It was a mistake for Eric to wear a t-shirt to his job interview, and it was a bigger mistake to wear that particular t-shirt.

Acing the Interview

Katrina Cope, Career Adviser, UCSC Career Center

kcope@ucsc.edu
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AGENDA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Their questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Your questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Professional impression</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Follow-up</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Research Before Your Interview:

- Study the job description
- Research the organization/company
  Glassdoor & Career Shift-
  Resources in your Career Center
  SlugQuest account
- Utilize your network to talk
to someone in the organization
What you need to know...

- Type of clients?
- Service and/or products?
- Locations – regional/national/international?
- Size – how many employees?
- Competitors?
- Challenges they are facing?
- What’s the organization’s history, mission?
- 5 or 10-year plan?
- Recent news and/or achievements?
What Are Firms Looking For?

- Personality
- Communication skills
- Confidence
- Poise and leadership skills
- Career goals
- Good match for company culture
Types of Interviews

- One-on-one
- Panel
- Group – applicants for same position interviewed at the same time
- Skype
- Phone
- Second round
- Series interviews
- Lunch interview
Greeting the Interviewer

- Shake hands
- Good posture & head up
- Make eye contact & smile
- “Hello, my name is Mary Smith.
  (Say both of your names slowly & clearly.)
- “Hello Ms. Jones, I am pleased to meet you.”
What is an Elevator Speech?
- A 30-second advertisement of yourself!

Why do I need one?
- To be prepared to network anytime & anywhere

When could I use it?
- Interviews, job fairs, networking events, & elevators!
- For the “Tell me about yourself.” questions
Elevator Speech ideas:

- Name, year in school, major, relevant classes
- Your career goals
- Your key strengths/skills related to this type of employer
- Adjectives that describe your personality
- Work & internship experiences
- Classroom or student organization experiences/projects.
- Leadership roles you have taken on.
- Problems you have solved/contributions you have made.
- Reasons you are interested in the organization.
- Personal information only if it is relevant to the work.
Practice your introduction and elevator speech

- Find a partner you don’t know
- Introduce yourself
- Tell him/her your target job or internship
- Give your “elevator” speech
- Give & receive feedback
- Thank your partner
Common Interview Questions

1. Tell me about yourself.
2. Why do you want to work for us?
3. What unique qualities or abilities would you bring to this job?
4. How does your past experience in school and employment relate to this position?
5. What are your strengths? Your weaknesses?
6. Where do you see yourself in 5 years?
7. Describe a time where you worked on a team project? What was your position on the team? What did the team accomplish?
8. Think back to a situation where you had to resolve a conflict. Tell me how you did it.
9. Give me an example of a time when you faced a lot of obstacles to achieving a goal.
10. What salary are you expecting?
11. What questions do you have for me?
Sample Behavioral Questions

- Describe a time when you had a problem with a team member.

- Give me an example of a time when you faced many obstacles to achieving a goal.

- Tell me about a time when you came up with an innovative solution to a challenge in class, on a job or internship. What was the challenge? What role did you play?
Use the “STAR” method for behavioral questions:

- **Situation**: “Set the scene” When and where did the situation take place?
- **Task**: What was the task or challenge?
- **Action**: What actions did you take to achieve the task or solve the problem?
- **Result**: What was the end result? If not completely positive, what did you learn from the experience?
Practice Answering Interview Questions

- Pick a new partner
- Take turns at being interviewer
- Ask your partner 4 questions:
  - 2 Behavioral
  - 2 Non-behavioral
- Give your partner constructive feedback
Questions NOT To Ask Employers

• What does this company do?  
  (Do your research ahead of time!)

• When can I take time off for vacation?  
  (Wait until you get the offer to mention prior commitments.)

• Can I change my schedule if I get the job?  
  (Figure out the logistics of getting to work… don't bring it up during the interview.)

• Did I get the job?  
  (Don't be impatient. They'll let you know.)
Questions to Ask:

- How would you describe the responsibilities of the position?
- How would you describe a typical week/day in this position?
- What is the company's management style?
- What are the prospects for growth and advancement?
- How does one advance in the company?
- If I am extended a job offer, how soon would you like me to start?

Use your pre-interview company research to come up with questions to ask your interviewer.
• Prepare to answer typical interview questions.

• Have examples/stories for behavioral questions.

• PRACTICE - out loud with a partner several times.

• Avoid discussing salary unless the interviewer brings it up.

• Don’t “Bad mouth” former employers or co-workers.

• Turn off your cell phone!
Invest in a Portfolio

• Pad of paper & pen
• Copies - resume
• Copies - references
• Copies - transcripts
• Your questions
• Interviewer contact info.
• Directions
Dress Appropriately

Offices fall under four general styles of attire:

- **Casual**
- **Business Casual**
- **Business Formal**
- **Business Conservative**

**Dress one level higher than the office attire.**

*(If the employees are in flip-flops and jeans ("casual"), you would dress “business casual” for your interview.)*
Business Casual

Colors: Subtle shades of many color such as blue, gray, white, tan, rust

For men: Sweater, polo, button-up. Tie – optional.

For women: Skirt, slacks, sweater, blouse. Jewelry fine, but not too flashy.

For both: No jeans, no t-shirts, no gym clothes.
Business Formal

Colors: Black, dark blue, light blue, white, gray, tan

For men: Matching pants and jacket
Long sleeve shirt
Dark socks
Polished dress shoes
Tie

For women: Matching skirt/slacks and jacket
Jewelry minimal—nothing too dangly or flashy
Avoid short skirts & low cut tops
Plan ahead...

- Obtain interview attire in advance and make sure everything fits correctly

- Obtain a portfolio & enclose copies of your resume, references and any other documents.

- Bring contact information, directions, parking info.

- Bring cash and/or a credit card for parking

- Bring a breath mint & talcum powder, if needed
At the End & After the Interview:

1. Thank interviewer for his/her time.

2. Reiterate your interest
   “Ask for the job”

3. Get clear about next steps

4. Extend another handshake.

5. Send a thank you email right away
Thank You Note:

1. Thank the interviewer for his/her time.

2. Indicate the position for which you are applying.

3. Describe in one or two sentences why you are the best applicant.

5. Find thank you note examples on the Career Center web page:
   http://careers.ucsc.edu/handouts/thank_you/
Wrap Up

What were the “take-aways” for you?
New ideas or information?
Reinforcement of prior knowledge?

QUESTIONS?