

# Interviewing for **IMPACT**

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Career Guide

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THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

# INTERVIEW GUIDE

Strategies to help you *land the position*.

Ways to get people interested in *connecting* with you.

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| <b>Table of Contents</b>                     |       |
|--|-------|
| <b>Getting Started</b>                       | 2     |
| Understanding the Interview Process          | 2     |
| Common Types of Interviews                   | 2     |
| <b>Interview Nuts &amp; Bolts</b>            | 3     |
| Preparing for the Phone Interview            | 3     |
| Preparing for the Skype Interview            | 4     |
| Preparing for the In-Person Interview        | 5-6   |
| <b>How to Craft Your Interview Responses</b> | 7     |
| STAR Method                                  | 7     |
| CCAR Method                                  | 8     |
| <b>Commonly Asked Interview Questions</b>    | 9-10  |
| <b>Questions to Ask the Interviewer</b>      | 11    |
| <b>After the Interview</b>                   | 12    |
| Thank You Letter or Email                    | 12    |
| Thank You Letter Template                    | 12    |
| Sample Thank You Letters                     | 13-18 |

# GETTING STARTED

## Understanding The Interview Process

### What do employers want to accomplish?

As a result of the interview, employers want to **answer the following**:

#### Are you qualified for the position?

- Does your educational and professional background, including acquired knowledge and skills, align with the position requirements?
- Do your past experiences provide you with transferable skills needed for the role?
- Can you adjust to change and adapt to a new environment?

#### Will you complete the tasks the job requires?

- Does the organization align with your career goals?
- Are you a motivated person who is eager to conquer new assignments and tasks?
- Are you willing to learn on the job?

#### Will you fit into the team or organization?

- Are you a team player?
- What is your ideal supervision style?
- How do you respond to feedback? Criticism?
- Do you have the skills needed to build and maintain relationships with others?

#### What makes you stand out in comparison to other candidates?

- Does your resume highlight several experiences that will make you more memorable to the interviewer?
- Are you a genuine person who cares about the position and/or organization?

## Common Types of Interviews

*Depending on the type, level, and grade of the position to which you are applying, each employer will have his or her own way of choosing a person to fill a vacancy. Below are sample interview types that you can anticipate. Use the information below to help you prepare for your next interview.*

### **The Preliminary or Screening Interview:**

*Not always used in the interview process, but it is an easy way for employers and/or hiring agents to screen their candidate pool. Skype and phone interviews are most common; however, each can serve as a regular interview as well.*

- **Telephone:** Used to determine if a candidate meets the minimum requirements before extending an offer to an on-site interview
- **Skype:** Can be used to narrow down the applicant pool while saving travel time and costs

### **The In-Person Interview**

*For some this may follow a screening interview; for others this is your round one interview. The style used will vary as will the number of times an organization asks its candidates to interview.*

- **One-on-one:** A single interviewer will interview one candidate
- **Panel:** More than one person interviews the candidate at the same time
- **Group:** A group of candidates are interviewed by a panel or an interviewer
- **Meal:** A candidate is interviewed while eating, usually over lunch
- **Working:** The applicant is given a task to perform and is observed and assessed by an employer or hiring agents
- **Behavioral Interview:** Can be conducted in a variety of styles such as the one-on-one or panel set-up. Involves a series of questions focused around the logic that past behavior predicts future behavior.
- **Case Interview:** Detail-specific interview in which an applicant's ability to handle complex problems is assessed.

