

The Second Interview

After a successful on-campus interview, you may be invited for a second interview at an organization. The onsite interview is typically the final step in the interview process before a job offer is made. You may participate in a half-day or full day of interviews and your visit may include a meal and/or a site tour. The onsite interview provides an additional opportunity for you to evaluate the organization and gain a better understanding of the work environment. This is also an opportunity for them to see how you interact with the people that you may potentially be working with.

The recruiter

The recruiter who initially interviewed you has a vested interest in your success at the onsite interview. This person recommended you, so prepare for your onsite interview by asking your sponsor questions prior to the interview if they don't already provide them to you. Examples:

- With whom will I be meeting and what are their job titles and descriptions?
- What will they be looking for?
- What type of activities will be scheduled during the day?
- Can you provide additional information about your company?

What to expect and what to do

Depending on the type of position for which you are interviewing that's what the content of your day's activities will depend on. A second interview, therefore, is an opportunity for you to exchange specific information about the job and your ability to fulfill that role.

- Prepare by conducting in-depth research on the organization, beyond their website. Learn what has been written recently about the organization.
- Prepare several questions for the supervisor and prospective co-workers.
- You will interview with several people during the interview and they may ask very similar questions so be consistent with your answers.
- Be as enthusiastic in the afternoon as in the morning when you started your interview.
- Be observant and assess what the physical and social environment is like. Can you envision yourself working there and being happy?
- Be nice to everyone, you never know who may influence the hiring decision.
- Collect business cards from all the interviewers and send individual thank you notes or emails immediately after the interview.
- If there is a meal included in the day's activities demonstrate excellent dining etiquette. Try not to order messy foods like spaghetti and sloppy joes. Don't eat very much because chances are you are fed, breakfast, lunch and other snacks.
- Salary discussions may occur generally at the end of the day. Do not be surprised if salary information isn't broached until an offer is made, often several days later.

Travel Expenses

Employers will typically reimburse candidates for normal travel and lodging expenses or some may make the travel arrangements for you and purchase your plane ticket. Make sure you know the employer's travel policies and their reimbursement procedures before you agree to a second interview out of town. Demonstrate your good business sense by keeping records with receipts of all reasonable expenses.

Unreasonable expenses include flying first class, expensive restaurants and entertainment not arranged by employer.