

Business Skills for IT Auditors:

Session 1

Situational Awareness

Self Awareness
Social Awareness



Lonnie Barone

Ryan Luzak



Sections 001, 002

Section 001

ALSWAILEM, KHAWLAH A.
BILLUPS, MARSHA
CHEN, LINLAN
DIPENTINO, VITTORIO C.
FELDMAN, JOSEPH E.
FOGGIE, JAMES T.
GUDUSKY, EDWARD
HUANG, HAITAO
JILES, LEZLIE M.
LAI, CHENHUI
MAYS, JASON M.
MU, RICHARD
SYED, MOHAMMED H.
TOOR, PARNEET
VAN CLEAVE, NATHAN A.
WANG, DONGJIE

October 7, 2017

November 11, 2017

Section 002

AHMED, RAISA
BERG, KEVIN P.
COLLURA, MICHELANGELO C.
CHEN, XINTENG
GAIRE, BINJU
JIANG, JING
KESHTKAR, SOMAYEH
LI, MENGTING
NTOKWANE, KARABO
SUN, PING
TANG, ROUYING
WANG, YINGYAN
WEI, ZHIXIN
WU, ZHENGSHU
ZHOU, HANQING

October 14, 2017

November 18, 2017

Agenda

- Syllabus and Overview of Semester
- Ryan Luzak, MBA: Awareness
- YouTube Video and WSJ Article
- Elevator Talks
- Resume Writing
- Executive Presence and Confidence
- Interviewing Questions and Role Plays

Online Posts, Announcements, Assignments, Syllabus, etc.

<http://community.mis.temple.edu/mis5287sec001sp2017/>

Be sure to subscribe!

Course Description

- *“Business skills that are necessary to be effective as an IT auditor skills include managerial communications and public speaking, interviewing skills, negotiation and personal selling skills, business writing, industrial psychology/behavioral science skills, project/time management and team building skills.”*

Course Objectives

- Develop and practice managerial communications and public speaking skills
- Increase competency in job Interviewing and networking
- Practice techniques of negotiation & influencing
- Identify behavioral science skills related to effectiveness as an IT Auditor
- Enhance team building skills
- Understand and improve self, social, and situational awareness
- Engage in leadership development

What an IT Auditor Does

- Check procedures vs. real facts and steps
- Compliance with regulations, standards and procedures (some legal)
- Produce reports (Incident, Risk, etc.)
- Help to keep the Company out of the news
- Gather data from various parts of the company and analyze it
- Offer suggestions for improvement

From an IT Forensic Firm

- Ability to handle ambiguity
- Attention to detail
- Flexibility
- Communicating and consulting and understanding the business need and needs of the matter/audit
- Technical knowledge/expertise

Today's Objectives

- Increase self, social and situational awareness
- Write a resume that works for you
- Create your elevator speech
- Increase competency in job interviewing



Today's Guest
Ryan Luzak, MBA
Senior Associate
Booz Allen Hamilton

Leadership

Organization Design

Human Capital Development

Change

Ryan Maxwell Luzak

Strategy Consulting, Organization Development, and Human Capital Management

EDUCATION AND CERTIFICATIONS

MBA	College of William and Mary	Organization Development	12/2003
BS (Honors)	United States Naval Academy	English Literature	05/1997
CMAA	Georgetown University	Change Management Advanced Practitioner	10/2010
SPHR	HR Certification Institute	Senior Professional in Human Resources	06/2009
SHRM-SCP	Society for HR Management	Senior Certified Practitioner	10/2015
MHCS	Human Capital Institute	Master Human Capital Strategist	11/2009
MBTI®	CPP, Inc.	MBTI® Certified Practitioner and Instructor	06/2014

EMPLOYMENT HISTORY

Booz Allen Hamilton	Norfolk	07/2015 – Present	Senior Associate
Booz Allen Hamilton	Norfolk	01/2011 – 06/2015	Lead Associate
Booz Allen Hamilton	Norfolk	01/2009 – 12/2010	Associate
Alpha Solutions Corporation	Virginia Beach	12/2003 – 12/2008	Principal Consultant
Center for Naval Leadership	Virginia Beach	09/2001 – 10/2003	Director of Training
U.S. Navy	Various Ships	05/1997 – 09/2001	Division Officer

KEY SKILL AREAS

- ▶ Strategy Consulting
- ▶ Human Capital Strategy
- ▶ Leadership Development
- ▶ Interpersonal and Team Effectiveness
- ▶ Organization Development
- ▶ Change Management
- ▶ Senior Leadership Transitions
- ▶ Adult Learning Theory

EXPERIENCE SUMMARY

Ryan has extensive experience and deep expertise working with senior military and civilian leadership to design and deliver comprehensive organization development and transformation solutions, and he has led geographically dispersed and functionally diverse teams through the development of enterprise-wide talent management strategies. He earned an MBA in Organization Development from the Mason School of Business at College of William and Mary, he holds certifications as a Senior Professional in Human Resources (SPHR) and Master Human Capital Strategist (MHCS), and he earned post-graduate certification from Georgetown University as a Change Management Advanced Practitioner.

