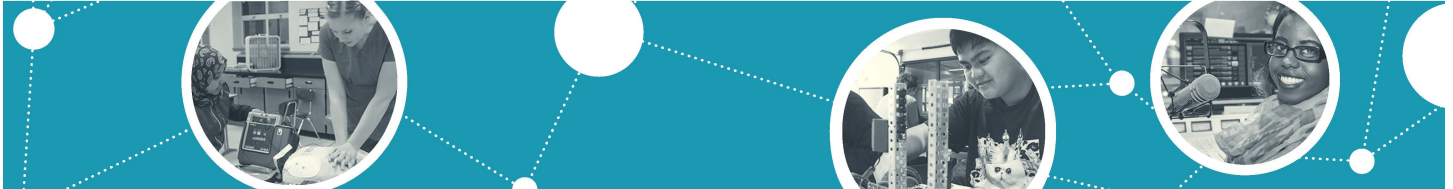




Partner Connect: *Mock Interviews*



Portland Public School students often have limited experience applying for and interviewing for jobs. A mock interview allows them to think about what they offer to prospective employers, how to present themselves and effectively communicate their strengths, and how to make the case that they are right for the job.

During a Mock Interview, the interviewer is a professional who plays the role of the prospective employer, and the interviewee plays the role of the job candidate. Mock Interviews allow students to practice interview techniques and get feedback and coaching on their interviewing skills. Generally, mock interviews are an activity for older students who are beginning to think more seriously about jobs and careers as they continue their education.

WHAT IS A MOCK INTERVIEW

- *Students prepare for mock interviews in the same way that job candidates should prepare for real interviews—by researching the company, weighing the strengths they offer as a candidate, and dressing appropriately.*
- *Interviewers can prepare by reviewing a student's resume and learning in advance about the student's interests, academic qualifications and work experience.*
- *The typical duration of a Mock Interview is from 25–45 minutes.* Following the interview, the interviewer should provide feedback to the student on how it went.



EMPLOYER PARTICIPATION

- Contact the Career Coordinator so you have some basic information about the students you will be interviewing.
- Encourage schools to have students send resumes or letters outlining their key skills, experiences and interests.
- Communicate with the Career Coordinator throughout the process and when communicating with students.
- Make sure the school and the student have information about the company so the student can prepare for the interview in advance.
- A good interview should flow like a conversation. Prepare a basic set of questions so you can cover key points and keep the conversation flowing.

STUDENT PARTICIPATION

- Get firsthand, relevant information about the realities of working within a particular field, industry or position.
- Improve your communication skills and confidence speaking with professionals.
- Gain knowledge that can help you in writing your resume and interviewing for jobs in the field.
- Initiate a professional relationship and expand your network of contacts in a specific career field.

LIABILITY EXPOSURE

Liability Exposure at the company place of business and while the student is in transit is the responsibility of Portland Public Schools. You should think of liability issues in the same manner that you handle them for visitors who spend time in your facility.





EMPLOYER BENEFITS

- Employers have the opportunity to expose students to their company and industry and generate student interest in career and jobs in their organization and industry.
- Employers can help students understand the education and skills they need to secure jobs with their companies.
- Employers advance their reputation as supporters of education and community leaders among school leaders, teachers, parents, and students.

STUDENT BENEFITS

- Students gain valuable experience and practice by having to think about and articulating their strengths and skills they offer prospective employers.
- Feedback is a key facet of the mock interview experience, students are able to evolve their understanding of where they need to develop and build-on their strengths.
- The interview process can be quite daunting, by affording students the opportunity to practice this invaluable skill they are able to gain insights into the real-world processes.

TIPS FOR MOCK INTERVIEWS: MAKING IT EFFECTIVE AND EDUCATIONAL

- Coordinate with the Career Coordinator/teacher and set up a date and time. Be sure to ask the Career Coordinator what background knowledge students have about the company or career field.
- Greet the student as an adult business associate, with a handshake and a warm hello. Introduce yourself, provide your name, job title and business card.
- Let your student know you volunteered to facilitate Mock Interviews because you think it is important for students to experience firsthand the processes businesses use to screen and hire potential employees.
- Ask to see the resume, and then use it as a tool to provide an initial basis for conversation.
- Discuss how many people work for the company, and provide a quick overview of the various types of jobs they hold, as well as the technical and "soft " skills necessary for those jobs.
- Follow up with the Career Coordinator/teachers, determine what went well and what might need to be adjusted in the future.

POTENTIAL STUDENT QUESTIONS

- What do you see as the pros and cons of this type of work?
- What are the qualifications and educational requirements for this type of work?
- What factors would make one fail or succeed in this type of work?
- What are the current challenges faced by this industry?
- What is the future outlook for careers in this area?
- What kinds of experience would you suggest that someone pursue to make them more marketable in this field?
- What resources and tools does your organization use to recruit and hire prospective employees?
- Can you recommend any professional journals, conferences/workshops, or professional associations that relate to your line of work?
- Are there specific employer directories, industry leaders, or employer research guides I could further explore for targeting potential networking contacts?
- Are there other contacts you can refer me to that might provide additional insight into your profession?

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