## INTERVIEW NUTS & BOLTS

### *Preparing for the Phone Interview*

Check off that you completed the following



|   |   |
|---|---|
| <b>Determine Your Availability</b>                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Schedule the interview for a time when you can give the hiring agent or manager <b><i>your full, undivided attention.</i></b></li> <li>▪ The length of the interview will vary. <b><i>Block off extra time before/after</i></b> to leave time to prep and for questions you may have.</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Preparation Research &amp; Take Thorough Notes</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Thoroughly <u>review</u> the position description.</li> <li>▪ <u>Highlight the words that are repeated</u> within the document and make notes on how your current experiences and accomplishments target the position qualifications.</li> <li>▪ Research the organization ahead of time using the <u>organization's website, Google, and LinkedIn</u> account if applicable.</li> </ul>                       |
| <b>Dress for Success</b>                              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ To put yourself in an interview mindset, it is recommended that you wear some type of <b><i>business attire.</i></b></li> </ul>  |
| <b>Have a Greeting Prepared</b>                       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Answer the phone by stating your <u>first and last name</u>. This lets the caller know exactly with whom they are speaking, and enables him/her to clearly hear how to pronounce your name.</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Be Prepared with Notes and Questions</b>           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Have <b><i>notes</i></b> on the organization, a copy of your <b><i>resume</i></b>, and the <b><i>job description</i></b> by the phone. Use these documents to help organize your thoughts and to <b><i>prepare questions</i></b> to ask the employer at the end of the interview.</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Embrace Silences</b>                               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ During the interview, <u>the interviewer will be taking notes.</u></li> <li>▪ Do not be surprised if it takes a minute in between your responses for the person on the other line to get organized. <u>Wait to speak!</u></li> <li>▪ Use these pauses to <u>collect yourself</u> and <u>prepare</u> for the next question.</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Pause &amp; Ask Questions</b>                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Before you respond to a question, <b><i>think!</i></b></li> <li>▪ Responses should be <b><i>clear, concise</i></b> and <b><i>highlight your skills and abilities.</i></b></li> <li>▪ Refrain from using the non-words "like," "ah," or "um" to fill silence.</li> <li>▪ <b><i>Do not be afraid to pause</i></b> and ask for clarification if necessary.</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Be Positive</b>                                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Whenever possible, <u>smile!</u> The positive energy and enthusiasm you express will be augmented in your voice.</li> <li>▪ Due to the nature of a phone interview, it's important to "turn up" your personality to make sure it is conveyed as well as it would be in person.</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Close with a Verbal and Written Thank-you</b>      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Close by thanking the person(s) for their time and consideration.</li> <li>▪ <b><i>Reaffirm your interest</i></b> in the position and <b><i>highlight the attributes you would contribute</i></b> to the company or organization if hired.</li> <li>▪ After the interview is finished, <b><i>send a thank you letter by e-mail that evening</i></b> to again outline your interest in the position.</li> </ul> |

**Preparing for the Skype Interview**  
Check off that you completed the following



|  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>Set the Scene</b>                                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Use your background to <u>establish a professional atmosphere</u>.</li> <li>▪ Look for a quiet space that is <u>warm, inviting, and not too busy</u>.</li> <li>▪ To avoid the interviewer(s) from getting distracted by your background, position yourself in front of a <u>blank wall</u>.</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Conduct a Trial Run</b>                             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Test your <b>webcam, speakers, microphone, and internet connection</b> ahead of time.</li> <li>▪ Check the computer camera height.</li> <li>▪ To practice and to confirm that your technology is working properly, <b>have a friend or family member Skype you</b>.</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Dress for Success</b>                               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Wear an outfit that would be acceptable for an in-person interview.</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Professional Body Language is Key</b>               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ To convey yourself well: maintain <b>good posture, speak slowly and clearly</b>, and <b>lean in</b> toward your webcam to show interest. Place your <b>computer on a flat surface</b> and <b>sit in an up-right chair</b>.</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Look at the Camera, not the Screen!</b>             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Eye contact shows that <u>you are focused and prepared</u>.</li> <li>▪ Staring directly at the camera <u>prevents the interviewer from thinking you are constantly looking away from the screen</u> and will help <u>refrain you from getting distracted by your own image</u>.</li> <li>▪ To help avoid staring at your own image on the computer screen, <u>cover your image with a post-it note</u>.</li> <li>▪ Make sure all other <u>computer applications and programs</u> are <u>closed</u> so you do not get distracted during the interview.</li> </ul> |
| <b>Plan for Technological Difficulties</b>             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Plug your computer into a <b>power outlet</b>, and keep your <b>phone on hand</b> in case the interview mode changes at the last minute.</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Take Advantage of the Distance</b>                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <u>Keep your resume and/or notes in front of you</u> to help answer any questions the interviewer(s) may ask.</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Prepare Questions Ahead of Time</b>                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Following the interview, the employer will ask you what questions you have about the position or the organization.</li> <li>▪ To impress the employer, <b>ask thorough questions</b> that will help you <b>gain insights to the daily operations of the position and company culture</b>.</li> <li>▪ See page 11 for examples.</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Be Cognizant of How you are Presenting Yourself</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ To the best of your ability, remember to <u>breathe, smile, and let your personality shine</u>.</li> <li>▪ Be <u>honest</u> with the interviewer(s), especially if this is your first time doing a Skype interview!</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Close with a Verbal and Written Thank-you</b>       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Close by thanking the person(s) for their time and consideration.</li> <li>▪ <b>Reaffirm your interest</b> in the position as well as <b>highlight the attributes you would contribute</b> to if hired.</li> <li>▪ After the interview is finished, <b>send a thank you letter by e-mail that evening</b> to again outline your interest in the position.</li> </ul>   |