WORK EXPERIENCE

Booz Allen Hamilton 07/2015 – Present
Senior Associate

Ryan is a senior leader in the areas of strategy consulting, organizational transformation, and human capital management. In this role, he leads the design and execution of the overarching strategy for building, growing, and bringing to market the firm's capabilities and service offerings in a wide variety of client organizations, including Navy, Marine Corps, Intelligence Community, Cyber, and NATO commands. He has been the lead author on key proposals and white papers, and he has created original pieces of intellectual capital that have enhanced the firm's position as a thought leader in these areas. For example, he wrote Booz Allen's "Viewpoint" on the succession-management challenges facing senior civilian leaders across the Department of Defense, and he prepared materials on employee engagement that were presented at the Human Capital Management in Defense (HCMD) conference in Washington DC. In addition, he delivered the keynote address on change management and cultural transformation to more than 100 delegates from NATO Nations, Commands, and Agencies at NATO Headquarters, Supreme Allied Command Transformation (HQ SACT).

Ryan Maxwell Luzak

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EFFECTIVE RESUME WRITING

- **Resume is a selling tool** - It is clearly focused on a specific job
 - Outlines relevant:
 - Accomplishments
 - Skills
 - Experience
- **For the position.**

• Guess what?

- **Employers give your resume**
 - **7 – 10 Seconds**

What does an effective resume do?

It gets you an interview!

ANATOMY OF A RESUME



Elevator Speech

- Emphasize who you are & what you do
- Explain how you can help them
- Create a connection between you & audience
- How are you different: Your personal brand
- Tell them why they should hire you

Elevator Speech

- Hi. I am _____ with a majority of my career involved in _____. Most recently, I worked (or something else) at _____ as _____ where I _____ (list duties or accomplishments)'. Prior to that I _____
My strengths include _____. At this time _____
My future plans are to _____

Exercise: Try It

In pairs, improve and recite your elevator speech

- Help each other deliver the elevator speech
- Your name: say it slowly
- Explain what you are doing now
- Accomplishment you are most proud of
- Reason you are looking or leaving
- Future focus: What you want to do next based on your strengths

Getting to Know Each Other

- Explanation of the 2 minute elevator pitch
- How to do an elevator pitch or “your commercial”
- Understand your “brand,” how you come across, what is the “self” that they are aware of

Customer focused MBA with versatile experience in entrepreneurial environments. Record of completing tasks and projects on time, prioritizing problem solving and improving organizational efficiencies. Proficient in MS Office, Quickbooks, Adobe software. Develops trust relationships quickly and easily. Competencies include:

- Customer Service
- Operations
- Marketing
- Financial Management

EDUCATION

RDF SCHOOL OF BUSINESS, UNIVERSITY OF HRT, Anytown, NY
MBA with Operations Concentration, expected June 2011. Current GPA 3.72.
Class Representative to RDF Dean's Advisory Board.

JIO COLLEGE, Anytown, CT

BA Political Science, June 2008.

Varsity Swim Team, NCAA Division II, 2004-2008. Two-time America East Semi-Finalist.
JIO Scholar-Athlete Award with Full Scholarship.

EXPERIENCE

XYZ COMPANY, Anytown, NY 2010 - 2011
Materials Management Intern

- Served as support to 8 member cross-functional logistics and warehousing team, linking SAP and Access together to enhance reporting between distribution and operations.

JGR HEALTH CLUB, Anytown, MA 2005 - 2009
Associate Membership Manager

- Co-developed and implemented enhanced enrollment program with PLD Health Club Consultants to increase total membership by 20% while raising fees an average of 11% in down economy.
- Managed membership operating budget of \$45K and oversaw capital improvements to facility and grounds. Researched fitness equipment vendors as part of effort to replace 14 workout stations.
- Suggested and introduced member referral program which increased leads by 10+ per week with 50%+ conversion rate for referrals.

Head Lifeguard/Masters Swim Coach

- Hired and managed staff of 8 lifeguards, including scheduling, training, and pool maintenance.
- Prepared 17 member masters swim team for inter-club competition by conditioning and improvement of stroke mechanics. In 2007, coached team to 6-1 record, winning YTR Valley Senior Championship.

TOWN OF JFK, Anytown, CT Summers 2003-2005
Waterfront Director

- Hired and managed staff of 17 lifeguards to ensure safe operation of pool and facilities. Purchased pool equipment, scheduled and staffed multi-level age group swim lessons, and addressed citizen issues.
- Taught progressive swimming classes to children from 5 to 14 years of age.
- Involved with semi-annual pool drain and cleaning.

HHY CATERING, Anytown, MA 2002 - 2004
Assistant Manager / Server

- Assisted with opening of new 3-season outdoor catering business and café.
- Supervised 4 counter employees, managed shift schedule, and created related forms and procedures for daily operations.
- Teamed with owner to brainstorm, create, and implement marketing strategy to re-introduce business.

VOLUNTEERING

RDF School of Business – Admissions Volunteer, 2009 - 2010
University Health Services - Mental Health Intake Volunteer, 2006 - 2008
Anytown United Funding Agency – Fundraising Special Events Assistant, 2005 - 2008

The Right Look:

- 1-2 Pages
- Well Proofed
- Consistently Formatted (Bold, caps, italic, bullets, alignment)
- Uncluttered
- Times New Roman Font
- 10-12 pt. Font.



•**Self Identification**

- Name at top in caps; no picture(s)
- Address optional; email required (use name)
- Phone required
- Purpose: who you are and how I can reach you?



