An aerial photograph of a beach and ocean. The left side shows a sandy beach with some small rocks and footprints. The right side shows turquoise ocean waves with white foam. The text is overlaid on this image.

ROUTE

23

INTERVIEW GUIDE

DESTINATION INTERNSHIP

TABLE OF CONTENTS

This guide will provide all the necessary information to understand the basics of successful interviewing. Be sure check out the Route 23 Interview videos on Destinationinternship.com for a more in depth explanation how to successfully interview.

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33% of hiring managers know if they will hire a candidate within 90 seconds. (Classes & Careers)

Within 90 seconds of starting an interview, a lot can go right or wrong depending on your presence and preparation.

This guide will share strategies to ensure that you ace your interview right from the start.

Lack of confidence during the interview is why 40% of interviewers don't take a candidate past the first stage. (Twin Employment)

One of the best ways to be more confident during an interview is to **prepare like a champ**. We'll share unique and proven preparation techniques to help you win your next interview.

Once your foot is in the door, the interview is critical to winning the favor of the hiring manager.

Interviewing, while seemingly daunting, is nothing more than sharing your knowledge, experiences, and personality with someone looking to hire you.

This guide shares techniques to position yourself as the best candidate for the job during the interview process.

47% of employers say that they will reject candidates if they don't know much about the company. (Twin Employment)

Company research is a critical component of interview preparation.

Knowing where to find relevant company information is one of the key pieces of sharing your knowledge that will impress an interviewer.

STATISTICS

PREPARATION



The Expanded Resume

The expanded resume technique is "square one" for interview preparation. It provides a strong foundation for your responses to questions as well as your confidence during the interview.

In a nutshell, the expanded resume is a **living document that contains all the information about your experiences** that don't fit on your resume.

The benefit of creating an "Expanded Resume" is two fold: First, it **"jogs" your memory and reminds you of experiences not directly written on your resume**. Second, **by becoming more familiar with your experience, you will begin to talk more confidently during an interview**.

Benjamin Franklin once said that "Failing To Prepare Is Preparing To Fail." This quote cannot be more true when it comes to preparing for an interview.

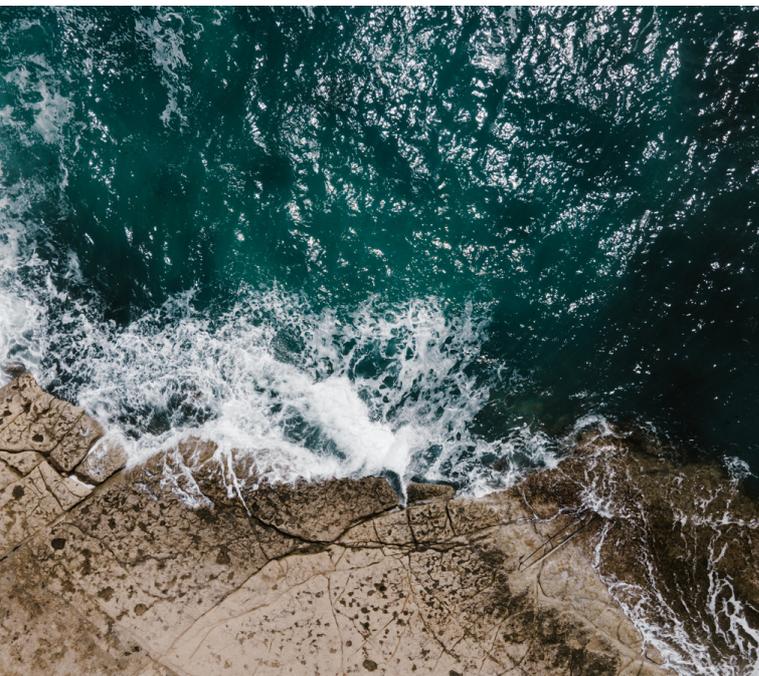
Preparation is crucial.

However, most candidates simply do not prepare because they simply do not know where to start.

Most tasks require only 20% concentrated effort to achieve 80% of the results. This guide will address only a portion of everything there is to learn about your preparation, but will provide you with all the tips and tools to receive an offer!