**Preparing for the On-Site Interview**  
 Check off that you completed the following



|  |                                   |  |
|--|-----------------------------------|--|
|  | <b>Know Your Resume</b>           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Use this document to <b><i>talk up your skills</i></b>, the knowledge you have gained, and the relevant projects and other tasks that you helped develop.</li> </ul>  |
|  | <b>Research the Company</b>       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Learn as much as you can about the culture of the organization and the employer <u>through the organization’s website, Google, and the organization’s LinkedIn account</u>.</li> </ul>  |
|  | <b>Be Prepared with Questions</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The job description provides an overview of the position; however, <b><i>it does not include everything</i></b>.</li> <li>▪ Come to the interview prepared with <b><i>a list of questions</i></b> about the nature of the position, company environment, and daily operational functions (see page 11 for sample questions).</li> <li>▪ <b><i>This is your opportunity to show the employer that you have done your homework!</i></b></li> </ul>  |
|  | <b>Dress Professionally</b>       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ First impressions are a vital component to the interview process.</li> <li>▪ To make a positive statement about yourself, <u>follow the tips on page six</u>.</li> </ul>  |
|  | <b>Plan Ahead</b>                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Write down the employer’s name, address, and phone number.</li> <li>▪ Prior to your interview, <b><i>look up directions</i></b> to the interview site and determine how long it will take to commute.</li> <li>▪ If possible, <b><i>travel to the site ahead of time</i></b> to familiarize yourself with the area.</li> <li>▪ In advance of your interview, <b><i>pack your bag</i></b> or briefcase <b><i>with extra copies of your resume and business cards, a pad folio, and a couple working pens</i></b>.</li> </ul> |
|  | <b>Be Early and Friendly</b>      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <u>Arrive about fifteen minutes early</u>. If you are worried about being too early, find a local coffee shop to wait in.</li> <li>▪ Sitting in the lobby enables you to <u>get a sense of the organization’s environment</u> and gives you <u>additional time to review your notes and/or resume</u>.</li> <li>▪ <u>Treat everyone that you encounter with kindness</u>. Anyone from the secretary to maintenance worker may share their first impressions with the hiring manager.</li> </ul>                             |
|  | <b>Firm Handshake</b>             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Greet your interviewer(s) with a strong handshake.</li> <li>▪ This will most likely be the first interaction with the interviewer(s) and will <b><i>help set the tone</i></b>.</li> </ul>   |
|  | <b>Listen First, then Answer</b>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Avoid rambling and talking quickly by <u>speaking clearly and succinctly</u>.</li> <li>▪ <u>Take the time to pause</u> and think through each question fully.</li> <li>▪ Make sure to <u>smile, sit up straight, and maintain eye contact</u>.</li> <li>▪ Show <u>enthusiasm, confidence, and energy</u> toward the position.</li> </ul>  |