SONYA S. SAMPLE

567 MAIN STREET
ANYTOWN, NY 00000

[HTTP://WWW.LINKEDIN.COM/IN/SSAMPLE](http://www.linkedin.com/in/ssample)

000-000-0000
[SSAMPLE@QQQEMAIL.COM](mailto:ssample@qqqemail.com)

•SUMMARY OF QUALIFICATIONS

- Write 3 – 4 statements
- Statements should highlight relevant strengths, experience, skills.
- Prioritize statements (most important first)
- These are your strongest selling points



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•EDUCATION

- How much you emphasize depends on
 - Career level
 - Timing of degree



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•PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

- This is an opportunity to showcase your work history.
- Use correct key phrases:
 - **Evaluate wireless telecom*
- Quantify accomplishments:
 - **Averaged 120% of quota in 2014*

Do Not Paste in Your Job Description!

- Your job isn't seeking a job, you are
- Job descriptions don't look like you
- Job descriptions are often inaccurate
- Besides, they make a resume dull.

•The Accomplishment Statement

- PAR = Problem, Action, Results (Impact)
- SBO = Situation, Behavior, Outcomes
- SAR = Situation, Action, Results

Accomplishment

- What sets you apart
- Why you can do it better
- What makes you unique
- Why you have bragging rights!

Accomplishment

- You saw a problem, challenge, or situation.
- You took a specific action.
- Your choices resulted in positive outcomes, such as saving your organization time, money, or lives. PAR or SBO statements can be about people, data, or things.

Accomplishment

- **Quantification** includes money saved, money generated, number of people affected, timeliness, how often, how accurately, how consistently, how thoroughly.
- **Impact** on the organization, people, department, office, team, customer, system.
- **Contribution** to the mission of the organization, quality, cost, bottom-line, safety, consistency, reputation, morale, recruitment, inspection
- **Obstacles** overcome.


•PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE




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•PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

- 
- 🎬 Led conversion to new cost system with improved accountabilities, resulting in \$5K quarterly savings and improved profitability on sales of \$100K+. Involved employees to create ownership of changes and develop positive cross-functional working relationships.
 - 🎬 Negotiated new carrier contracts, saving \$128K over 2 year period.
 - 🎬 Prepared all related financial documents and met regulatory requirements for \$8M spin-off with IPO. Created related deferred compensation and incentive plans for executive team.

•PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

- 
- 🎬 Determined market valuation of spin-off to within 95% accuracy of offering, ensuring integrity of business plan, pro formas, and market assumptions.
 - 🎬 Re-wrote protocol for \$5M+ contract bids, streamlining process and increasing margins.
 - 🎬 Organized all financial systems for Mexican subsidiary, completing all related tax returns for first year and incorporating transfer pricing model.

EFFECTIVE RESUME WRITING

•**SKILLS/ADDITIONAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS/ACTIVITIES**

• **Show employers other skills or experiences.**

- Language – Proficiency
- Computer Skills



VOLUNTEERING

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TYPES OF RESUME: BEST FIT



EFFECTIVE RESUME WRITING

•**CHRONOLOGICAL**

- Organized by job titles
- Most recent listed first
- Employers prefer because they are easily skimmed

•**WORKS BEST FOR**

- Job seekers with solid experience
- Logical work history

EFFECTIVE RESUME WRITING

•**FUNCTIONAL RESUME**

•Highlights skills and accomplishments

–**Program Coordination**

- Coordinated the logistics of **XYZ** Residential Treatment Centers
- Oversaw automation of **XYZ** clinics
- Managed 25 Program Managers for **XYZ** company

–**WORKS BEST FOR**

- A new graduate
- Making career changes
- A “mixed bag” work history – not clear, time gaps

RESUME TIPS



•**1 - 2 PAGES**

-User/reader friendly, a lot of white space, no clutter

•**USE ACTION WORDS AND KEY WORDS**

- Check job posting for key words

- Computer might disqualify your resume!

- “Developed innovative program that increased sales by 150%”

•**AVOID:** “responsibilities included/responsible for”

