

# ALL-DAY INTERVIEW TIPS

## What is an All-Day Interview?

All-day interviews are typically a series of 30 to 60 minute sessions with a variety of interviewers from the company or school and may include informational sessions, presentations, panels, workshops, and/or meals throughout the day. They are most common for competitive programs, rotation programs, graduate schools, and executive positions.

### Preparing for an All-Day Interview

- Review emails and other modes of communication from the school or company so you know and understand all the details of the day. If you are not told, ask for the schedule ahead of time as well as information about who you will be meeting. The closer to the date of your interview, the more likely the schedule will be set.
- Prepare answers to common interview questions as if you were going to a traditional interview, but practice answering the same question emphasizing different skills that the story or experience involved each time.
  - Example: You are an administrative assistant in an office on campus.
    - 1st Interview (with an employee/student at your level): Discuss how daily tasks include paperwork and focus on organizational skills.
    - 2nd Interview (with a potential supervisor): Discuss how daily tasks include interacting with students and faculty who visit the front desk and focus on communication skills.
- Coordinate travel logistics. You may be provided transportation by the company or program via car, train, or plane, but you also may not. Each company and program has a unique policy for covering the costs of travel for interviews. Ask for clarification, and be prepared to cover your own costs in case the interviewer does not.
- If possible, visit the location prior to the interview so that you know you know where to park, where the restrooms and stairs/elevators are, the overall layout of the facility, and the temperature of the building.

### The Day of the Interview

- Dress appropriately for your industry, and keep comfort in mind. You will be in the same attire all day, so during bathroom breaks, check to make sure everything is tucked in and your accessories, if any, are intact.
- Know your needs and plan accordingly for the day (caffeine, hunger, hydration, etc.). Have a padfolio with copies of your résumé, cover letter, business cards, and a notepad. Take quick breaks between interviews to give yourself a few seconds to breathe and jot down some notes, which will be helpful when writing thank-you notes.
- Arrive early to the interview site (10-15 minutes) to become familiar with the environment and settle in.
- Be prepared to interact with many individuals, including employees/students at your level, your potential supervisor(s), higher-ups, and/or other candidates.

## During the Interviews

- Treat each stage of the interview like it is your first. Pay particular attention to making strong first and last impressions.
- Tailor your questions to each interviewer's position; emphasize experiences and skills that relate closely to what they do. Making these connections will allow you to stand out as an interviewee.
- At the end of each interview, ask for the interviewer(s)'s business card(s) and offer yours. Later in the day, write a note on the back of each card so you can remember each interviewer personally.

## Tips for Meal Times

- If the day includes any meals (could be breakfast, lunch, and/or dinner), make prior arrangements for food allergies/dietary restrictions by reaching out to the interview coordinator via email saying something along these lines:
  - "My name is \_\_\_\_\_, and I am participating in an interview for [position/program] on [date]. I understand that the interview day I have been invited to includes lunch, and I adhere to a vegan diet, so I am reaching out to see if any vegan options will be available or if I should plan to make alternative arrangements. Please let me know at your earliest convenience. Thank you."
- Act professionally and interact with other employees, students, and/or candidates. Remember that the meal is still part of the interview, so continue to discuss relevant topics in a conversational manner. Avoid using your cell phone at the table.
- Try to stay away from foods that are usually messy, such as spaghetti, to avoid stains and spills on interviewing attire and foods that will remain on your breath beyond meal times, such as garlic.
- If you are at a buffet-style meal, start with one plate and only go up for seconds after every guest has gotten a first serving.
- If you are at a sit-down meal, be polite to all wait staff and avoid ordering the most expensive item on the menu.

## Tips and Tricks

- Bring minimal baggage because you will be moving around all day and do not want any additional stressors.
- Ask questions. All-day interviews can be chaotic and confusing, so it's better to ask than be wrong.
- Be flexible. Understand that the interviewers have a lot to coordinate and there may be schedule changes, overlap between interviews, and/or emergencies that come up.
- Send each interviewer a unique thank-you note within 24 hours of your interview. Some interviewers may have mailboxes specifically for thank-you notes on the day of; others will not. It's best to be prepared with cards in case the mailbox option is available.
  - In your thank-you note, you can include a connection you made with that specific interviewer, back-up information for an answer you may have stumbled on, and a personalized, genuine thank you for their time.