|  |  |   |
|--|--|---|
|  | <b>Do Not Forget to Ask Your Questions</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Use your research to show employers that you are interested in the position.</li> <li>▪ Focus on asking about the <i>position responsibilities</i>, the <i>culture of the company</i>, and the <i>expectations of the person who will fill the vacancy</i>.</li> </ul>   |
|  | <b>Collect Contact Information</b>         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Ask the all the individuals with whom you interviewed for their <u>business cards</u>.</li> <li>▪ This will help you to contact these individuals after the interview is finished to <u>send off thank you letters</u> and to <u>connect on social media sites</u> such as LinkedIn.</li> </ul>  |
|  | <b>Follow Up with a Thank You Note</b>     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Verbally thank the interviewers</b> for their time and consideration. <b>Reaffirm your interest</b> in the position and <b>highlight the attributes you would contribute</b> to the organization, if hired.</li> <li>▪ <b>That evening, send a thank you letter via e-mail</b> to all those who have interviewed you. If you are serious about the position, <b>consider following-up with a hand-written thank you</b> letter by standard mail outlining your interest in the position.</li> </ul> |

### Attire Quick Check:

Two-piece dark colored suit

- Appropriate colors: black, blue, gray
- Solid or very light conservative stripes
- Suit jackets are offered as single- or double-breasted. Select the style that fits your industry or personal style.

Crisp white or blue tailored shirt

Conservative tie that reaches mid belt

Polished shoes that match the color of your belt

Dark blue, black, grey or brown socks

- Match your suit - never wear white socks.

Remove body piercings, earrings and any obnoxious/flashy jewelry

Use cologne sparingly

Carry a portfolio folder or professional bag



Two-piece dark colored pants or knee-length skirt suit

- Wear neutral colored panty hose or dark tights if wearing a skirt

Crisp white or blue blouse, tailored shirt, or shell with conservative neckline

Polished, closed toe shoes with a low to moderate heel

- Try to avoid shoes with very high heels

No multiple earrings or gaudy jewelry

Use perfume and makeup sparingly

Nail polish should be a neutral color

Carry a portfolio folder, professional bag, or a simple conservative purse



Source: <http://careercenter.depaul.edu/resumes/interviewprep.aspx>

# How to Craft your Interview Responses

## The STAR and CCAR Methods

One of the best ways to *STAND OUT* at job interviews is to display confidence and superb communication skills. Giving direct, poignant responses and maintaining a consistent conversation flow will help you to make a positive first-impression with the interviewer(s). To help you practice crafting your responses, consider using the **STAR** or **CCAR** models. These are two common frameworks used to clearly and succinctly answer employer's questions. Review BOTH of these models below to find the one that works best for you!

### **The STAR Method:**

#### STAR stands for:

- **Situation** – Begin your story with a brief description of the situation (who, what, where, when, and how). When describing, be as specific as possible to give the interviewer enough detail to understand. Previous job experiences, volunteer opportunities, and other relevant events are items to highlight.
- **Task** – Next, explain the task you had to complete, or the goal toward which you were working. In this section, highlight any challenges or constraints you may have faced (example: deadlines, costs, uneven distribution of work, etc.).
- **Action** – Describe the specific actions that you took to complete the task. Highlight the action steps you took as well as the competencies you learned (leadership, organization, problem solving).
- **Result** – Finish your story by sharing the result(s) or outcome(s) of your efforts. To frame your response, you should be able to answer the following: What happened? What did you accomplish? What did you learn? What would you change in the future? If possible, include numbers to quantify the result (example: increased response output by 60% through streamlining the use of correspondence software).

