

The 2nd Round Interview / Site Visit

What to Expect:

- Expect the site interview to be more in-depth than on-campus interview, as you likely will be interviewing with several managers, including the person most likely to become your supervisor
- Expect to interview with several people at the same time or to rotate among several interviewers (up to 5 or 6). You may be at the site all day.
- Expect to meet with HR, perhaps the same person you met on campus.
- Expect to be in a group of several other candidates (some from other schools). You may rotate around as a group, or you may rotate around individually. You may have lunch together with managers as a group of candidates.
- Expect to be asked some of the same questions by several interviewers.
- Expect to be asked to fill out an application upon arriving at the site

How to Prepare:

- Research the company THOROUGHLY beforehand. Remember that interviewing is a two-way street—you want to find the company that provides the best match for you
- Know your resume. Employers want to know the extent of your involvement on a particular project. Even if your role within a particular project was relatively specific or minor, you should know in detail the concepts and instruments used; e.g., the instrumentation, software, or programming languages selected, why they were selected, how they were used, etc.
- Create a list of questions to ask (use your company research). Try not to ask all of the same questions at each interview.
- Bring the names and contact information of 3 references (title, address, phone, email). Know the dates of your work history and the approximate salary at each. You might need this information to fill out an application.
- Bring a few copies of your resume and a copy of your transcript.
- Have the name and phone number of the person you will be meeting (and/or the main company number) handy. Call if lost, in traffic, etc. Bring a picture ID and be prepared to encounter security.
- When possible, take a “practice run” to make sure you know how to get there and approximately how long it will take.

Tips:

- Keep in mind each person in the office is another “interviewer”. The secretary, your lunch table companions, anyone who was able to interact with you can potentially make the comment that heavily influences your status.
- Remember that “casual” group activities with other candidates (lunch, cocktail parties) are still part of the evaluation process. Use this opportunity to stand out from the crowd by asking informed questions that show you did your homework.
- Get a business card from EVERY person you interview with. Try to send a separate, unique, personalized thank-you note to each. If that is not feasible, it’s OK to thank the main person you met with for arranging the meeting with _____, _____, and _____. Write down quick notes on the back of the cards during breaks so you can remember your conversation with each interviewer.
- Keep your eyes and ears open during the site visit/tour. Is this an environment in which you can picture yourself? How does everyone dress? How do they act?
- Above all – relax and be enthusiastic. Remember that even though you are tired by the time you get to the last interview, you still have to appear as enthusiastic and excited as you did during the first one.
- As with first round interviews, be sure to clarify the next step in the process. Be sure you understand how and when the employer will be getting back to you regarding your candidacy. When will you be contacted? By whom? Is it OK to follow up if you don’t hear back by the timetable given? Who should you contact?