

Interview Research & Mock Interview | Beyond OSU: Experience

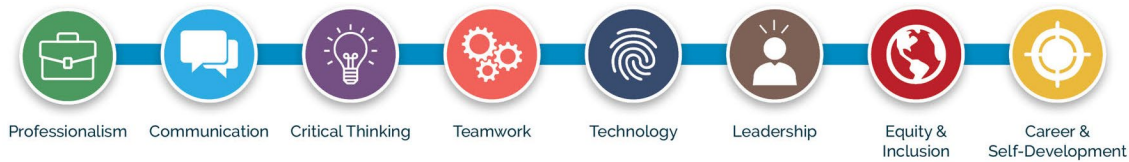
Assignment Overview:

Researching employers is a critical component of your interview preparation. Knowing more about employers will help you feel comfortable and confident walking into an interview. This research will also help you align your questions and answers to the organization's goals and initiatives. After researching a company of interest, you will connect with an OSU alum to conduct a mock interview via Zoom or in-person.

Learning Outcomes: 1. Generate a method for gathering background insights on an organization.
2. Apply those insights to perform an effective mock interview.

Beyond OSU: This assignment falls under the **Beyond OSU II (Engage) learning outcome:**
Apply career development concepts to relevant artifacts from engagement in a career related experience or activity.

NACE Competencies: Skills developed completing this assignment:
Professionalism, Communication, Critical Thinking, Career & Self-Development



Student Worksheet:

Step 1: **Company research:** Using the methods below, learn about your target company.

Company Website: Do a deep dive of their homepage, about us, staff, mission, and current projects.

Social Media: Look for a company account on Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, YouTube, etc.

Google News/Search: Pull public stories from across multiple platforms and outlets for the latest news.

Build a Network: Ask people you know professionally and socially if they are familiar with the organization or anyone who works or has worked there. Research people inside the organization using [LinkedIn](#) and [OSUConnections](#) and look for alumni affiliated with this employer or industry.

Step 2: Alumni contact: If you come across OSU alumni working where you are conducting your research or an alum within a similar industry or area of work, try to connect with them and ask if they would be willing to talk and take part in a mock interview assignment for your class at OSU.

Alumni you found for this assignment:

If you do not find an alum within your company research, use [OSUConnections](#) to find alternate alumni in similar fields or graduates of your college that might have some shared experiences. The instructor of this course can also offer insights.

Step 3: What you learned: List the most compelling information you found in your research.

1. **Mission statement** and goals of the organization.
2. Where is the organization's **headquarters** located? Do they have additional locations? Where? Which location(s) would you consider working at?

3. What are the **primary projects** and divisions of the organization; in what area would you like to work for them?

4. What is the **primary product** or **service** of the organization? Who are their customers/clients?

5. Are there any **notable accomplishments/awards/recognitions** for this organization?

6. What can you tell about the **culture** of the organization?

7. What 3 questions would you ask this company during an interview? It's a good idea to have many ready!

Step 4: Questions for your Mock Interview: The final part of this assignment is completing a mock interview where an OSU alum will interview you using questions you provide them. These can be both general questions along with 2-3 company specific questions. The person interviewing you may not know everything about the organization you researched, but the goal is to have them provide feedback on your overall engagement and techniques while you gain experience. The Career Development Center offers [sample questions](#) to help you get started. Feel free to add your own ideas and research results to add some focused or company specific questions.

Write 10 general questions you could be asked by mock interviewer (have interviewer choose 5)

Step 5: Create a list of three questions you'll ask your interviewer (OSU Alum) following your mock interview. Use the list below to get you started thinking. [Additional Questions](#) can be found on the Career Development Center site.

1. Any suggestions for a focus if I were to interview with this company/organization?
2. Broadly speaking, what are employers looking for when they hire recent graduates?
3. What advice do you have about how to be successful going through an interview process?
4. What questions should I ask an employer in an interview? Any suggestions that would make me stand out?

Write 3 Alumni questions:

Step 6: Set up a time to meet with your interviewer/Alumni contact.

Finding someone is the most difficult part of this assignment, but the most valuable. The instructor for this class can help connect you with potential alumni beyond your general search. Once you find someone, set up a time to meet well in advance (even before you have this sheet completed). This can be over Zoom, in-person or over the phone. Follow the instructions and details from your instructor.

Step 7: Reflection.

Using the box below, write a 200-300 word reflection on what you learned from your interviewer and from the interview process. Questions to answer: What will you use from this assignment to prepare for a real interview? What was the hardest part of this assignment for you? Why? What felt a little more comfortable to complete or made you feel confident? Why?

Notes for Instructors:

Please adjust this assignment as needed to fit your schedule, point system and course outcomes. While this assignment is designed intentionally at this length, we know that career development is not a one-size fits all process. Be mindful of your audience and their readiness conducting a mock interview and contacting people. Feel free to add specific industry elements or supportive alumni from your college to make this more engaging. Please schedule this assignment with ample time to secure student interviewers. Please have a reserve list of participating alumni before implementing this assignment.

Suggestions for this assignment:

Length: If this is too long for your course, consider cutting down the number of questions or removing the reflection. Students should use this worksheet to prepare for a particular organization, but the same preparation is helpful for any interview. Coach students through any industry expectations and best practices in their field(s), proper attire, etc.

Assessment & Submission: Please assess this assignment in line with the other work for your course, and direct students in how you would like it submitted (printed and turned in during class, electronically filled out and submitted via Canvas, etc.). Depending on the needs of the student populations you typically work with, you might consider a “Choose Your Own Adventure” assignment and let students choose between a mock interview with an alum or an informational interview. You could also replace alumni interaction with industry if you happen to have more professional connections than alum connections.

Alumni contacts: Some colleges have high alumni engagement that can be utilized in this assignment. The Alumni Association is also a good place to turn for alumni contacts beyond [OSUConnections](#), but we suggest working through your college to find the best industry connections. Depending on the number of alumni you have access to, you could also double up and have Alumni mock interview multiple students if and when willing.

Additional Resources: Please consider using the robust online resources the [Career Development Center](#) offers you and your students. For more information on using the Career Development Center's tools, events and workshops in your classroom, please [visit our website](#).



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