Steps to Developing an Expanded Resume

- Create a new file of your resume and left align text. Then, set the font, text size, spacing, etc to the same for the entire document.
- Delete information irrelevant to your experience: Name, Contact Information, GPA, etc.
- For the remaining experiences and information, begin adding more information to the document: specific moments in your experiences, clubs, extracurricular activities, volunteering, etc. For example, if my resume said "Collaborated with other engineering disciplines to create mechanical CAD drawings," an extra detail I could include in the "Expanded Resume" is when one of the other disciplines provided incorrect information to me and how I overcame that obstacle.
- Format the document using Bold, Italics, etc in your preferred manner to organize the file.
- "Tag" each of the expanded pieces of information in the document. In the example above, I would tag the experience as "Working in a Team." Common tags come from the types of questions interviewers ask: Making a Mistake, Working in a Team, Overcoming Conflict, Thinking Outside of the Box, etc



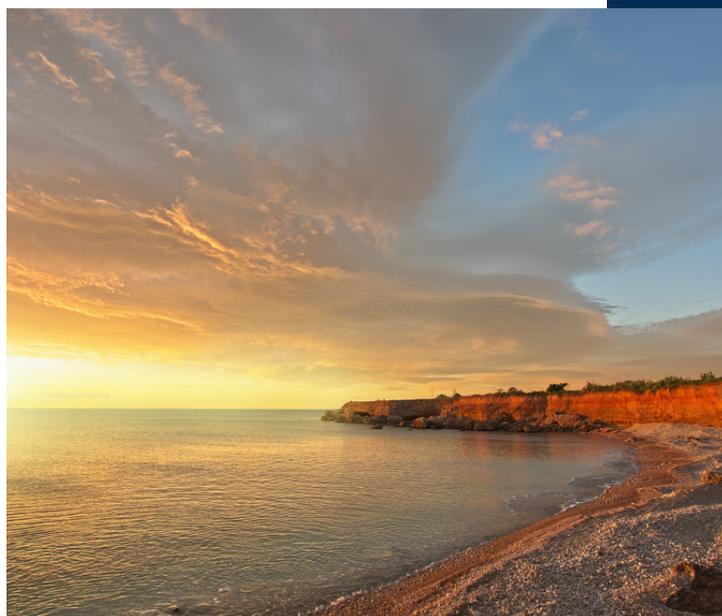
KNOW THE ROLE!

Successful interview preparation also means knowing about the role itself! This includes **requirements, expectations, company-specific information, and more.**

This knowledge is very important and will impact your preparation in several ways. First, it should impact how you answer questions. **Make sure to provide answers that reflect the values and skills the company is looking for in a candidate.** Second, it will impact your preparation. **Your preparation should be done through the lens of what the company is interested in finding out about you.** If I am interviewing for a software developer engineering role, then I would focus on understanding my software development experience more than others.

There are few ways to learn about the role that a company needs to fill. The first place to look is the job description. Many times the description will include a team name, key qualifications, and desired skills. Be sure to take note of skills that are specific to the role and not very common. Knowledge of these will likely set you apart from other candidates.

A little-utilized trick to learn more about internship positions is to **read the job descriptions of full-time roles.** How does this work? First identify the type of role for the internship. For example, if the role is titled "Facilities and Infrastructure Accounting Internship," you should have a clear idea that the role is accounting related and probably part of the Facilities and Infrastructure department.