#### STAR Example:

| Step             | Response   |
|------------------|--|
| <b>Situation</b> | From August 2012 to June 2013, I served as one of 300 state of California AmeriCorps volunteers.   |
| <b>Task</b>      | My goal was to recruit at-risk high school youth from grades 9-12 at Kaynor Tech, and to engage them in after school volunteer opportunities to increase youth academic achievement, civic engagement, and pro-social behavior . These included: weekly visits to a local nursing home, running afterschool programs for third and fourth grade students at two elementary schools, and participating in ongoing community-wide events.  |
| <b>Action</b>    | In this role I worked with a guidance counselor to recruit and monitor students' academic attendance, behavior, and achievement. Throughout the course of the academic year, I also oversaw the implementation of Service Learning Projects on topics including oral hygiene, nutrition, and emergency preparedness. By applying for and receiving the StateFarm Good Neighbor Grant, a \$1000 fund, I was able to support these Service Learning Projects. In this manner, I effectively introduced youth and families to various public health careers and established volunteer opportunities for students in this professional area. |
| <b>Result</b>    | As a result of these steps, all twenty-one participating high school students completed more than 75 hours of service in an 8 month period, and eleven of those students received the Presidential Service award for completing more than 200 hours of volunteer service.  |

## The CCAR Method:

### CCAR stands for:

- **Context:** Begin your story by providing the employer with some context regarding your past experience and its requirements. Items to stress include your job title, the role you played (leader, manager, team member, organizer, teacher, etc.), and the timeline of the project or situation which you faced.
- **Challenge:** If applicable, describe any specific obstacles that you had to overcome. Identify the challenge and explain the impact it could have made on the outcome of the project if it was not remedied.
- **Action:** Describe the actions you took to solve the problem or to create new opportunities. In this part of your response you should be able to answer these questions: what efforts did you contribute that made an impact on the problem? What specific steps did you take? What did you learn from the experience?
- **Result:** Highlight the outcome of your action steps and explain how the organization benefited. Again, try to quantify your results if possible with facts and figures (example: as a result of the new software program, the company saved \$445/month).

### CCAR Example:

| Step      | Response  |
|-----------|---|
| Context   | When I started my position at the US Department of Education as Management and Program Analyst, one of my main responsibilities was to manage and provide technical support to over 50 federal grants including Ready to Learn, Teaching American History, and Teacher Quality Partnerships Programs. |
| Challenge | The federal grants ranged in value from \$3 - \$50 million dollars, and I was in charge of providing annual funding recommendations to senior leaders by conducting regular budgetary and performance measurement reviews of grantees.  |
| Action    | To carry out this process, I organized and planned grant competitions for nearly 500 applicants. This included recruiting over 400 peer reviewers, creating reviewer training materials and FAQ sheets, and answering public inquiries.   |
| Result    | I worked in conjunction with the peer reviewers to select 30 applicants to receive federal financial support for their projects.  |



**BE PREPARED!** Use these frameworks to think about how you could highlight your past experiences. Then, **PRACTICE** your responses aloud in front of a mirror, with a friend, or by using Interview Stream: <http://tspppa.gwu.interviewstream.com/>.

# COMMONLY ASKED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

## **Getting Started Questions:**

- Walk me through your resume. What led you to a Masters of Public Policy/Administration? Why did you chose The George Washington University?
- What skills have you learned at the Trachtenberg School, and how can you apply those skills in this position?
- What is the most important thing you have learned from a specific class or specific work experience?
- What is your preferred working style? How do you learn best?
- Why do you want to work here? What would you expect to find the most satisfying about this job?
- What would you expect to be the most challenging?
- What do you hope to learn or gain from this experience?

## **Behavioral Questions:**

- Tell me about a problem you had to solve or an obstacle you had to overcome in your work experience or in your coursework. How did you go about it? In retrospect, what would you have done differently?
- Core competencies of our organization are achieving results, thinking critically, presenting information, and working with others. Give examples of your abilities/skills in these areas.
- Talk about a time when you may have worked on a project and your supervisor failed to provide much direction for the project. What did you do?
- Tell me about a time you had to speak in public. How did you prepare for the presentation?
- Tell me about a group project where one of the group members was difficult to work with or did not pull his/her weight. How did you handle this?

## **Career/Professional Development Questions:**

- What are your career goals, and how does this position align with your professional objective?
- Are you currently applying and looking at other opportunities?
- How are you different from every other MPA candidate who has applied?
- What are you least excited about doing in this position? How would you tackle the tasks that you do not enjoy doing?
- In what ways will this role help you stretch your professional capabilities?
- What is one area in which your last supervisor would suggest you gain more training or exposure?
- Where do you see yourself five years from now?