•**USE NEUTRAL PAPER (NOTHING BOLD)**

•**PUT EDUCATION IN THE RIGHT PLACE**

COVER LETTER

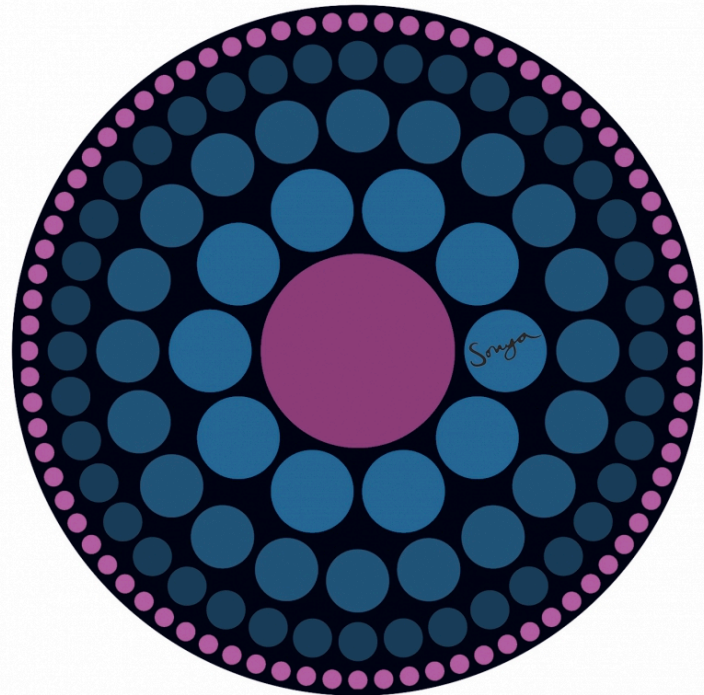


COVER LETTER

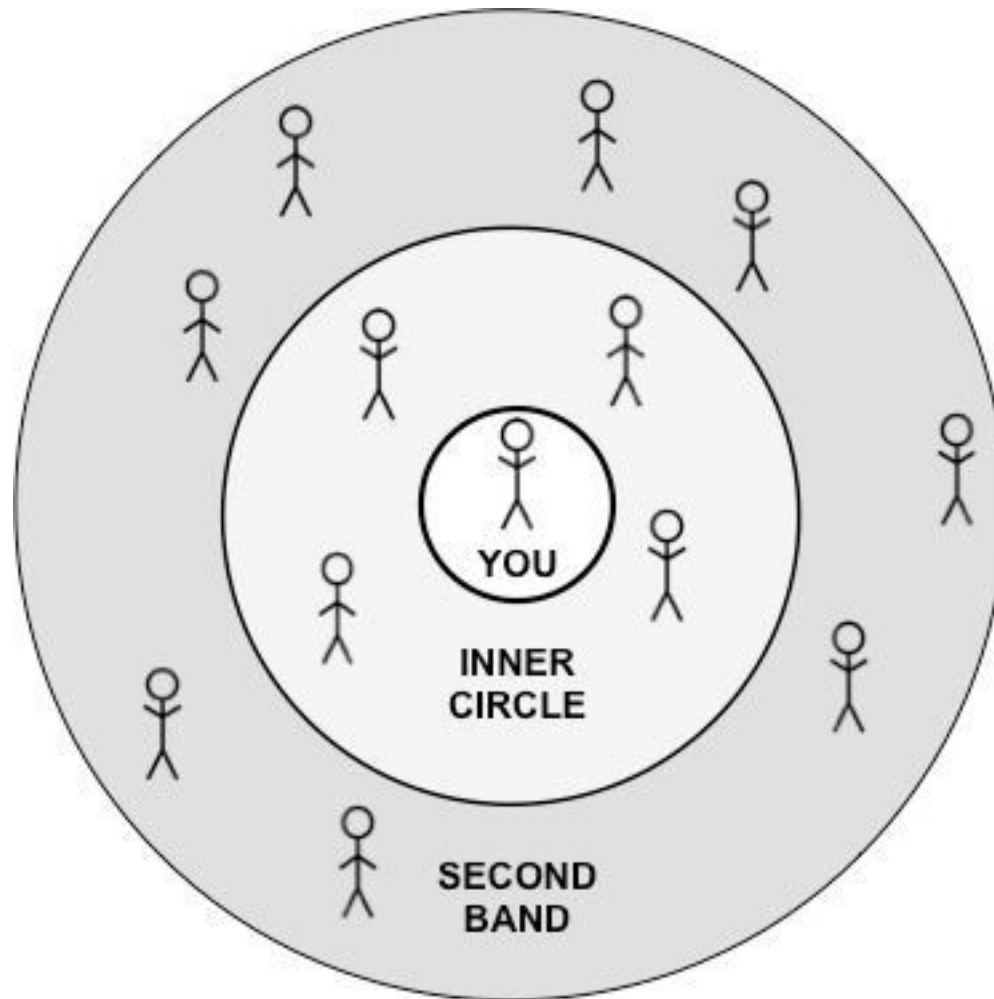
- Cover letter always accompanies a resume.
- Gives another opportunity to emphasize what you can contribute.
- Answers, “How can this person help us?”
- Makes it personal: address it to the hiring manager by name.
- Let’s you say things you can’t put in a resume (“This position struck me as an excellent match for my skills and experience.” “I left the workforce for two years...” “I am transitioning...”)

Networking

The Circle of Power



Circle of Power



Identifying Allies

- Often emerge during discussions about other things
- When seeking information on a potential ally consider:
 - Facts about the ally and the ally's relationships
 - Positive and negative implications of these relationships

Constructing the Circle of Power

- Choosing the band
 - Relationship is influential
 - Have special knowledge or skills
 - Could become *adversaries*, better to have them as allies
 - Willingness to help

Constructing the Circle of Power

- Deciding how and when they will help
 - Long-term allies are those who are constant positive forces
 - Roles can change over time or “seasonally”
 - Short-term allies will have insertion times when they are called upon

Networking

- What is it?
- Why do it?
- How do I go about it?

Who is a hiring manager?

- Your future boss?
- HR manager?
- Interviewers?
- Anyone else out there?

So you want to be better at that job interview

- What do you want to change about yourself?
- How do you do it?
- Take 10 minutes and discuss.
- Be prepared to tell the group.

- WHAT IS STOPPING YOU?

Why behavioral change is hard

- Comfortable with the uncomfortable
- Knowing what you don't want, not what you do want
- Work on too much at one time
- No realistic way of reaching goal
- Impatient with pace of change

Turn it around

- Face the Challenge and Risk of Change
- Clarify the change you are seeking
- Work on one goal at a time
- Plan with your actual life in mind
- Give change a chance (Be patient!)

Types of Interview



Telecon/Phone



Panel



Campus/job fair



Traditional

Other Types of Interview



Informational



Elimination



Series

Other Types of Interview



Non-Directed



Demo



Behavior Based



Stress

Before the interview

- Consider the WSJ Article; there are 10 paragraphs.
- In Groups of 4, prioritize the paragraphs from most important to least, numbering them 1-10.
- 15 minutes
- Prepare a report to the class with your ranking and reasoning.

