



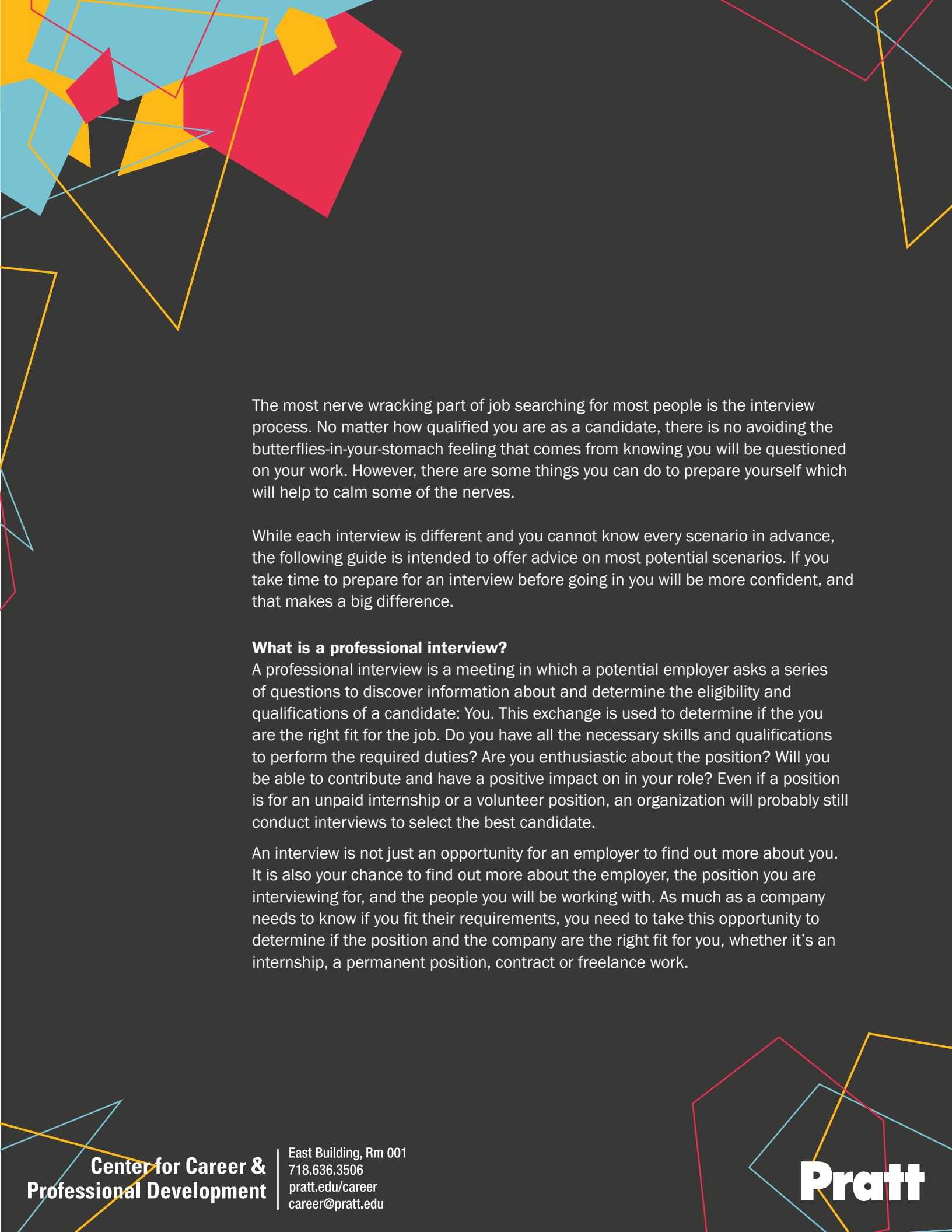
INTERVIEWLAB

take action towards success

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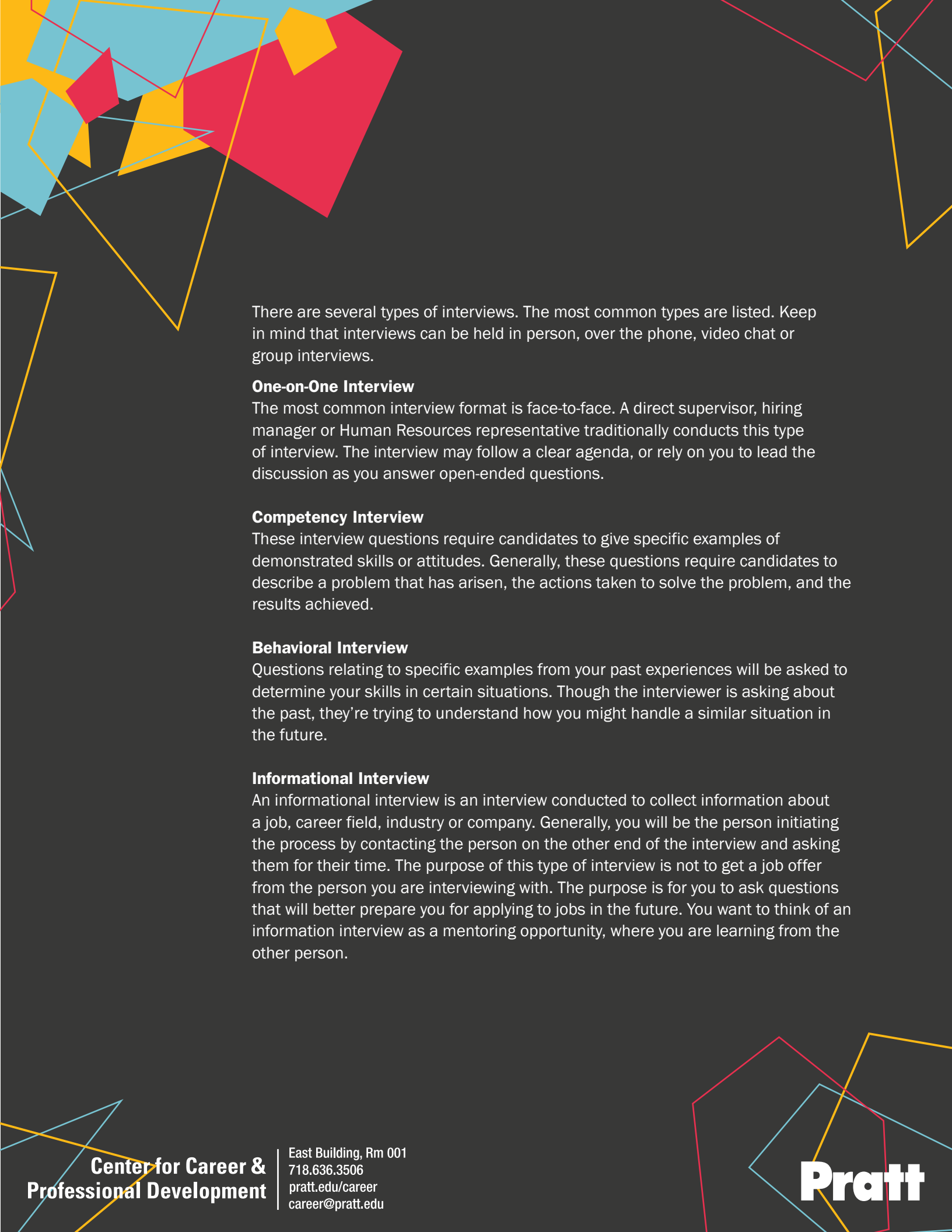
The most nerve wracking part of job searching for most people is the interview process. No matter how qualified you are as a candidate, there is no avoiding the butterflies-in-your-stomach feeling that comes from knowing you will be questioned on your work. However, there are some things you can do to prepare yourself which will help to calm some of the nerves.

While each interview is different and you cannot know every scenario in advance, the following guide is intended to offer advice on most potential scenarios. If you take time to prepare for an interview before going in you will be more confident, and that makes a big difference.

What is a professional interview?

A professional interview is a meeting in which a potential employer asks a series of questions to discover information about and determine the eligibility and qualifications of a candidate: You. This exchange is used to determine if the you are the right fit for the job. Do you have all the necessary skills and qualifications to perform the required duties? Are you enthusiastic about the position? Will you be able to contribute and have a positive impact on in your role? Even if a position is for an unpaid internship or a volunteer position, an organization will probably still conduct interviews to select the best candidate.

An interview is not just an opportunity for an employer to find out more about you. It is also your chance to find out more about the employer, the position you are interviewing for, and the people you will be working with. As much as a company needs to know if you fit their requirements, you need to take this opportunity to determine if the position and the company are the right fit for you, whether it's an internship, a permanent position, contract or freelance work.



There are several types of interviews. The most common types are listed. Keep in mind that interviews can be held in person, over the phone, video chat or group interviews.

One-on-One Interview

The most common interview format is face-to-face. A direct supervisor, hiring manager or Human Resources representative traditionally conducts this type of interview. The interview may follow a clear agenda, or rely on you to lead the discussion as you answer open-ended questions.

