How to impress the best: Interviewing 101

Kevin Driggs, senior manager of HR at IM Flash Technologies, talked with students on Tuesday, September 20 about how to be a good interviewee and how to get interviews at a job fair.

Here are some tips Driggs gave students:

**When Going to a Job Fair:**

- **Practice, Practice, Practice.**
  - Spend time practicing how to approach recruiters.
  - Practice being confident. Let recruiters know you are awesome without being overly confident.
  - Practice interviewing in the mirror, with friends/family, or video yourself. You can also do mock interviews online, or schedule a mock interview with BYU Career Services at (801) 422-6535.
- **Craft your "story statement."**
  - Have three points to get across and think of experiences or stories to go with each one, but keep it short.
  - Tell recruiters that you are interested in their company, what you are looking for, and what you can offer them if they hire you.
- **Prioritize your list of companies you want to talk to and do research on them before.**
  - Know why you want to work for them. Go to their website, talk to other students or professors who have worked there or know people that work there. A list of recruiters that will be at STEM Career Fair is online now.
- **Spend time getting to know the recruiters.**
  - Go to every event you know recruiters will be attending. Stay until the end or get there early to get more one-on-one time to talk with recruiters. The better they know you, the better they remember you when they look at your resume at the end of the day.
  - If there are multiple recruiters for one company at a job fair, talk to more than one.

**When You Get the Interview:**

- Tailor your resume to the company you are interviewing with.
• Make your resume look impressive to each specific employer. Write that you want to work for that specific company in your objective. Employers like when they can tell you are interested enough to put in the extra effort to tailor it to them.

• Answer questions in the STAR format.
  o Situation, Tell about a specific situation.
  o Task, Talk about the task you were given to complete.
  o Action, Explain the actions you took to complete the task.
  o Result, Give the results of your actions.

• Be ready for all types of questions.
  o Many employers in the STEM field will ask problem solving or analytical questions. It is best to think out loud when answering these. They want to see how you use the process you use to get to an answer.
  o If you are asked a question you don’t know the answer to, be honest with them. If you are currently learning about a subject, let them know. Tell them what you know, but don’t try and guess. The worst thing you can do is to act like you know what it is when you don’t.

• Be prepared for the “what’s your weakness” question.
  o Have examples of how you have recognized your weaknesses and what you have done to address them. You may not be an organized person, so tell them what you do to try and be better organized.

• Never leave an interview without asking questions.
  o Employers want to see you are interested in the job and asking them questions lets them know that you are, but don’t ask too many questions. Trying to turn the interview on to the employer is not a good idea. They are still interviewing you.
  o Before you leave an interview for a job you really want and are qualified for, always ask “have I said anything in this interview or given you any reason to doubt that I am a good fit for the job?” Asking this gives you a chance to explain yourself more to help change their minds.

• Do not ask about pay unless they bring it up.
  o The pay should not be the most important thing to you about the job. Employers want to know you want the job for the experience and to better their company, not just the money. That can be discussed if you get the job.

• Don’t be afraid to follow up with an employer after an interview.
  o Send them an e-mail, letter, text, or call them. It doesn’t hurt to keep your name fresh in their minds when they are making decisions.

• There is no decision to be made until you get an offer.
  o Even if you are only slightly interested in a company who asks you for an interview, go for it. Take every opportunity you can because that could be your only job opportunity.