and attire. Look in the mirror to make sure everything goes well together, and that you are confident with your professional look.



## DON'T'S

Don't wear sneakers, jeans, polos, or any other casual attire. Accessories and fragrances should be light. Do not wear revealing clothing, and ensure piercings and tattoos are aligned to company culture.



**NOTE:** More companies are relaxing their dress codes. Do your research and ensure you are dressed for the interview aligned with the culture of that company. For instance the finance world is typically conservative professional dress while a design studio may be casual. You want to ensure you are never underdressed and sometimes not being overdressed is also important.

# Behavioral Questions

What are they looking for?



## Adaptability

- Is responsive, resourceful and versatile to changing demands and challenges
- Works cooperatively with others when implementing initiatives

## Question Examples

1. Tell me about the most challenging change you've faced at work.
2. Describe a time you had to be flexible in order to solve a difficult problem. What specific steps did you take to maintain your flexibility?

## Customer Focus

- Talks and acts with customers' best interest
- Establishes and maintains effective relationships with customers and gains their trust and respect

## Question Examples

1. Tell me about a time that you had to address an angry customer. What was the problem? Describe the steps you took to defuse the situation. What was the outcome?
2. Describe a time when you had to educate your customer about a new product. Give me details on how you made this happen.

## Drive for Results

- Able to accomplish personal goals in cooperation with team/department goals
- Sets high standards for self and others; maintains positive outlook and "can do" attitude

## Question Examples

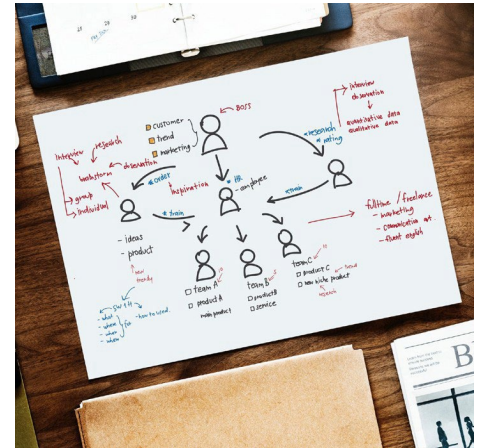
1. Tell me about a time when you had to go above and beyond the call of duty in order to get a job done. What did you do & what was the outcome?
2. What's an example of an important goal that you set in the past; tell me about your success in reaching it?

Practice answering Behavioral Questions using the S.T.A.R. Method

**S**ituation  
**T**ask  
**A**ction  
**R**esult

# Behavioral Questions

## What are they looking for?



### Action Oriented

- Completes assignments and key responsibilities on a timely basis
- Assumes responsibility for actions and contributions to the business

### Question Examples

1. Give me an example of a time when you had to meet a challenging/aggressive timeline on a project. What actions did you take to meet the deadline? What happened?
2. It's often very difficult to prioritize projects, activities and responsibilities. Tell me about a time when you made a mistake in prioritizing your responsibilities. What happened?

### People/Team Development

- Able to transfer skills and personal knowledge to others
- Develops relationships with peers, direct reports, and superiors based on mutual trust and respect

### Question Examples

1. Tell me about your methods for keeping your manager/team members advised of your progress?
2. Give me your best example of working cooperatively as a team member to accomplish an important goal. What was the goal or objective? What was your role in achieving this objective?

### Handling Complexity/Using Good Judgment

- Works on most important business priorities
- Is able to distinguish assumptions from facts

### Question Examples

1. Give me an example of a good decision you have made in a work situation. What did you do and why was it a good decision? What was the result of your decision?

**Want to ace your next interview?**

Book a mock interview with an advisor today!

## Be Prepared for these Questions:

### Their Question.

- **Tell me about yourself?**
- **What are your greatest strengths?**
- **What are your greatest weaknesses?**
- **Where do you see yourself five years from now?**
- **Describe a situation when you worked on a team project where members disagreed with each other or were not doing their fair share?**

### What they are really asking.

- **What makes you qualified for the job? Why should we hire you?**  
Tip: Prepare several selling points about yourself. Give a quick elevator speech that overviews your experiences and achievements these past four years at Johnson & Wales University.
- **How do you perceive your talents and abilities that would be an asset to our organization?**  
Tip: Did you excel at a job or in a class? How would your boss or teacher describe you? Think of several relevant adjectives to describe yourself and give examples of how you've demonstrated those strengths.
- **How honest and realistic are you being about yourself?**  
Tip: Present your weakness as a positive and don't talk too long or emphasize your downfalls. Give examples that focus on weaknesses you've learned from.
- **Are you committed to staying here for a while?**  
Tip: Be aware that they will not hire someone who will be around only for a year or two. Show flexibility and eagerness to learn new things. Express your interest in doing the current job to the best of your abilities, and hope to continue advancing within the company.
- **Prior to going to a higher authority, did you have the necessary leadership skills to rectify the situation.**  
Tip: The interviewer is interested in hearing that you worked with other student(s)/colleague(s) to discuss the problem and possible solution. After giving the individual an opportunity to rectify the problem and still nothing happens; then the situation needs to be addressed to a higher authority.



