Interview Tips from the Director of Residence Life

☑ Dress appropriately – whether it’s for an on campus, off campus, full time, or part time position. Anytime you are interviewing, you should look like you want the job. For an on campus part time position, snappy casual is acceptable. On campus employers understand that you have class and labs, but it’s still possible to be dressed interview appropriate coming from class. And no jeans!

☑ Make eye contact and shake hands with your interviewer when you come in. This makes a strong first impression.

☑ Be at least 10 minutes early. This gives you time to prepare and to find where you are going. It also shows the employer that you are punctual. I personally have a five minute rule – if you are not there five minutes early I consider you late.

☑ Research the position, even on a minimal level. Check the department’s (or business’s) website. Most of them will list a position description and either an organizational chart or staff list. You should be able to talk about the responsibilities of the position and how your experience will translate. You should at least know basic details of the business or department that you are interviewing with.

☑ If you know someone in the position currently, ask them about their job and what they do day-to-day. If you don’t know anyone in the position, try to reach out. For example: if you are interviewing for a RA position, talk to a current RA. Take notes. My first question to every interviewee for a RA position is always “who is your RA?” If you can’t answer that question, it shows me that you haven’t taken the time to talk to him or her about the position, and more importantly, tells me that you haven’t become active in your community.

☑ Bring at least one or two questions to ask your interviewer. It might not seem necessary, but interviewers view it as you being invested in the position and committed to learning more. It’s one proactive step you can take in making a great impression.

☑ Finally, you should always be aware of your social media profiles and what they contain. Employers do check these sites and can be a factor in you getting hired or passed over. If you don’t want it on the front page of the newspaper, then don’t post it online!