



THE SECOND INTERVIEW

GETTING PREPARED

The Invitation – Candidates who are being seriously considered are frequently invited for a second interview in the home office or plant. If a company representative considers you to be a qualified candidate for employment, an invitation to continue with the process will be extended. You should acknowledge this invitation with a minimum delay. In many cases, the invitation letter will include a number of alternative dates for your visit, with the selection left up to you. You should choose a date that least conflicts with your schedule. You may also receive a telephone call inviting you to a second interview.

WHAT TO EXPECT

The Opportunity – You should accept an invitation for an office visit only if you are seriously interested in the employer. Some students/alumni have commented on the difficulty of “staying fresh” for a series of interviews comprised of the same questions. There is no magic formula or special technique to suggest other than to keep telling yourself that to each member of the organization the information you provide is new and you should try not to get exasperated by repeat questions. In order to make the interview more dynamic and interesting, we recommend that you ask questions that are specific to the department or individual with whom you are speaking. This not only gives you a broader range of topics to discuss, but provides you with valuable information about the organization which you will need in order to make a wise employment decision. Since the call-back interview is used to measure mutual fit, you should prepare yourself to become more integrally involved in the interview process.

Expenses – If the invitation does not mention expenses, contact the employer for clarification. Most employers pay all reasonable expenses incurred on visits, yet the company will expect you to use discretion in reporting your expenses. Keep records for transportation, food and lodging. If you are planning to visit more than one employer on the same trip, inform each of them and they will assist you in prorating your expenses. The following items are not considered to be normal expenses: entertainment, tours, cigarettes, alcoholic beverages, magazines, personal calls, valet expenses, flight insurance, and excessive tips.

The Interview – The office or plant visit will be conducted in much the same way as your initial interview. Second interviews can vary in length from half an hour to a full day of interviews, tours, and meals with a variety of company employees. For most of us, talking to all of these people can be draining. Therefore, strategies such as taking notes when appropriate and timing your responses – delaying your questions and reaction – may help you to remember names as well as intelligent questions to ask later. During the interview, candidates may expect to discuss job responsibilities, personal qualifications, observe company operations, visit facilities where they might work, meet other personnel, and perhaps tour the community.

Business Etiquette – It is not unusual to be taken out to lunch or dinner as part of your second interview. At such events it is essential to remember and practice everything you ever learned about table manners. Here are some basic guidelines:

- Don't smoke or drink alcoholic beverages (even if invited)
- Order something that is easy to eat (avoid spaghetti, juicy hamburgers, etc.) and which is moderately priced.
- If wine is ordered by your host, have only one glass (if you drink).
- Remember, even though your luncheon host may not be your potential supervisor, you are still being scrutinized and sized up for a correct “fit.”