Supplement your mock interview skills online using *Big Interview*:  
[www.link.jwu.edu/jobs & internships/Big Interview/practice video interviewing](http://www.link.jwu.edu/jobs&internships/BigInterview/practicevideointerviewing)



## Always Have Questions for the Interviewer:

### Your Question.

- **What are you looking for in the ideal candidate for this position?**
- **How would you describe your management style?**
- **What do you like best about working for this organization?**
- **What would you like to see happen six to twelve months after you hire a person for this position?**
- **Is there anything you are still wondering about my candidacy that might keep you from offering me the position? Is there anything I can further clarify?**
- **What is the average length of time employees stay with the organization?**
- **What types of formal training or on the job training does the organization provide?**
- **What is the next step in this process?**

### Why you are really asking.

- For the opportunity to counter by adding particular skills or qualities that you left out of the interview.
- To gain insight into whether you might get along well with this company.
- To gain insight into the culture of the organization and this allows the person answering the question to feel good.
- For clues regarding whether or not the expectations for the job are realistic.
- To show you are open to feedback or critique. It shows the employer you want every opportunity to reassure him/her that you would be a great employee.
- To let them know that you are not a "job hopper".
- To let them know you are interested in improving your skills.
- To let them know you are interested in the position.

Practice answering these questions in a mock interview.

To schedule your appointment go to [link.jwu.edu](https://link.jwu.edu) > Jobs & Internships > Handshake > Appointments > Schedule a New Appointment

# Sample Thank You Email

Your Name  
Your Email Address  
Your Phone Number

Date

Contact Name  
Contact Title  
Company Name  
Company Address

**NOTE:** While you can send your thank you as a letter or note, in today's fast-paced world, sending an email ensures your thank you gets seen quickly.

Dear Mr./Ms. Contact Last Name:

It was a pleasure interviewing with you on [date] for the [title] position. Spending that time with you has made me even more interested in working at [Company Name] when I graduate in [graduation date].

The information you shared with me regarding {reference to interview questions} was relevant to what I am looking for in an employment opportunity. The interview process reinforced my belief that this is a company I would be proud to work for. I am very interested in pursuing this opportunity further.

Please contact me at {phone number with area code} if I can answer any further questions regarding my education, experience, or intentions.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Your Signature

Your Name

**NOTE:** this is just a sample. Write yours in your own words. Remember to keep the tone professional. Referring to something (good/interesting) that you discussed during the interview is a good way of having the recruiter remember you.

## How long should you wait prior to following up on your interview status?

Wait at least 7-10 days. If the interviewer gave you a date they would contact you and you haven't heard from them you can call them back to inquire the day after you expected a call.

# Mock Interview Rubric

	<b>Excellent interview: You should get a job offer!</b>	<b>Average interview: You could get called back but it is not certain.</b>	<b>Interviewing skills need significant improvement: You would not get this job.</b>
<b>First Impressions</b>	Your appearance is professional –you are wearing a business suit. You greet and shake hands with your interviewer correctly. Your conversation is enthusiastic and engaging.	You look nice but you do not wear a suit. Your greeting is appropriate but you forget to shake hands with your interviewer. Your conversation is enthusiastic and engaging.	Your attire is not professional—you wear jeans or shorts to this interview. You do not greet or shake hands when you meet your interviewer. Your conversation is not energetic.
<b>Interview Content</b>	You are knowledgeable about the organization and position you are interviewing for. You display poise and confidence. You relate your skills to the job very well.	You are knowledgeable about the position but not the organization you are interviewing with. You display adequate confidence in your answers. You state your skills but do not adequately relate them to the job.	You are not knowledgeable about the position or organization you are interviewing with. You are not confident in answering questions about yourself. You do not state the skills you have to do this job.
<b>Interview Skills/Techniques</b>	You have excellent eye contact with your interviewer without staring. Your language and grammar is appropriate. You do not use “um or and”. You speak at the appropriate speed.	You have adequate eye contact with your interviewer. Your language and grammar are adequate. You say “um or and” a few times, but not enough to disrupt the interview. You talk a little too fast or too slow.	You look at the floor or ceiling when speaking. Your grammar and language are not appropriate. You say “um or and” too many times. You talk too fast or too slow.
<b>Closing</b>	You successfully convey your interest in this position. You ask appropriate questions to the interviewer. You thank the interviewer.	You convey some interest in the position. You are not prepared to ask any questions. You thank the interviewer.	You do not show any interest in this position. You do not ask any questions. You do not thank the interviewer.

# FOLLOW THESE STEPS TO SUCCESS:

# 1

Book a mock interview with an advisor

# 2

Practice your video interview skills using Big Interview

# 3

Plan your attire. Visit our career closet for free professional attire.



## CONNECT WITH US!

### Experiential Education & Career Services

The Yena Center, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor  
(401) 598-1070  
M-F 8:30am - 4:30pm



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