

Video Transcript: Interviewing/Inside the Mind of the Interviewer

When it comes time to interview, students often approach it the wrong way. They think “I’m interviewing with Brad. Let the battle of wits begin.” In your mind every question is some type of trick question, and it’s our job in split second to figure out what that trick question is. I can almost see your brain churning. “Brad has asked me this question. It’s clearly some type of trick question. Here’s what I would normally say. Here’s what Brad probably wants me to say. So here’s what I am going to say.” Sorry wrong answer.

The fact is the best interviews are conversations between two people. There are very few trick questions. There are no right or wrong answers. And there aren’t hidden meanings in what they’re asking you. In fact the following is not a likely interview scenario:

Brad: If you were stranded on a deserted island, with only one book, two farm animals, and 1 signer of the declaration of independence, what would you choose?

Interviewee: War and Peace, a chicken, a goat, James Madison.

Brad: Wong! We were looking for the Iliad, a rooster, a cow, and John Hancock. Leave my office you have just failed the interview!

Interviews are about establishing a connection and showing the interviewer who you are. So how do you ace an interview? Well just like a lot of things in life, preparation and practice. This may sound obvious, but know what you’ve done.

You need to take a three hundred and sixty degree perspective of everything you’ve experienced. From your activities, your sports, classes you’ve took, jobs, even interest. If it’s something you’ve done be prepared to speak about it intelligently. For instance, if they see that you are a leader in student government they are not going to say:

Oh Courtney, I see that you are president of student body. That’s pretty cool huh? It’s much more likely that an interviewer is going to spend quite a bit of time on that fact. In fact they can ask you questions like: Why did you decide to run for student government? What did you like about it? What did you dislike about it? Why do you think you won? What was your platform? What was your greatest mistake? What was your biggest success? If you had to do it all over again, how would you do it differently and why? Tell me about the relationship you have with your vice president? Tell me about the relationship you had with someone in administration. How did you convince a skeptical school to do something they never wanted to do? And on and on and on.

Now an interviewer isn’t going to rip them off like I just did. But the fact of the matter is they want decent answers to those questions. That’s where practice and preparation comes in. Yes, practice. How do we become good at anything? We practice, and interviewing is no different. I recommend you go on at least 3 or 4 mock interviews before you go on a real interview. Your Career Center’s the best place to start. They can interview at least a couple times and give you some amazing advice on how to ace the

interview. Then get your parents to do it, your friends, really anybody. The more you dress up in a suit, sit behind a desk, the more comfortable you'll feel. Good Luck.