## **Salary Questions:**

- Tell me about your salary history.
- What is your salary expectation if offered this position?

## **Brainteaser/ Unexpected Questions:**

- Describe an event in your life that has had a major impact on you.
- Tell me about a time in which you failed.
- If you don't get a job with this agency, what will you do?
- Have you had a person who acted as a mentor at some point in your life? Tell me about him/her.
- Why have you had so many jobs in such a short period of time?
- What does it mean to be successful? According to your definition, how successful have you been so far?

## **Additional Questions:**

- How would your best friend describe you?
- How do you handle stress?
- What tools or habits do you use to stay organized?
- In what ways do you raise the bar for yourself and others?
- Why do you want to leave your current organization?

## COMMONLY ASKED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS CONTINUED

### Public Policy and Public Administration Questions:

- What areas of public policy or administration particularly interest you? Why?
- Tell me what the most important item on your resume is and how it best represents your passion for public policy/administration.
- Describe your commitment to service.
- What research have you undertaken in the field of public policy/administration?
- What are some current policy issues in which you personally, if given the opportunity, would like to be involved?
- Tell me about your experience with quantitative and/or qualitative research. How comfortable are you working with large data sets?
- How will the policy analysis skills you gained as a graduate student be applicable to this position?
- Tell me about a time when you've had to manage a team? What was your approach?
- How do you approach managing a project? What is your process of ensuring that goals are met?
- What do you think are the traits that make a successful leader in public administration? Which of these do you embody?

### Health Care Field Questions:

- Tell me what brought you to pursue a career in healthcare.
- What experience have you had in the field?
- Which area of healthcare are you interested in?
- How will you use your educational background in this position?
- As an administrator, how would you reconcile business and humanitarian concerns regarding managed care?
- What are the qualities of management success in the healthcare industry?

### International Development Questions:

- How do you define effective international development?
- What experience do you have forming international and domestic partnerships?
- What motivates you to work in international development in the US or overseas?
- Describe your experience managing project budgets and supervising staff on an overseas development project: what problems did you encounter and how did you handle them?
- What experience do you have writing proposals or fundraising?
- Describe a time in which you obtained funding or reported on the progress of a project to an agency?

### Academic/Research Related Questions:

- Describe your research. Tell us about your research program. What are you working on currently? What do you plan to look at next?
- What audiences are you addressing; what are the other relevant books or scholars in your field, and how does your work compare with theirs?
- Can you explain the value of your work/research to an educated layperson?
- What are your plans for publishing?

### HOW TO APPROACH THE SALARY QUESTION?

- If possible, try to have the employer to give a salary figure first by responding that you are very interested in the position and want to know if there is a range budgeted for this role.
- If you must give an answer, be sure to:
  - **Do your research.** Learn what the average salary is for the position, field, and location in which you are applying.
  - **Give the employer a salary range** based on your experience and research of the average salaries.
- For more information reference additional materials on the Trachtenberg Career Services website.



## QUESTIONS TO ASK THE INTERVIEWER

**Following the interview the employer will leave time for you to ask your questions. Be prepared with some questions ahead of time:**

- Where do you see the organization heading in the next five years?
- What brought you (the interviewer) to your current position?
- What energizes and/or excites you the most about your current position within the organization?
- Describe for me some of the organization's and/or department's accomplishments.
- How would you describe the culture of the organization?
- How does the department align its goals and values to the mission of the organization?
- What, if any, professional development opportunities does the department provide for its employees?
- What would you consider to be the most important aspects of this job?
- What are the key skills and attributes needed for a successful applicant for this position?
- How can the person who fills this vacancy meet and exceed your expectations?
- How would you describe your management style?
- Are there opportunities for growth within the organization?
- What is a typical work day or week like for someone in this position?
- What have been the challenges, if any, faced by the person who last filled this role?
- How will I be evaluated by my supervisor, and how often?
- What does success look like for this position?
- What are the next steps in the interview process?