How to prepare a job interview:

<http://guides.wsj.com/careers/how-to-succeed-in-a-job-interview/how-to-prepare-for-a-job-interview/>

Before the interview

- Read the job posting and company profile days before the interview. Know what the job is and how they speak about the position.
- Do your research on the company, and the interviewers you will meet.
- Get directions to the interview site.
- Know what you are going to wear, make sure it is clean and it fits.

Before the interview

- Have a notebook and several pens with you
- Ask if you can take notes, if you need to do so
- Have business cards and resumes
- Get there early but not too early
- Be on your best behavior from the second you arrive until you actually leave
- Use the restrooms before the meeting

Questions about H1B Visas

- Is a work visa needed?
- STEM program gives 29 months of OPT
- Should you ask about sponsorship?
- Get CISA designation because of the MS earlier

Things NOT to do

- Do not wear heavy perfume, cologne or after shave.
- Do not smoke before you go inside for the interview (the smell stays with you).
- Do not take coffee if offered, take water or nothing.
- Do not dress casually even if they say it is ok.
- Do not leave your phone on; turn it off and keep it out of sight,

Interviewing Skills

- Everyone is nervous in interviews. If you simply allow yourself to feel nervous, you'll do much better. Remember also that it's difficult for the interviewer as well.
- In general, be upbeat, positive. Never be negative.
- Rehearse your answers and time them. Never talk for more than two minutes straight

Video #1

- Video: Interviewing snapshots
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HVK-xbdddhA>

Video #2

- David and Gwen
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VFTNOF77bMs>

Executive Presence

- First impression: confidence & looks = smarts
- Circle of Success: feel good, look good, act good = confidence...which leads to feel good
- Body language
- Grooming
- Dressing for the interview
- Assertiveness and Self Confidence

First impression

- Only get one chance... Usually made in the first 5 seconds but can be overcome
- From the time you leave your home to the time you get back home, do not let your guard down

FEAR AND TREMBLING

- You left every asset you have outside the door and entered armed only with your fear



- Fear provides you with a highly limited set of strategies



Power and Confidence



2 20 lb. satchel exercise

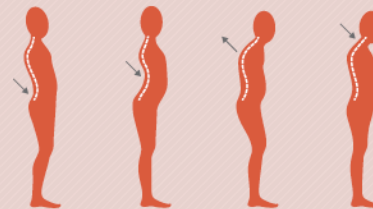
Away from the core

Own your turf

Gestures: palms up; palms down

Effective Zone of gestures

CHECK YOUR POSTURE



BAD

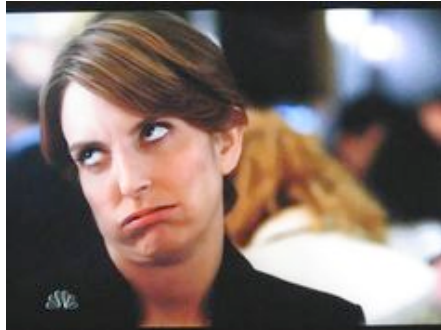


GOOD

Watch your body language



Covering your mouth says something



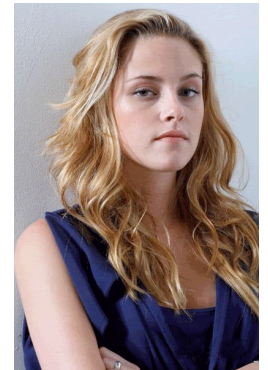
Rolling your eyes



Not making eye contact



Slumping over



Crossing your arms



Playing with hair

Handshake



Some other body language

- Biting the lip
- Tapping your pen or feet
- Raising eyebrows
- Shifting in seat
- Sighing
- Too many hand gestures

Situational Awareness

Selective Attention

Perceptions

Attribution Errors

Physical Appearance

Beauty creates a better perception, not necessarily a better product. Package yourself

- In today's economy, looking good is no longer something we can dismiss. Appearance can affect your career and your job.
- There is a beauty bias in the workplace
- No: tattoos, visible piercing, untrimmed nails

MEN Dressing for the Interview



Well fitting

Conservative

Colors match

Minimal bling

Matching coat and pants: a suit!



Shined dress shoes, not scuffed or worn out

MEN Dressing for the Interview

- Current not trendy tie and suit, good fit
- Conservative and professional
- Empty pockets, classic long sleeve shirt
- Clean glasses, well trimmed facial hair
- Light briefcase or portfolio
- Clean polished shoes, dark socks
- Pant legs should go to your heels
- No earrings

Women Dressing for the Interview



Minimal bling



Suit with skirt or pants

(Light perfume)

A dress can work!