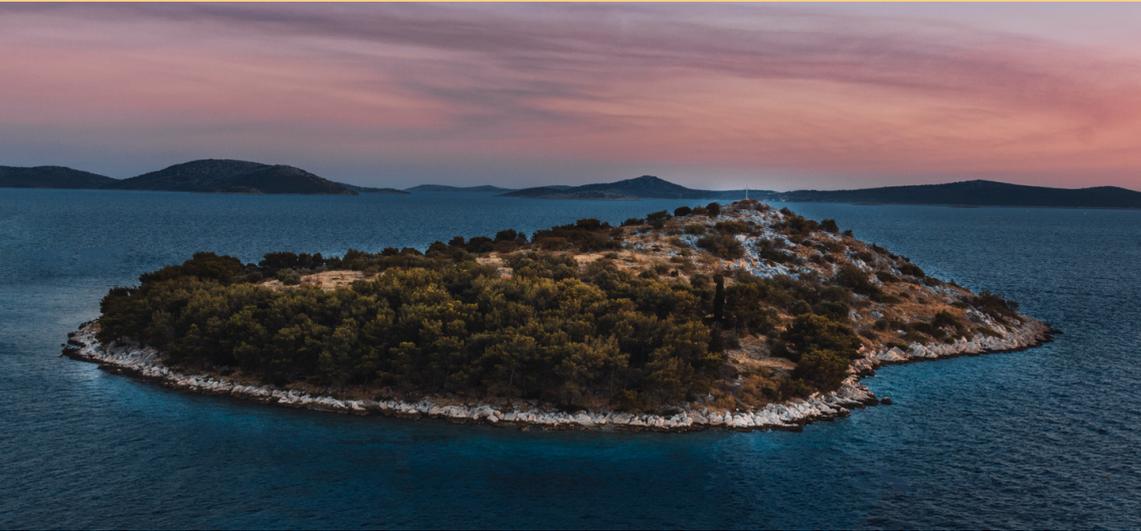


Next, check out a general search engine or the company's Careers webpage and try to find the full-time equivalent of the internship position. Often times, the full-time job posting will share more detail about the team and role.

After learning about the role, it is important to understand more about the company. Be sure to **research the products that the company makes and understand their competitive advantage in the marketplace.** For example, if you are working for a car brand that customers keep buying because of its track record of reliability and safety, it is important to know that the brand is known for reliability and safety. **Additionally, most companies have a mission statement and core values. Be sure to understand these.**

Lastly, use on top of current events involving the company. If the company just announced a major expansion, that information is just one click away. **Try using Google News or the company's News webpage to learn more recent events within the organization.**

In all, be sure to know about the role and company that interests you. **The knowledge gained from a few minutes of research can easily enhance your conversations with an interviewer.**



INTERVIEW PREPARATION

Specific preparation for the interview can be daunting. However, knowing more about it should help ease most of your concerns.

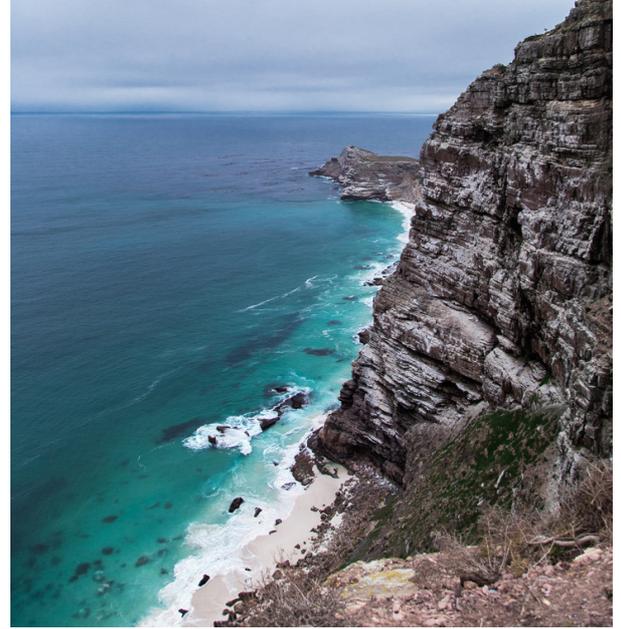
It is important to **understand the format** of your interview. This includes how long it is, the types of questions that will be asked, and how many people will be in the interview. Finding out all this information is just an email away.

Usually the recruiter working with you will provide details about the length and how many people will be on the interview. Some interviews are 1:1 with a hiring manager. Others are called "panel interviews" and consist of yourself and multiple other people on the hiring team.

Knowing the type of interview will greatly ease any concerns you may have. Some "interviews" are considered screening interviews and used to pass candidates on to more formal interview rounds. These interviews check for general qualification and are not too difficult. But later on, you may be interviewing with the hiring manager. At this point it is usually a good idea to ask your recruiter for information about the type of interview. **In a general most internship interviews are either technical, behavioral, or both.** The different types are discussed at length later in this guide. Knowing the type of interview will impact how you prepare and what material you use to prepare.

The last main component of preparing for interviews is having a core group of questions to ask at the end. **Interviewing is often called a two way street for the company to evaluate their interest in you, and for you to gauge your interest in the company.** Use these questions to learn more about the type of work, the company culture, etc. One of my favorite questions to ask is: "Is there anything I've talked about during the interview that I can provide clarity on or do you have any reservations about anything I've talked about?" This question opens the door for you to clear any confusion the interviewer might have. Their response can also give you an idea of your overall interview performance.

