

A detailed botanical illustration background featuring various plants. In the top left, there are pink and purple flowers with green leaves. In the top right, there are white flowers with green leaves. In the bottom left, there is a large yellow flower with a dark red center and green leaves. In the bottom right, there is a yellow lemon on a branch with green leaves and a small white flower. The central text is framed by a white border.

How **not** to screw up a job interview

Jaya Nagarajan-Swenson



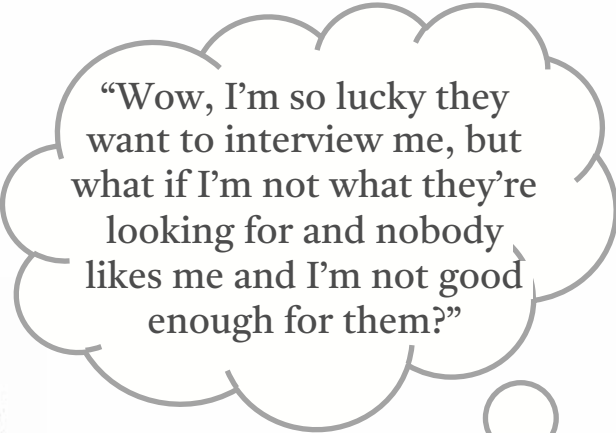
You **will** fail if you're unprepared

This presentation is about the best ways to prepare



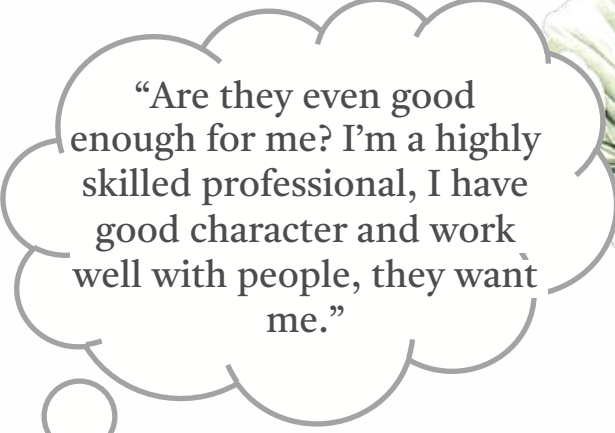
Mindset:

You wouldn't have gotten an interview if they didn't want you!




“Wow, I'm so lucky they want to interview me, but what if I'm not what they're looking for and nobody likes me and I'm not good enough for them?”

VS.



“Are they even good enough for me? I'm a highly skilled professional, I have good character and work well with people, they want me.”

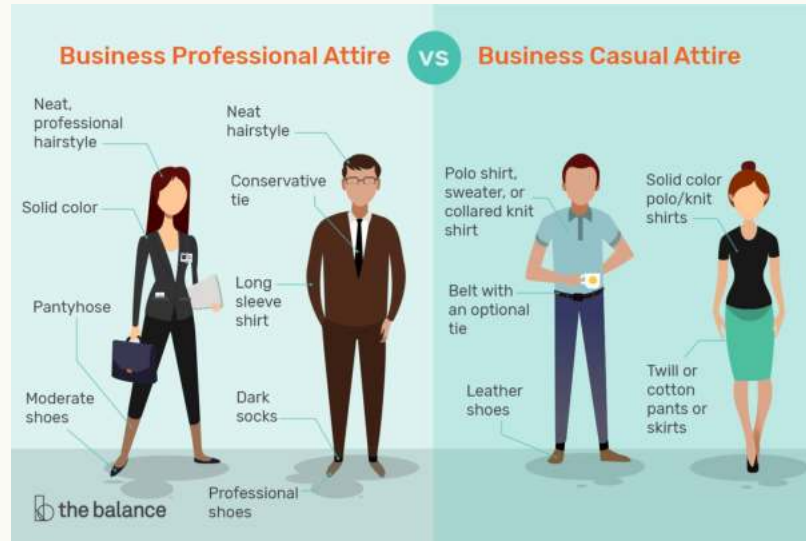




Looking good

No jammies ☹️ you should dress one level nicer than the employees there

Levels are: casual → business casual → business formal → formal



Research



The position

Especially if your first interview is a filtering one. Repeat the keywords from the description back to them in interesting ways! Script your answers to questions using these keywords.



The department / company / etc.

Google News is your friend. Use this research to inform the questions you ask them at the end of the interview.



Your interviewing team

You should know your audience well, because they inform the questions you get asked. Emphasize the stuff they do in your answers!

Preparing

Questions:

- Benefits, upward mobility
- What is the most important soft skill to be successful in this role?
- What is the onboarding process here like?
- How would you describe the culture here?
- What was your personal favorite day working here like, and why?
- (May I ask) why is this position vacant?
- Specific: I saw that X said Y. How does that impact the company culture?
- When can I expect to hear back from you?

Stories:

- A time you overcame an obstacle
- A time you achieved something at work
- A time you disagreed with a coworker
- A time you failed
- Etc etc etc




Preparing (2)

How to answer: “tell me about yourself!” (UGHHH)

NO: rambling, telling your whole life story, repeating your resume

YES: past, present, future.

1. Past: where you're from, education, prev experience.
 2. Present: what you're currently doing, how you feel about it.
 3. Future: ambitions, interests. Tie back to the position here!
- 



During the interview



Be on time

Plan for the worst parking ever or the bus getting stuck in traffic. Arrive ~10min early. Virtually, test wifi and check your lighting.



Be nice, don't talk smack

Even if your old employer SUCKED, approach critiques to them more as what didn't work for you.



Answer the questions!

Circle back to the question at the end of your rambling. (Better yet, don't ramble.)



PRACTICE

With someone who WILL roast you.



Resources

- Common questions: career.uconn.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/7/2014/12/common-academic-interview-questions.pdf
- Common mistakes, general: academicpositions.com/career-advice/the-nine-biggest-interview-mistakes
- Common mistakes, academic: enago.com/academy/academic-job-interview-mistakes-to-avoid/
- Academic interview strategies: apa.org/members/content/academic-job-strategies
- General career: advicewitherin.com