

## INSIDE THE MIND OF THE INTERVIEWER

**Brad:** When it comes time to interview, students often approach it the wrong way. They think, “I’m interviewing with Brad. Let the battle of wits begin.” In your mind, every question is some type of trick question and it’s your job, in a split second, to figure out what that trick question is. I can almost see your brain churning: “Brad has asked me this question. It’s clearly some type of trick question. Here’s what I would normally say. Here’s what Brad probably wants me to say. So, here’s what I’m going to say.” Sorry, wrong answer. The fact is, the best interviews are conversations between two people. There are very few trick questions. There are no right or wrong answers. There aren’t hidden meanings in what they are asking you. In fact, the following is not a likely interview scenario:

**Interviewer:** If you were stranded on a desert island with one book, two farm animals, and one signer of the Declaration of Independence, what would you choose?

**Interviewee:** *War and Peace*, a chicken, a goat, and James Madison.

**Interviewer:** Wrong! We were looking for the *Iliad*, a rooster, a cow, and John Hancock. Leave my office. You have just failed the interview.

**Brad:** Interviews are about establishing a connection and showing the interviewer who you are. So, how do you ace an interview? Well, like a lot of things in life, preparation and practice. This may sound obvious, but know what you’ve done. You need to take a 360-degree perspective of everything on your resume. From where you went to school, to your jobs, your internships, your major, and even your extra-curricular activities. If it’s on your resume, be prepared to speak about it intelligently. For instance, if they see you’re a leader in student government, they are not going to say,

**Interviewer:** Oh, Courtney, I see you’re president of the student body. That’s pretty cool, huh?

**Brad:** It’s much more likely that an interviewer is going to spend quite a bit of time on that fact. In fact, they could ask you questions like:

- Why did you decide to run for student government?
- What did you like about, what did you dislike about it
- Why do you think you won?
- What was your platform?
- What was your biggest mistake?
- What was your biggest success?
- How would you do it differently and why?
- How was your relationship with your vice president?
- How was your relationship with administration?
- How did you convince a skeptical school?
- ...and on and on and on.

Job  Bound



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Now an interviewer isn't going to rip them off like I just did. But the fact of the matter is, they want decent answers to those questions. That's where practice and preparation comes in. Yes, practice. How do we become good at anything? We practice. And interviewing is no different. I recommend you go on at least three or four mock interviews before you go on a real interview. Your career center is the best place to start. They can interview you at least a couple of times and give you some amazing advice on how to ace the interview. Then get your parents to do it, your friends, really anybody. The more you dress up in the suit, sit behind the desk, the more comfortable you'll feel. Good luck.