COMMON QUESTIONS



The three most common types of questions asked during interviews for internship roles are Behavioral, Technical, and Experiential. Each has their own intended purpose and should be treated differently when preparing for an interview. This section of the guide will walk through the purpose of each type and tips for succeeding.

Behavioral

The purpose of behavioral questions is to understand how you behave in certain situations. Most often they will begin with "Can you tell me about a time when..." Common behavioral questions relate to working with a team, resolving conflict, or making a mistake.

If you successfully created the Expanded Resume talked about at the beginning of this guide, then finding a situation to talk about should not be difficult. Be sure to use a situation that is a relevant and easy to explain.

Sometimes it is not possible to think about a situation. **Don't Lie! It is ok to say you cannot think of a specific situation, but be sure to follow up with how you would act in that particular situation**

The best way to respond to a behavioral question is to use our START method outlined later in this section.

Experiential

Experiential questions are meant to help the interviewer understand more about the work you performed at a previous job or experience. The interviewer will often try to dig deeper into the experience. For example, the interviewer will ask for an explanation of your responsibilities at a previous job. Then, the interviewer might ask for more specific details such as the rationale for making a certain decision.

The best way to prepare for these types of situations is to create the Expanded Resume that is discussed at the beginning of this guide.

It is also important to practice explaining your experience out loud. Only when you start speaking out loud will you understand what words and phrases best explain your experience.

Technical

Technical questions are the least common during internship interviews. **The purpose of the technical interview is to understand your skills or knowledge as they relate to the job.** For example, an electrical engineering student that is interested in electronics might be asked to create a specific circuit using basic electronic devices.

It is important to know that solving the question correctly is not always the most aspect of your response. **It is important for the interviewer to understand your thought process as you solve the problem.**

The interviewer wants to know how you think. Feel free to "think out loud" and share different ideas you have. Also, remember that the interviewer is on your team and wants you to succeed. Try to work together with the interviewer to solve the problem instead of silently sitting and solving.

START METHOD

Use the START method to structure your response to behavioral or experiential interview questions.

SITUATION

First, explain the situation. Explain the who, what, where, when, and why of what you are about to explain. This is **important context for the interviewer to understand the situation**. However, do not explain too much. If you explain too many "in-the-weeds" technical details, then the interviewer may grow impatient waiting for your reply or become confused.

TASK

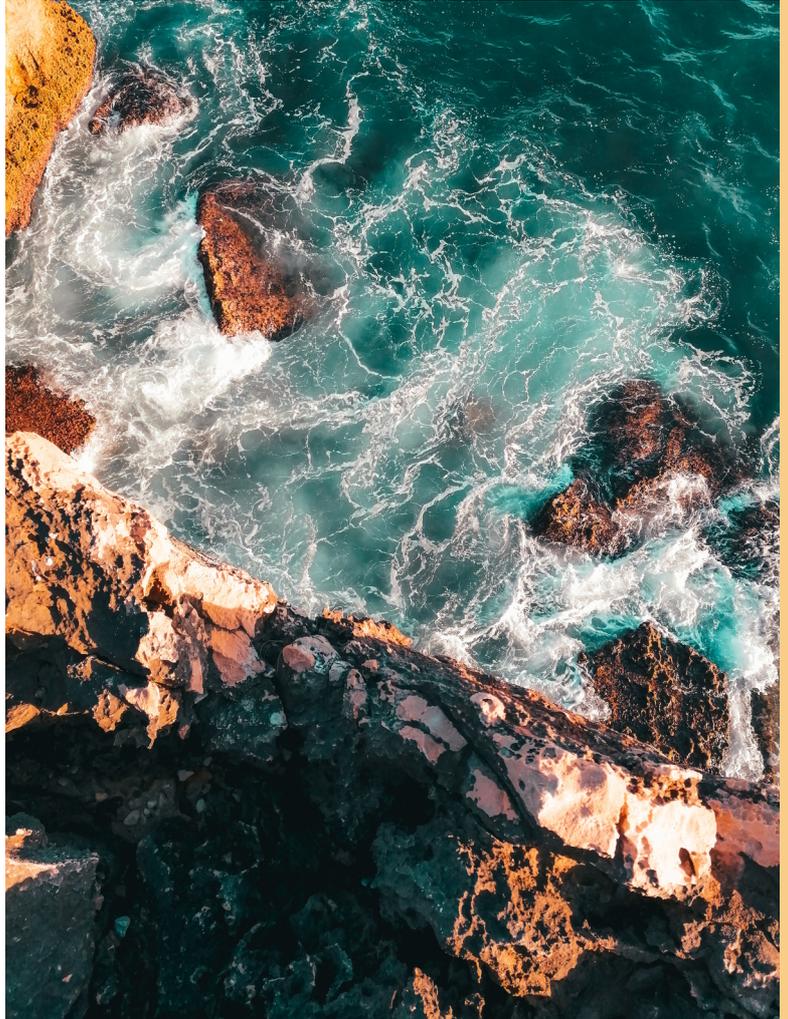
What was it that you were tasked to do? **Explain what was your main objective during the situation**. Don't explain too many details that would bore the interviewer. Explain just enough to inform them and keep them intrigued.

