

# Internship Interviews – A Guide for Students

## Purpose :

- 1) To convince the organization that your presence will be of value to their organization
- 2) To decide if this is a place you would enjoy working

## *Preparing for the Interview:*

### 1. Look at the website

- Know the organization's goals, issues, and programs
- Know the name and position of the person interviewing you
- Prepare questions to ask your interviewer

### 2. Dress Up

- Best to dress just a little more formally than your interviewer would on an average day.
- Unless your site is extremely casual
  - Men: Dress pants, solid colored dress shirt, tie, dress shoes, dark socks
  - Women: Very modest, dark colors preferred, **comfortable** dress shoes (no heels—prepare to walk several miles)

### 3. Day-Before Checklist

- Print 2 copies of **resume** for each interview site, and pencil and paper for taking notes
- Make sure **numbers** are in **cell phone** (WCSC, WCSC staff, and interview sites)
- Give your cell # to WCSC staff and interviewer
- Print **directions to WCSC** from our website, as well as from Google Maps
  - use GPS as a backup – it often takes you through slower parts of the city
  - a WCSC staff member will take you by Metro or car to your interview
- If coming from Harrisonburg directly (not standard; WCSC staff will meet you there)
  - print directions, exact address, and instructions for what to do when you arrive
  - bring parking meter money
  - arrange travel time to avoid 6:30-9:45am and 3:30-7pm (rush hour)
  - add 1 hour for traffic and/or getting lost

## *During the Interview*

### Demonstrate:

- Confidence – introduce yourself, make great eye contact, smile
- Interest – ask questions, connect the organization's goals and interests to yours
- Knowledge – say what you know about them. **Refer to WCSC as “WCSC”, not “Wussy”**

### Remember:

- Negotiate your role as an intern. Sometimes their job description is more negotiable than it seems
- Take time to give a thoughtful answer
- Be positive but straightforward about your desires, skills, and level of experience

### Know:

- Your schedule – average 20 hours/wk, not Wednesdays from 1-4:30, university classes?
- WCSC facts – dates, food and housing provided, unpaid internships, 15 students max

### Questions to Expect:

- How much do you know about this organization already? *(Tell them what you know, but let them know you'd enjoy hearing them explain it further)*
- Why did you choose this organization? *(If you haven't chosen it, say why you like it)*
- Which of our programs would you most enjoy working with?
- What are your career goals and interests?
- What are your strongest skills and talents? Areas of weakness?
- What experiences have you had that have prepared you for this type of internship?
- What would you expect to get from an internship with our organization?
- What questions do you have?

### Questions to Ask:

- What would a normal day look like for me? How much time could I expect to spend on each of the tasks you mentioned?
- Would there be opportunity for me to work on a specific project while I'm here—something that I could put on a resume?
- Will I have the chance to work in more than one department, or on various levels of the organization?
- Who will I be working with? If my main supervisor is out sick, who else can give me work to do?
- What hours would work well for me to come?
- Do you provide transportation money for your interns?
- When can I expect to get a final decision from you? *(If you want the position, now is the time to say that. If you need more time to decide, give them a date.)*

### \*\*\*Send a Thank-You Email!\*\*\*

(See sample below)

Dear Mr. or Mrs. Employer,

Paragraph #1: "It was a pleasure to talk with you yesterday" Mention something that really impressed you about the job or the company/organization.

Paragraph #2: Mention two or three reasons, based on your qualifications, why you would be the right candidate for the job.

Paragraph #3: Remind interviewer of your dates of availability. Thank him/her for the time spent with you and say that you will touch base with him/her in a week to see if he/she has come to a decision.

Sincerely,  
Your first and last name