Companies are on campus again, recruiting for both internships and full-time jobs. If you have interviews coming up, you’ll want to be prepared to help you nab that job. Here are three things that employers have told us are important to them!

Make a Good Impression right off the bat!

⇒ Dress appropriately, which usually means in business attire.
⇒ Arrive 5-10 minutes before your meeting.
⇒ Smile and introduce yourself when you arrive.
⇒ Shake hands firmly and make eye contact.

Since starting work at the Career Services Center as Educational Program Interns, Laura and Joyce have learned new skills and discovered tips they wish they had known before starting a job and/or internship search. Read on and learn from their experiences.

Laura: “I went to the job fair as an undergrad, but I did not do my homework before the big day. I wish I knew (or at least paid attention when someone told me) to thoroughly research companies before the job fairs and interviews. At my first job interview after college, I briefly reviewed the company’s website, but was not well-versed on the organization. One of the first questions asked was, ‘Do you know what our company does?’ and I'm pretty sure I panicked and said something like, ‘Um, not really.’ If I had realized how important it was to research companies before you meet them, I would have been more successful.”

Joyce: “My senior year I had a poor internship experience because I wasn’t prepared for the interview. First, I didn’t know to ask questions so when I started work I was surprised at the job responsibilities. Second, because I felt obligated to accept the position I didn’t realize I had the option of refusing even though I didn’t think it was a good fit. And last, I found the internship on my own and decided to take it for experience and not for credit. If I had used the Career Services job board or taken it for credit, I would have had a university point of contact to go to when I encountered difficulties. In the end, I learned the importance of research and preparation when job searching.”

Be Prepared!

⇒ Research the company: This proves to the employer that you really are interested in their company.
⇒ Practice interviewing so you’re more comfortable in the interview setting.
⇒ Formulate questions you would like to ask. Your research of the company should make this easier.

Close the Interview on a Positive Note

⇒ Thank the interviewer for his/her time.
⇒ Restate your interest in the position and company.
⇒ Ask for the next steps, such as their timeframe in making decisions.
⇒ Shake hands, smile, and leave.
⇒ Send thank you notes within 24 hours.

These 3 basic steps ensure that your interview starts and finishes on the right note!