ACTION

This is where you explain the action you took. Use this as an opportunity to really shine. Did you take bold and decisive action? Did you do something impressive nobody else was thinking? Did you do something considered "out of the box?" **Let the interviewer know what steps you took to address the task at hand**.

RESULT

What was the result of your action? Did your team win the competition? Did your design work when it was built? **This is the time to show how your action had a meaningful impact on the situation**. How did the situation end. Use this as an opportunity to provide closure on the situation



TRANSFERABLE SKILLS

Most people giving interview advice only share the STAR method. The START method adds one more step to the response that allows you to hit a home run on every question.

By ending your response with a short statement about transferrable skills learned, you **provide more insight into how you grew from the situation**. This could be as simple as saying "And this situation taught me the importance of receiving feedback from others when I'm working on a project without many details."

WRAPPING IT UP: STRATEGIES

WHEN YOU DON'T KNOW THE ANSWER

It is ok if you do not have an answer to every question asked during an interview. However, you always want to try your best to respond in some way. When you can't think of an answer to a question, first ask the interviewer if you can move on to the next question and come back to that one later. This will give you more time to think of a response. If you return to the question and can still not think of a response, tell the interviewer you are struggling and ask what they are looking for in a response. This is important because maybe you are misinterpreting the question. As a last case scenario, talk about a hypothetical situation and how you would behave. This is much better than not answering the question at all.

TALK SLOW

It's easy to talk fast, fumble words, get out of breath, and ramble on during an interview. All of this can be improved by talking slow. The interviewer is there to listen to you, so be sure that every word has meaning and you are communicating your ideas clearly. Often times when you start talking very fast, it is harder for the interviewer to follow along. Additionally, it is easy to skip over important details and end up saying "actually, let me go back" and re-explain a topic over again. Be sure to consciously talk slow to improve your interview performance.

STRUCTURED RESPONSES

During an interview, there are key components of your response that the interviewer is looking for and recording in their notes. It is for this reason that you want to be sure your responses are very structured and easy to follow. Before replying, take a moment to think about how you will reply. For example, if I was asked why I studied electrical engineering, I structured response involves stating two reasons and then explain each reason. This is a very logical and easy-to-follow response.

THINK BEFORE RESPONDING

There is no rush to give an answer the second the interviewer is done asking a question. Take a minute to think about your experiences and how you will phrase it in the context of the question. By rushing into a response, it is easy to start talking faster than you think and lose your train of thought. Use the 15-30 seconds after a question is asked to determine what you will talk about and how you plan to talk about it most effectively.

Matt and Mike Kadus started Destination Internship in December 2020 with the following goal in mind: Share experiences, tips, and strategies in interviewing and hiring for college students.

After successfully receiving internship offers from many companies including Apple, Tesla, SpaceX, McKinsey & Co, Johnson & Johnson, ExxonMobil, GM, GE, Siemens, John Deere, and many more, they've developed proven strategies for effective networking, resume writing, and interviewing. Our advice has been verified with years of experience and success, as we've received Fortune 100 internship offers every year since entering college as freshmen.



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WHO WE ARE

LET'S TALK!

CHECK US OUT!

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