STUDENT LEADERSHIP INTERVIEWS

Much like any interview, you should 1) research the organization and role; 2) assess how your skills, personality, values, etc are a fit; 3) show up on-time (5-15 min prior); and 4) follow-up with a thank you note or email.

PREPARATION

- Review your application.
- Research the organization.
- Be prepared to explain why you want the 'position' and what you will bring to the program.
- Be prepared with anything you were asked to bring.
- Arrive a few minutes early.
- Schedule a Mock Interview or practice with a friend.
- Dress appropriately (business professional or casual, see Tip Sheet). Ask, if not in application materials.
- Relax and know you will do your best.

INTERVIEWING

- Smile as enter room and make eye contact with interviewers.
- Be yourself and be enthusiastic...but fake shines through.
- If panel, let them extend hands first or skip shaking hands.
- Let the panel tell you when to sit down.
- Organize your thoughts before you speak; know what you want to tell about yourself.
- **WOMEN**: Sit on front half of chair, leaning slightly forward. Don't cross your legs, cross your ankles.
- **MEN**: Sit on front of chair, leaning slightly forward. Plant feet on the ground in front of or slightly under your chair.
- Don't play with hair or jewelry; if you tend to fiddle, then don't wear it and pull your hair back.
- Keep hands in your lap unless making a gesture.
- Don't watch clock, check your phone or glance at watch.
- Don't assume you know the question being asked, listen.
- Maintain natural eye contact; be sure to address answers to each person on the panel, not just to the person who asked the question.
- Don't be afraid to pause a few seconds before answering; gather your thoughts.
- If you don't understand the question, ask for clarification.
- If you don't know the answer to a question, say, "I'm sorry, I don't know. Can we come back to that question?"
- Avoid nervous habits/fillers: um, like, you know, etc.
- Don't exaggerate your accomplishments.
- Don't ramble. Make your point and end the thought.
- Don't mumble. Speak up so that all can hear you.
- Don't chew gum!!
- Don't take a portfolio unless you were asked for ideas or special information to be brought.
- Always leave the interview panel with "something"...reiterate your interest, ask meaningful questions, etc.
- Thank the panel for their time.

SAMPLE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

- Tell us about yourself.
- Where do you see yourself in _____ years?
- What are your strengths/weaknesses?
- What one word best describes you?
- What is your favorite Murray State tradition and why?
- What has being here taught you about people?
- If you were president of MSU for one day, what policies would you initiate?
- What do you see as the biggest problem facing MSU today?
- If you were taking a prospective student on a tour of MSU, where would you take him and why?
- Why did you choose to attend Murray State?
- What makes Murray State special?
- How have you changed since being at Murray State?
- What activities are you involved in and how have they prepared you for the future?
- Do you see yourself as a leader or follower? Why?
- Who has been the most influential person in your life other than your parents?
- If you were a color/tree/kitchen appliance/etc, what would you be?
- What has been the proudest moment in your life?
- Tell us about your most embarrassing moment.
- Tell us about a time when you dealt with a difficult person.
- Tell us about a time when you balanced multiple responsibilities.
- Tell us about a time with you led a team.
- Why should we choose you over other candidates?
- Is there anything you would like to leave us with?

WHAT DO JUDGES LOOK FOR?

- **Appearance** - that you are neat and well groomed. Check yourself in a mirror before an interview to make sure everything is in place.
- **Poise** - that you are self-confident. Know what you are talking about. Show that you can handle a difficult or awkward situation.
- **Personality** - that you're a fit for the organization. Smile and show that you are happy to be there. Make eye contact and show that you are interested. Communicate that you will be a good representative.
- **Originality** - that you are an individual. Tell them original and sincere answers. Avoid cookie cutter answers and share specific examples.

See additional interview tips and sample questions on Interview Tip Sheet.

MURRAY STATE UNIVERSITY
Career Services

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