Transcript for Animated Video: Preparing for Interviews

Do you have an interview coming up? Curious to know how to best prepare? In this video, we will cover 3 steps to prepare for interviews and best position your experiences to employers.

Yale’s Office of Career Strategy has worked with thousands of students, including undergrads (first years through seniors), graduate students of all years, postdocs, and alums of these populations to prepare them to do well during an interview.

Only a small percentage of applicants applying for a position are selected for an interview. If you’re selected, you’ll want to shine. First impressions are made quickly; present yourself as a confident, self-aware professional. Too much information could drown out the important aspects of your skills and experience; too little information doesn’t give the interviewer your full story. All you need to do is follow these 3 steps:

**Research the role/organization and industry:**
You’ll need to have a good understanding of the role and the organization, reflect on their needs, how your background fits and what you can contribute. More than likely you will be asked ‘why do you think you are a good fit’ and ‘why do you want to work for us’. To do this, you should -

- Thoroughly research the employer, understand their mission and purpose, the department, their top competitors and some of their key clients and products and services.
- Utilize the Yale Career Network to set up informational interviews with alumni who have worked in these organizations, and learn more *before* you go.

**Develop your interviewing story:**
This is a brief (under 2 minutes) introduction about yourself. It includes your area of study, how and when you initially became interested in this field, your relevant skills and experiences and your enthusiasm for this role.

**Craft accomplishment stories:**
Accomplishment stories are an excellent way to communicate your skills and achievements to an employer when asked behavioral interview questions. They also provide proof of your past achievements and an indication of how you may perform if hired for the role.

Every bullet point on your resume has the potential to be a story of your accomplishments. To prepare accomplishment statements use the acronym STAR (Situation/Tasks/Actions/Results):

- What was the challenge?
- What did you do? Who did you work with? How large was the team or budget?
- What was your impact or results? Qualify/quantify when possible. What skills did you use or develop? Did you make any recommendations or change a process? Did your work result in a publication or presentation?
For example:

If you are asked by an interviewer: Tell me about one of your most successful initiatives?
You might say: As Vice-President of the XYZ Society, I was tasked with increasing our membership. To accomplish this I created a marketing campaign that included informational meet and greet sessions for more than 100 students. This effort resulted in a 22% increase in membership.

Composing compelling accomplishments stories and preparing for interviews requires time and practice. We are here to assist you with this process and can practice interviewing with you during an advising appointment. For information on different types of interview techniques and for more guidance on how to prepare, visit the Office of Career Strategy’s website.