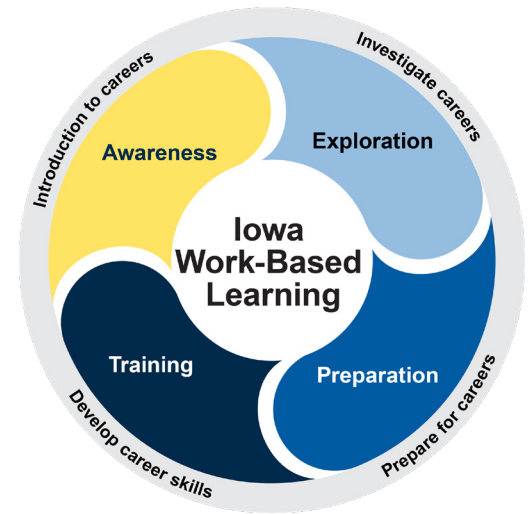


# Mock Interview Toolkit

## Mock interview definition:

Mock interviews are a career preparation experience intended to provide students with the opportunity to develop professional interviewing skills through a practice interview with industry partners, receive valuable feedback to improve performance for the real world and network with industry professionals. To maximize a student's mock interview experience, the student should be prepared to provide professional documents at the time of the interview such as a resume, cover letter, completed application and portfolio. The student should also prepare prior to the mock interview with practice in the classroom setting on how to dress, how to respond to interview questions, expected professional interview behavior and how to receive performance feedback professionally. The industry professionals are able to provide the student with immediate verbal feedback and through evaluation on a scoring rubric, as well as provide professional suggestions for future success. Work-based learning coordinators or college staff overseeing internship programs should maximize student preparation prior to the student's internship interview by first including a mock interview



## Preparation for Mock Interview Experiences

### Identify a planning team for mock interviews

Executing a successful mock interview experience takes coordination and should involve a team of professionals.  
Internal Educational Team

- Responsible for the logistics of the event
  - Date, time, location & schedule
  - Identify and follow district and college policies based on the location of the event
  - Additional support for set-up and tear-down/clean-up on the day of the event
- Connecting students with the appropriate interviewing professional(s)
  - When possible, connect students with industry partners who are in their desired career or related career path
  - If an industry partner in the student's interested career path is not available, find someone in human resources who can provide a quality mock interview experience

### Review Policies and Communication Strategies for Effective Planning

- If the event will take place at the school/college, communicate parking and entrance requirements with the participating industry partners
- If the event will be taking place at an external location, identify the district and college policies for attending off-site events
- Communicate with the event organizers off-site on the schedule, industry volunteers and expectations for students and accompanying staff

## Prepare student learners to maximize career learning during the event

### Prepare students for a successful experience

- Provide learning and time to develop a professional resume and cover letter for the position students are interviewing for
- Provide a simple mock job application for students to complete
  - This will help guide student responses to the mock interview questions

- Teach students and provide classroom practice on:
  - First impressions, proper hand-shaking and non-verbal communication during the interview
- Teach students about appropriate attire and professional appearance
- Share the mock interview questions and strategies for answering effectively
  - Provide classroom time for practicing with other students
  - Provide the rubric on how the students will be evaluated

#### Support student needs

- If participating students need accommodations, plan accordingly to ensure all students have the opportunity to participate

#### Support student professionalism with the experience

- Prepare students with a preview to understand what to expect
- If there are particular professional behavior expectations, discuss and practice those in the classroom prior to the experience to increase successful outcomes
- Outline clear behavior and attire expectations for the students
- If the educator/instructor expects students to submit a completed assignment, activity or project from the event, provide the expectations and identify how and when students will submit their responses

## Prepare internal staff with information to support a successful event

#### Schedule Monitoring

- Depending on the size of the event, additional staff may be needed to help coordinate a rotation
- Identify someone to be responsible for following the planned schedule

#### Supporting Participating Industry

- Identify staff who will be responsible for supporting industry volunteers during the experience
  - Expectations for support may include: welcoming and escorting them into the building, troubleshooting issues during the event and assisting with the end of the event
  - If the event will require industry volunteers to be present during a mealtime, communicate if the meal will be provided or if industry will need to supply their own

