THE SECOND INTERVIEW/ ON-SITE INTERVIEW

The on-campus interview, or the telephone interview, is what recruiters call a *screening tool*. They allow the recruiter to see a relatively high number of candidates, and *screen* which candidates they would like to invite for further interviewing. After an on-campus or telephone interview, a favorable candidate will be invited to schedule an on-site interview in order for a candidate to learn more about the organization, and for the organization to see if the candidate is a good match for the job.

PREPARING FOR THE SECOND INTERVIEW

Purpose: The purpose of the second interview for the employer is to learn more specifically about your skill set, and if you would be a "good fit" in their organization. They determine the likelihood of your fit in the organization, and your compatibility with the existing team, by having you interview with your potential co-workers and supervisors. The organization also has the opportunity to "sell" you on working for them during this time.

While on-campus interviewers usually have formal interview training, on-site interviews are typically conducted by potential co-workers or supervisors who have little or no formal interview training. Be aware that because of this minimal training, on-site interviewers may be more subjective in their evaluations, and conduct more informal interviews.

The second interview is also beneficial to you as the candidate. After visiting the work environment and meeting potential teammates, you can begin to evaluate whether or not you believe the organization is a good fit for you.

Preparation:

- **Research the organization extensively prior to your visit**. Learn as much as you can about what the organization does, and what the position entails. You may want to consider using the Grove City College Alumni Directory to research alumni who work for the organization, and ask for their insight into the company before your interview.

- **Interview questions**. You can anticipate being asked some of the same questions you were asked in the first interview, but with some new questions added as well. Second-interview questions may inquire more into your personality, so interviewers can determine how well you might fit in with the department. Second interviews will also be more likely to include questions targeted toward specific technical skills. More technical questions will be asked by department managers or co-workers, questions pertaining to personality will usually be asked by a human resources representative. Since you will most likely be meeting with a number of interviewers, try to keep your answers fresh yet consistent for each person you meet with during the second-interview. You can expect questions like:

- Tell me what you know about our company.
- What do you know about the position for which you are interviewing?

- **Questions for you to ask in an interview.**
  - **Ask Your Prospective Supervisor:**
    1. What would be my primary responsibilities?
    2. What are some of the department's ongoing and anticipated projects?

  - **Ask a Prospective Co-Worker:**
    1. How long have you been with the organization?
    2. What do you like best/least about working for this department?
    3. Can you please describe a typical workday in the department?
    4. What are the possibilities for professional growth and promotion?

  - **Ask the HR Manager**
    1. Why is the position open?
    2. How large is the department where the opening exists?
    3. What is the rate of employee turnover?
    4. Does the job require much travel?
    5. What type of orientation or training do new employees receive?
    6. What are the long-range possibilities for employees in similar positions who consistently perform above expectations?

- **Items to bring with you include:** extra copies of your resume (you may be meeting with as many as ten people so bring a number of extra resume copies), your references, your portfolio, a leather folder with a notepad, a good pen, and any completed application materials.

- **Travel Plans:** If you are unfamiliar with the location of the organization, take a practice run -- or be sure you know exactly where it is and how long it takes to get there. Plan to be 10-15 minutes early.

What You Can Expect:

- **A long day with a number of interviews.** Upon arrival you can expect to be greeted and given your interview schedule for the day with the names and titles of individuals you will be meeting with. Keep this agenda because you will want to send each interviewer a thank you note at the conclusion of the day.

- **Your interview schedule changing.** Many times due to a schedule conflict, or because you have impressed your past interviewers so much, your interview schedule may change in order for you to meet with new employees. Make sure to be flexible and accommodating to any changes that may occur.

- **A meal as part of your interview.** Since on-site interviews many times take up most of the day, you can expect an employee to take you out to lunch. While this time is scheduled to allow you to relax, your actions and words are still being evaluated. Make sure to use proper dining etiquette! If you are not familiar with business professional etiquette in that context, brush-up beforehand by reviewing materials available in the Career Services Office Library and/or attending our annual Professionalism & Etiquette Night.

- **A final meeting with a representative from the human resources department.** The end of the day may conclude with a final meeting with a representative from the human resources department. The representative may ask you if you have any final questions, and let you know when they will be getting in contact with you again. Do not expect an offer at this time, because the interviewers need time to get together and discuss their thoughts on you as a candidate. If you do receive a verbal offer, you do not have to accept the offer at that time. Graciously thank the representative for the offer, and let he/she know that at that moment you are not prepared to make a decision. Ask for a written confirmation of the terms of the offer, and the timeframe for how long you are able to consider the offer.

Travel Expenses: Since second interviews are typically held on-site, you can expect to make travel arrangements for the interview. Most organizations will pay for your travel expenses, but you will need to inquire how the prospective employer wants to handle the expenses. Do not hesitate to ask ahead of time how travel expenses will be processed.

- **Expenses paid up-front**: Some employers will offer to plan and pay for your flight, airport transportation to and from the hotel, hotel, and meal expenses. Simply make sure to have the name, title, business address, phone number and e-mail address of the person who is arranging the travel arrangements in case there is an unforeseen change of plans. Also make sure to have an itinerary sent to you before the trip to ensure you know in whose name the reservations were made, and who you can expect to pick you up at the airport. You will also need a map of how to get from the hotel to the organization.

- **Travel reimbursement**: Many organizations will pay for your expenses, but you will have to organize the trip yourself. You can then expect to pay for everything in advance, and submit a form for reimbursement after the trip is complete. You must then make sure to keep your original receipts and document all your expenses which could include: airfare, an airport shuttle or taxi to the hotel, a rental car, the number of miles driven on your own car, parking garage fees and meals.