Competency Interview

These interview questions require candidates to give specific examples of demonstrated skills or attitudes. Generally, these questions require candidates to describe a problem that has arisen, the actions taken to solve the problem, and the results achieved.

Behavioral Interview

Questions relating to specific examples from your past experiences will be asked to determine your skills in certain situations. Though the interviewer is asking about the past, they're trying to understand how you might handle a similar situation in the future.

Informational Interview

An informational interview is an interview conducted to collect information about a job, career field, industry or company. Generally, you will be the person initiating the process by contacting the person on the other end of the interview and asking them for their time. The purpose of this type of interview is not to get a job offer from the person you are interviewing with. The purpose is for you to ask questions that will better prepare you for applying to jobs in the future. You want to think of an information interview as a mentoring opportunity, where you are learning from the other person.

INTERVIEWLAB

◆ PREPARING FOR AN INTERVIEW

Preparing for a successful interview entails being ready to speak about yourself, your work, and your qualifications. It also requires that you know about the employer and can show enthusiasm about the potential to be part of their team. Therefore, you must conduct thorough research on the company.

At minimum you should browse the employer's website and learn about their vision, message, goals, services, products and projects. Other good places to learn about the company are on their LinkedIn page as well as the LinkedIn profile of its senior staff (CEO, President, Creative Director, etc.). You should also read blog, newspaper and magazine articles about them to demonstrate that you keep current on the employer's activities. You can show enthusiasm about the position by asking questions. Prepare some questions beforehand about the company and the job you are applying for.

◆ COMMON INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

- Tell me about yourself.
- What are your strengths / weaknesses?
- Why do you want this job?
- What attracted you to this company?
- Why should we hire you?
- What do you know about this industry?
- What do you know about our company?
- How would you describe your work style?
- What would be your ideal working environment?
- What techniques and tools do you use to keep yourself organized?
- Tell me about your proudest achievement.
- What do you like to do?
- What three character traits would your friends/ co-workers use to describe you?
- What is the most important thing you learned in school?
- Why did you choose your particular major?
- What magazines do you subscribe to?

◆ QUESTIONS YOU MIGHT ASK

- How do you generate assignments and how do these assignments get assigned?
- What would you consider to be the most important aspects of this job?
- How would you describe the responsibilities of the position?
- How would you describe a typical week/day in this position?
- Can you please show me some examples of projects that I'd be working on?
- How do you communicate with your staff? Weekly meetings or email?
- Do you meet regularly with your team?
- When can I expect to hear from you?
- What are the next steps in the interview process?

TIPS

- ❑ Companies hire people, not their portfolios. When you interview, you are selling yourself and your ability to produce great work. Your portfolio is the product of you. Therefore, you must be prepared to speak eloquently and convincingly about your work rather than expecting the work to do it for you.
- ❑ Connect with the interviewer. Ask them about their role, how long they've been there, their approach to design, etc.
- ❑ Be enthusiastic
- ❑ In most job interviews for the creative field you won't need to wear a suit, but it's always better to be overdressed than underdressed.
- ❑ Each interviewer is different—some may like to drive the portfolio themselves, others may want to go through it quickly and then re-visit, and some will let you walk through it. You don't have to talk about each and every piece. It's OK if some get skipped. Be prepared for all scenarios.
- ❑ Tell the story behind your work. Do not just describe the finished piece
- ❑ When pressed for a full explanation, a good presentation formula would be a recap of the assignment, an explanation of how you met the objective and something unique about your process.
- ❑ Ask questions.
- ❑ Do not say negative things about your past jobs, a classmate, professor, another company or client.
- ❑ Never apologize for something being included in your portfolio. Instead, offer a respectful defense of your decision for including this work.
- ❑ Interviews should be a two-way exchange. You are also making decisions about whether the company is a good fit for you. You should feel comfortable asking questions that help you make this decision.
- ❑ Before you leave an interview, make sure you have the interviewer's contact information to send a detailed thank you or follow-up note

CHECKLIST

- ❑ Do your research.
- ❑ Select portfolio pieces and gear your presentation towards the audience while keeping true to the type of work you want to do.
- ❑ Handwritten thank-you notes are appreciated. An especially considerate touch is to have some with you at the interview and sit to write them out in the lobby before you leave the premises. You can hand them to the person at the front desk and ask them to deliver the notes. Well-written e-mails with relevant details from the interview process are also appreciated.
- ❑ Pay attention during the interview and ask relevant questions.
- ❑ Have a perspective and be confident expressing your point of view.
- ❑ Know and be able to articulate why you are in the creative field and what your goals are.
- ❑ Look up the location in advance and be early.



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