Colors match

Conservative

Shined dress shoes, heels fine, not too high



Women: Dressing for the interview

- Either a skirt suit or pants suit or business dress
- No sandals or open toe shoes
- Go with mid size heels
- Hosiery, neutral colors
- Carry a briefcase or portfolio, small purse
- Neutral nail polish
- Make up restrained
- Jewelry to a minimum

Visibility

- It's what they see in the interview
- Attitude of self assurance, good posture
- Be true to yourself within these guidelines
- Attire sends a message about your brand and what you will bring to the organization,
- In a recent study, hiring managers said, most vital
- 1 Experience
- 2 Confidence
- 3 Physical Package

What they are looking for

- **Can you do the job?**
Technical skills, experience, previous work
- **Will you do the job?**
Energy, integrity, enthusiasm, work ethic
- **Is there a match?**
Fit with the job requirements, the company's culture, the manager

Skills for Interviewing

- Listening Skills
- Speaking/Presentation/Storytelling Skills
- Questioning Skills/Facilitation/Interviewing Skills
- Feedback Skills

Listening

1. Stop Talking
2. Attend
3. Parrot
4. Echo
5. Paraphrase
6. Summarize
7. Empathize

And one bonus thought:

Pay attention to non-verbals, even on the phone, by email, text message and instant message

Social Awareness

Empathy

Attending

Mirror Neurons

Non Verbals

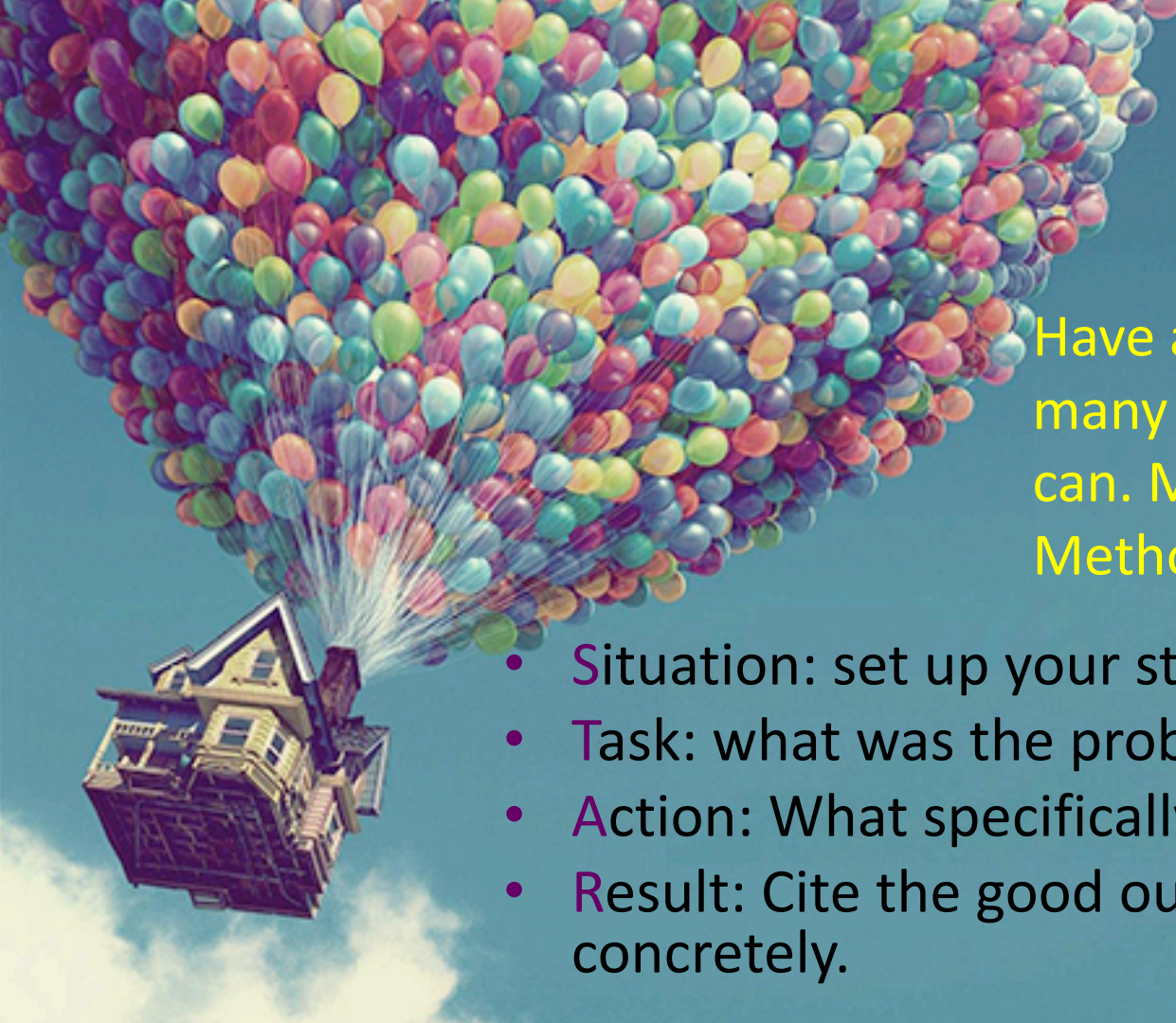
- We communicate with words, actions and sound. But how does this break down when someone is listening to us? What has the most impact?
 - **7% is verbal** - our choice of words, what we say and how we organize the flow.
 - **38% is the tone, volume, pace, inflection and modulation.**
 - **55% is body language**

Interview Tips

Don't be late. Some people are habitually late for appointments. Promptness reflects professionalism and reliability; hence a tardy executive's excellent performance during an interview may be tarnished by a negative first impression. If you are running a bit late, call and let your interviewers know right away.

And don't be too early! An executive who arrives to a job interview too early risks being seen as needy and desperate. Arriving 5 to 10 minutes ahead of time is your best bet. This way you'll have a chance to unwind and maybe even introduce yourself to a gatekeeper who may be involved in the hiring decision.

Don't look out of place. Looking inappropriately formal or casual may create a mismatch between interviewers and an executive candidate. Always have clean, ironed clothes. When in doubt: a suit!