### **Why does this matter?**

Many people think that the interview is finished when the interviewer has finished asking all of his/her questions. **HOWEVER, *many interviewers draw conclusions about you based on the questions you ask—or don't ask.*** To give the impression that you are interested and invested in the organization, ask questions about the nature of the position, the organization, and the team culture.

## After The Interview

### The Thank You Note or Email

Within *twenty-four hours*, follow-up with a sincere and succinct thank you note or email addressed to everyone with whom you interviewed. In your letter, *be professional and genuine*. Personalize your thank you to **include** any **specific details you learned** and/or **connections you may have made** to make you more memorable. Above all, your thank you note or email should be free from grammatical errors and spelling mistakes. A good rule of thumb is to have a peer read over your letter before sending it to the interviewer(s).

### Thank You Letter Template

Your Name  
Your Address  
City, State, and Zip Code  
Phone Number  
Email Address

Date

Interviewer's Name  
Current Title/Position  
Organization Name  
Organization Address  
City, State, and Zip Code

Dear Mr./Ms. Last Name,

First Paragraph: Thank the employer for taking the time to interview you, and reaffirm your interest in the position and organization.

Optional Middle Paragraph(s) (1-2 additional BRIEF Paragraphs): Highlight the skills and attributes that you would bring to the organization if offered the position. Reiterate the important qualities that a successful candidate in the position would hold and explain how you will fill these needs. If you forgot to highlight an important quality during the interview or want to clarify a connection you've made, include it in these middle paragraphs.

Final Paragraph: Thank the interviewer again, restate your interest in the position, and express your interest in speaking with the interviewer in the future regarding the vacancy.

Sincerely,

Your Signature

Your Name (Typed)

## Example Thank you Letters

### *Sample One:*

Rebecca E. Wells  
122 King Street  
Alexandria, VA 22206  
p. 202-333-2222  
e. [rwells@gwu.edu](mailto:rwells@gwu.edu)

May 13, 2013

Dr. Jessica Palmer  
*Director of World Learning*  
1015 15th St, NW  
Suite # 750  
Washington, DC 20005

Dear Dr. Palmer,

It was a pleasure meeting with you today and I appreciate you taking the time to share your insights and perspective.

I thoroughly enjoyed having the opportunity to learn about World Learning's priorities and future growth, as well as how you envision the Advancement Officer position supporting the continuation of the organization's success. Our conversations about service learning and professional development services for high school and undergraduate students, alumni relations, and national visibility reinforced my strong interest in this position.

I am confident that my background and skills are an ideal fit. In hearing more from everyone about the organizational culture, I know that World Learning is a place where I could contribute and thrive.

Thank you again!

Sincerely,

*Rebecca E. Wells*  
Rebecca E. Wells

## ***Sample Two: In-Person Interview Thank You***

Sara Servin  
2035 H Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20052  
p. 202-555-1245  
e. [sservin@gwu.edu](mailto:sservin@gwu.edu)

September 12, 2012

Meghan Hamel  
Executive Director  
Northwestern DC AHEC  
83 Prospect St  
Washington DC 20009

Dear Meghan:

It was terrific putting a face to a name today and having the opportunity to hear more of your insights about the Program Manager position at Northwestern DC Area Health Education Center!

I appreciated learning about your experiences when you yourself held this position and how the staff members are focused on helping each other succeed. The questions you and your team posed allowed me to share more of why I am drawn to serving as a Program Manager at Northwestern DC AHEC and to convey how my experiences are very much aligned with the responsibilities, expectations and organizational culture.

Thank you again for your time, perspective and energy!

Sincerely,

*Sara Servin*  
Sara Servin

### ***Sample Three: Phone Interview Thank You***

Tyler Howard  
2100 Foxhall Road, NW  
Washington, DC 20007  
Phone: 202-555-4545  
Email: howardt@gmail.com

November 10, 2013

Matthew Hutchinson  
United States Senator for Massachusetts  
2 Russell Courtyard  
Suite #554H  
Washington, DC 20512

Dear Mr. Hutchinson,

Thank you for taking the time to speak with me today about the Staff Assistant position. It was wonderful hearing from you, Paul Ryder, Marissa Lopez, and Laura Greenber to gain deeper insight into the US Senate and the desired qualifications for the Staff Assistant.