## Prepare the industry professional for an educational experience

#### Logistics

- Share venue location and parking information
- Share information on the process to enter the building
  - Identify the staff member who will meet the professionals in the front office
- Confirm the day and time for mock interviews
- Relay expectations for the student's professional behavior and attire
- Finalize and confirm details of the event with the industry partners and site location
  - Initial planning and final confirmation closer to the event

#### Outline clear expectations to support learning goals

\*Provide copies for all the materials the professionals will need:

- Mock interview questions and directions
  - Provide a list of questions for each student the professional is interviewing so they have something to take notes on
  - Provide clear instructions on whether the industry professional can ask additional questions
- Mock interview rubric for each student
  - Make the evaluation by the industry professional simple for efficiency of rating and providing feedback
- Copies of the student's professional documents
  - Offer to provide the student's resume, cover letter and application electronically prior to the mock interview date

## Providing feedback to the students

- Allow time in the mock interview schedule for the industry professional to provide verbal feedback
  - Inform the professional they need to provide positive as well as constructive feedback to the student once the interview has finished
- Provide an example of the extent of written feedback you are seeking

## During the Mock Interview Experience

### Provide a simple checklist for the day of the event

#### Outline expectations of the student

- Professionalism
  - Expectations in behavior, communication and attire during the experience
- Schedule of Interviews
- Any assignment following their experience, if required

#### Outline educational expectations of the industry professional

- Provide a professional and age appropriate mock interview experience
- Ask the questions provided by the educator/instructor
- Provide verbal feedback to the student at the end of the interview
- Complete the rubric on the student's interview before the mock interview experience ends

#### Provide expectations of the educator/instructor/staff

- Ensure the logistics of the event are communicated and adhered to
  - What are the different roles and responsibilities for different individuals
    - » Educators/Instructors
    - » Educational Staff Supporting the Event
- Who is responsible for the set-up of the event?
- Who is responsible for the schedule and rotation?
- Who is responsible for addressing student behavioral issues?
- Who is responsible for supporting industry professionals and their needs?
- Who is responsible to support the end of the event with tear-down and clean-up?

## After the Mock Interview Experience

### Make note of the experience and collect feedback

- Collect and document feedback from the professional, students and your own observations
- Identify recommendations to improve future experiences

### Send a thank you note to the professionals

- Encourage/require students to write a thank you note or a class/course/program thank you
  - Connects the value of the professional's time and provides an opportunity for students to practice professional skills.
  - Provides an important practice opportunity for professionalism for a future real interview situation

### Connect the mock interview experience with student ICAP

*Note for college instructors: Although the acronym ICAP is used in K-12, the following examples provide valuable reflection activities applicable in supporting work-based learning for college students.*

Sample reflection activities:

- Survey
  - Create a short survey and provide a QR code for students to complete their response
- Parking Lot with Follow-Up
  - Have students write up questions or concerns they have prior to the work-based experience on a sticky note and then upon conclusion, visit the parking lot to reflect upon their initial concerns or questions.
- More examples are available on the [Department's Career and Academic Planning webpage](#)

## Consider extension activities to deepen connections of content to career

- Research the career path and how it will impact what was learned during the mock interview
  - Other information learned during the feedback portion of the interview
- Use a professional skills workshop to prepare for the mock interview experience
- Combine a professional skills workshop with mock interviews in coordination with neighboring school districts for an event impacting more students with more efficient use of industry's time
  - Combine efforts with another school district or two to develop an event that offers mock interviews and other rotations on topics from a professional skills workshops
- Use mock interviews to refine student professionalism prior to student's interviewing for their internship

## Photos/video from the event

- If you have pictures from the mock interview experience, share the pictures with the professionals and your district or college
  - Make sure you have photo releases prior to sharing
- Publicizing the mock interviews demonstrates the value of the experience and the partnership with local industry

## Example Mock Interview Reflections

### Example Student Reflection

Mock Interview Reflection Activity (possible questions)

1. Student Name
2. What did you do well?
3. What is one thing you need to work on?
4. What do you wish would have been different about the experience?

### Example Industry Professional Reflection

Mock Interview Reflection from Industry (possible questions)

1. What went well with the mock interview experience?
2. What do you wish would have been different?
3. Was there a theme in interview components students need to work on that I can help better prepare students in the future?