Have a wealth of stories for as many realistic questions as you can. Make sure to use the STAR Method, like with resume

- Situation: set up your story; lay down the plot.
- Task: what was the problem you had to solve?
- Action: What specifically did you do to solve it?
- Result: Cite the good outcomes specifically and concretely.

Exercise: In the next 5 minutes answer this question: “Think of a time when you met a serious crisis that required swift action. Tell us about it.”

More Interviewing Tips

- Don't try to memorize answers word for word. To help you remember key concepts, jot down and review a few key words for each answer. Rehearse your answers frequently, and they will come to you naturally in interviews...
- Find out what people want, and then show them how you can help them get it.
- Find out what an employer wants most in his or her ideal candidate, then show how you meet those qualifications.

More Tips

- **Don't ignore body language.** What you don't say often speaks louder than the words you use. Aim to employ effective body language such as keeping an open posture, maintaining good eye contact, and smiling. **Don't forget to thank them.** Employers are people first, they want to be appreciated. Thanking them for their time is not only polite but also important for your image. Say it at the end of an interview.
- **Send an email-thank you** the next day, that is no longer than a paragraph. Ask if they need anything else
- **Have references lined up,** but do not give them the list

Interview Questions

- **Tell me about yourself...**

- Beware—about 80% of all interviews begin with this “innocent” question. Many candidates, unprepared for the question, skewer themselves by rambling, recapping their life story, delving into ancient work history or personal matters.
- **BEST ANSWER:** Start with the present and tell why you are well qualified for the position.
- **Remember that the key to successful interviewing is to match your qualifications to what the interviewer is looking for. In other words, you must sell what the buyer is buying. This is the single most important strategy in executive job hunting.**

Answering Questions

- In other words, you must match your abilities with the needs of the employer. You must sell what the buyer is buying. To do that, before you know what to emphasize in your answers, you must find out what the buyer is buying ... what she is looking for. And the best way to do that is to ask a few questions yourself.
- Regardless of how you accomplish it, you must remember this strategy above all: before blurting out your qualifications, you must get some idea of what the employer wants most. Once you know what he wants, you can then present your qualifications as the perfect “key” that fits the “lock” of that position.

Be Positive

- Think before you answer. A pause to collect your thoughts is a hallmark of a thoughtful person.
- If you do not understand the question fully, ask. Not with “I don’t understand,” but perhaps, “Can you tell me more fully what you mean by...”
- As a daily exercise, practice being more optimistic. For example, just as an exercise in your daily life, try putting a positive spin on events and situations you would normally regard as negative. This is not meant to turn you into a Pollyanna, but to sharpen your selling skills. The best salespeople, as well as the best-liked interview candidates, come off as being naturally optimistic, “can do” people. You will dramatically raise your level of attractiveness by daily practicing to be more optimistic.

Answering Questions

(1) Do all the homework you can before the interview to uncover this person's wants and needs (not the generalized needs of the industry or company).

(2) Know your own resume. Never, ever get thrown by something the interviewer references from your resume! Prepare for any question about any item.

(3) As early as you can in the interview, ask for a more complete description of what the position entails. You might say: "I have a number of accomplishments I'd like to tell you about, but I want to make the best use of our time together and talk directly to your needs. To help me do that, could you tell me more about the most important priorities of this position? All I know is what I (heard from the recruiter ... read in the classified ad, etc.)."

- Then, ALWAYS follow-up with a second and possibly third question, to draw out his needs even more. Surprisingly, it's usually this second or third question that unearths what the interviewer is most looking for.
- You might ask simply, "And in addition to that..." or, "Is there anything else you see as essential to success in this position?"

Answering Questions

- What are your greatest strengths?
- TRAPS: This question seems like a softball lob, but be prepared. You don't want to come across as egotistical or arrogant. Neither is this a time to be humble.
- BEST ANSWER: You know that your key strategy is to first uncover your interviewer's greatest wants and needs before you answer questions. And from Question #1 you know how to do this.
- **Prior to any interview, you should have a list mentally prepared of your greatest strengths. You should also have a specific example or two, which illustrates each strength, an example chosen from your most recent and most impressive achievements.**
- **You should have this list of your greatest strengths and corresponding examples from your achievements so well committed to memory that you can recite them cold after being shaken awake at 2:30 a.m.**

Strengths

- As a general guideline, the 10 most desirable traits that all employers love to see in their executives are:
- 1) A proven track record as an achiever...especially if your achievements match up with the employer's greatest wants and needs.
- 2) Intelligence ... management "savvy."
- 3) Honesty ... integrity ... a decent human being.
- 4) Good fit with corporate culture...someone to feel comfortable with...a team player who meshes well with interviewer's team.
- 5) Likeability ... positive attitude ... sense of humor.
- 6) Good communications skills.
- 7) Dedication ... willingness to walk the extra mile to achieve excellence.
- 8) Definiteness of purpose ... clear goals.
- 9) Enthusiasm... high level of motivation.
- 10) Confident ... healthy...a leader

Weaknesses?

- What is your greatest weakness?
- This can be an “eliminator” question, designed to shorten the candidate list. But many hiring managers are put off by someone who doesn’t admit weaknesses.
- Sometimes recommended: Disguise strength as a weakness.
- Example: “I sometimes push my people hard. I like to work with a sense of urgency and everyone is not always on that same wavelength.”
- Drawback: This strategy is so widely used, it is transparent to any experienced interviewer.

Weaknesses?

- What are your greatest weaknesses?