In knowing Paul for several years, I absolutely agree with your comment that he will have big shoes to fill, but it gets me excited thinking about the chance to build upon this strong foundation. As was asked today, while on paper this may seem like a lateral move, in actuality, the position offers me a new opportunity to focus my skills and experience on programming, and tracking legislation regarding banking, finance, tax, housing, trade and business issues on the structure and systems that Paul established. In addition, the way that the US Senate is positioned in the public service arena allows for different types of partnerships and programs that I would love to promote.

Finally, I also wanted to address further your answer today about a lack of staffing being one of the biggest challenges. Throughout my career, this is often a challenge I have faced at other organizations and one that I approach with creativity, resourcefulness, drive, humor and yes, some caffeine! I thrive on balancing multiple moving pieces and having a diverse workload, so I am confident in my ability to work with the staffing challenge.

Thank you again for your time - I would love to have the opportunity for an in-person interview with you and your team soon!

Sincerely,

*Tyler Howard*

Tyler Howard

**Sample Four:**

Meredith Richter  
2055 F Street, NE  
Washington, DC 20412  
Phone Number: 202-545-6633  
Email Address: meredith.richter@yahoo.com

February 7, 2013

Erik Eskilsen  
Assistant Professor  
The George Washington University  
2121 Eye Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20052

Dear Professor Eskilsen,

It was a pleasure meeting you today over lunch as part of my interview for the Graduate Intern position. I enjoyed speaking with you about my experiences and how they are in strong alignment with this position.

Thank you for sharing Trachtenberg's history and your insight into how the school is integrated within The George Washington University as it was very helpful to gain this past and present perspective! At this time, I remain very much interested in the position, and am looking forward to learning of your decision soon.

Sincerely,

*Meredith Richter*  
Meredith Richter

**Sample Five:**

Valerie Vargus  
223 M Street  
Washington, DC 20012  
Phone: 202-445-3355  
Email: valv34@gmail.com

March 27, 2013

Dr. Patricia Bergeron  
Director  
Center for Service and Civic Engagement  
The George Washington University  
2121 Eye Street  
Washington, DC 20052

Dear Dr. Bergeron,

It was such a pleasure meeting you today and also having you attend the afternoon presentation. From our University of Maine connection to your suggestion that I take my heels off for the presentation, I appreciated your energy and warmth!

Hearing this morning from you, Dr. Bergeron, about the goals and priorities for the Center for Service and Civic Engagement was incredibly helpful in providing perspective on the JumpStart Program Coordinator position. It reinforced my confidence in the alignment of my highly relevant background, knowledge and skills and how this could contribute to the Center for Service and Civic Engagement's continuing success.

To follow up with our conversation regarding the Peace Corps, my friend Jennifer Sweat is the Service Learning Coordinator. You may reach her at [jsweat@peacecorps.gov](mailto:jsweat@peacecorps.gov). I will let her know that you will be in touch.

Thank you again for your time, energy and insights!

Sincerely,

*Valerie Vargus*  
Valerie Vargus

**Sample Six:**

Joseph Louis  
43 Jill Road  
Apartment 22F  
Arlington, VA 21201

April 3, 2012

Lucy Crandel  
Executive Director  
Office of Global AIDS  
U.S. Department of State  
2201 C St NW  
Washington, DC 21004

Dear Ms. Crandel,

It was such a pleasure meeting you today during the staff panel! Thank you for taking the time out of your day for the interview and to share your perspectives on the Coordinator position within the Office of Global AIDS.

Having the opportunity to hear all of your insights into what makes the organization special, the role of Coordinator, and your hopes for the future was incredibly helpful. Our meeting reinforced everything I have been hearing about the U.S. Department of State community, which is very much aligned with who I am and what I could offer to the organization.

Connecting with all of the staff members today truly was a highlight and I loved hearing the research ideas that were shared. It would be wonderful to have the opportunity to bring these ideas to fruition to support the Office of Global AIDS!

Sincerely,  
*Joseph Louis*  
Joseph Louis