If pressed, express weaknesses as either:

- (1) One side of a strength: “I like to approach problems from a strategic position, as this job requires. As a result I sometimes have to remind myself that problems can require an immediate focus.”
- (2) Something you’ve made strides in overcoming: “Earlier in my career, I was nervous when giving a presentation. I’ve worked hard, gotten training, and today I am considered very effective in front of an audience, especially with technical data.”

Why Should I Hire You?

- **This is the most important question of your interview! HM must answer this question favorably in HM's own mind before you will be hired. Walk through the position's key requirements as you understand them, and follow each with a reason why you meet that requirement so well.**
- Example: "As I understand your needs, you are looking for someone with a strong background in trade book sales. This is where I've spent most of my career, that's 18 years. I believe that I know the right contacts; methods, principles, and successful management techniques as well as any person can in our industry."
- "You also need someone who can expand your book distribution channels. In my prior post, my innovative promotional ideas doubled, and then tripled, the number of outlets selling our books. I'm confident I can do the same for you. You also need someone to help boost your mail order sales. Here, too, I believe I have the experience you need. In the last five years, I've increased our mail order book sales from \$600,000 to \$2,800,000, and now we're the country's second leading marketer of scientific and medical books by mail."

Another Question

- **Where do you see yourself five years from now?**
- Interviewers ask this question is to see if you're settling for this position, using it merely as a stopover until something better comes along. Or they could be trying to gauge your level of ambition.
- If you're too specific, i.e., naming the promotions you someday hope to win, you'll sound presumptuous. If you're too vague, you'll seem rudderless
- **BEST ANSWER:** Reassure your interviewer that you're looking to make a long-term commitment...that this position entails exactly what you're looking to do and what you do well. As for your future, you believe that if you perform each job at hand with excellence, opportunities will present themselves.

Another Question

- Why do you want to work at our company?
- This question tests whether you've done any homework about the firm. If you haven't, you lose. If you have, you may win big.
- BEST ANSWER: This question is your opportunity to hit the ball out of the park, thanks to the in-depth research you should do before any interview. Start: “When I looked into your company, I was really excited to find...”
- Best sources for researching your target company: annual reports, the corporate newsletter, contacts you know at the company or its suppliers, advertisements, articles about the company in the trade press. Check their web page first.

Not enough experience

- BEST ANSWER: Here the concern is not that you are totally missing some qualification, such as a CPA certification, but rather that, your experience is light in one area.
- Before going into any interview, try to identify the weakest aspects of your candidacy from this company's point of view. Then prepare the best answer you possibly can to shore up your defenses.
- To get you past this question with flying colors, you are going to rely on your master strategy of uncovering the employer's greatest wants and needs and then matching them with your strengths. Since you already know how to do this from Question #1, you are in a much stronger position.

More specifically, when the interviewer poses an objection like this, you should...

- 1) Agree on the importance of this qualification.
- 2) Explain that your strength here may indeed be greater than your resume indicates

Role Plays

- Pick 3 questions and in groups of 4 practice answering these questions.
- Be prepared to present in front of the class

Interview Role Play: ½ hour

- In trios: two play traditional interview, one observes.
- Questioner describes the job and asks 2 questions about the respondent's fit for the job. 5 minutes.
- Observer gives feedback and discusses. 5 minutes
- Cycle until all 3 have played each role.
- General session debrief and Q&A.

Demo Role Play:

- Three questioners form a panel interview.
- A questioner describes the job and asks 1 question to kick off the role play. Other panel members ask questions. Instructor manages time.
- Observer gives feedback and discusses. 5 minutes
- Cycle until all 3 have played each role.
- General session debrief and Q&A.

What You Should Ask?

• Questions you can ask

- What do you expect me to accomplish in the first 60 to 90 days?
- What are the common attributes of your top performers?
- What are a few things that really drive results for your company?
- How do you plan to deal with your.....
- If I am hired , how will you know I have succeeded?
- Is there anything in my resume that would lead you to believe I cannot do this position?

More Questions

- Are there any other questions I can answer for you?
- **Questions you should ask in an interview:**
- How would you describe the company's culture and leadership philosophy?
- Can you please show me some examples of projects that I'd be working on?
- What is the single largest problem facing your staff, and would I be in a position to help you solve this problem?
- What specific qualities and skills are you looking for in the job candidate?
- Is this a new position, or did someone leave? If someone left, why did they leave or what did they go on to do?
- What is the typical career trajectory for a person in this position?
- What would you say are the three most important skills needed to excel in this position?
- Who would be my manager, and will I have the opportunity to meet him or her?

More questions you may ask

- Why do you like working here?
- What does a typical day or week look like for the person in this position? Is there travel, flextime, etc?
- How do you see this position contributing to the success of the organization?
- What do you think distinguishes this company from its competitors, both from a public and employee perspective?
- Does the company offer continued education and professional training?
- How can I best contribute to the department?
- What achievements would equate to success at this job?
- Are you most interested in a candidate who works independently, on a team, cross-functionally, or through a combination of them all? Can you give me an example?
- What is your ideal communication style with your staff? Do you meet regularly with your team, rely heavily on e-mail, use status reports or work primarily through other means?
- How do you see me as a candidate for the job in comparison with an ideal candidate?

Action Plan

Name:	
Job Title:	
Long-Term Goal:	
Short Term Goals:	
Strengths:	Development Areas:

Career Development Plan:			
Priority:	Action/Activity:	Strategy/Resources:	Target Date: