

# The Day Visit

## Purpose

*To evaluate your...*

- Communication abilities
- Ability to work effectively as part of a team
- Problem solving and analytical thinking proficiency
- Leadership skills
- Follow-through and initiative
- Creativity and innovation
- Technical aptitude

## Methods of Evaluation

- Your seminar presentation
- Individual and group interviews
- Meals and breaks
- Team activities and role-playing
- The entire visit

## Preparation

- Research the organization THOROUGHLY
  - Be able to incorporate information from your research into your answers
  - Prepare thoughtful questions based on your research
- Dress professionally – business casual only if suggested by your host (*see our office for additional information on professional/business casual attire*)
- Take care of yourself – get plenty of rest the TWO nights before your visit, eat properly, and exercise...site visits are exhausting and you need to display a high level of enthusiasm throughout the entire visit
- Consider your own values so that, at the end of your visit, you can properly assess whether or not this is an organization for which you'd like to work
- Even if they say they are 'picking up the tab' on your hotel, meals, etc. bring a credit card or plenty of cash in case they decide to have you cover the costs and get reimbursed instead
- Dress appropriately for the weather but pack as lightly as possible...dress professionally on the plane (or do not check bags) in case your luggage is lost
- Bring an extra copy(ies) of your résumé, references, & research slides/summary/publications
- Be prepared for 'emergencies' (carry Shout wipes, extra tie/shirt in case the one you have is soiled, extra nylons for women, extra glasses/contacts, tape/safety pins/sewing kit, bandaids, pain reliever, etc.)

## A Typical Schedule

Candidate Name

Thursday, October 12, 20xx

**Host: Dr. Lucas Harrison, 123-456-7890**

*Try to obtain a cell phone number as well as an office number so you'll have someone to call if you have travel problems after hours.*

8:00-8:30 AM Dr. Abbagail Rose, Director of Analytical Lab

*If it does not expressly say 'interview' on the schedule, always assume that is the case!*

8:30-9:00 AM Dr. Charles Richard, Manager – Inorganic & Materials

*Always address person as "Dr. \_\_\_\_\_" unless they give you permission to call them something else.*

9:00-9:30 AM Dr. Pat Simpson, Chemical Engineering Projects

9:30-10:00 AM Dr. Richard Charles, Manager – Organic

*Additionally, do not shorten a name (call someone named Richard, Rich, for example)*

10:00-11:00 AM Seminar Presentation

*See specific comments on following page*

11:00AM-12:00PM Tour

*Prepare enough questions that you can ask plenty throughout your tour – and have enough to ask each individual with whom you meet 2-3 questions as well.*

12:00-1:30 PM Lunch

*See page on "Lunch and Meals"*

1:30-2:15 PM Project Discussion

*If you have an opportunity to talk with various researchers, remember this is still part of the interview & they are also judging you to see if you'd be a fit for their project*

2:15-3:00 PM Project Discussion

3:00-3:45 PM Team Activity

*Team Activities are meant to judge your teamwork abilities of course, but they also display leadership, assertiveness (vs. aggression), problem-solving abilities, and persuasiveness*

3:45-4:15 PM Dr. Jennie Ingle, Director of Human Resources

*Generally, this is a discussion of benefits, etc. but sometimes will also be an interview...do be prepared to answer the 'salary' question if it comes up ("I'd rather discuss that once I know more about the complete benefits and what project I would be working on" but have a big range in case they do press you)*

## The Seminar

*Your seminar should demonstrate your...*

- Thinking/problem solving abilities
  - Sort through complex data to identify problems
  - Make well-reasoned conclusions and provide action plans
  - Be prepared to answer questions intelligently and with analytical thought
- Communication skills
  - Be organized
  - Ensure that you use proper grammar and that slides contain no spelling, punctuation, etc. errors
- Teamwork
  - Discuss how you were able to work across boundaries to solve problems
  - Break out what you did as opposed to what your group/lab as a whole did
- Technical mastery

### Other tips

- Timing: If your seminar is scheduled for one hour, talk for 45-50 minutes (no more, no less) and give the additional time for questions
  - Going over – or under – on your time will severely hamper the group's perspective of you!
- Technicality: Feel free to be as technical as you want to – you will be presenting to scientists, engineers, managers, etc. who are intelligent and familiar with the scientific concepts (if not your specific research)
  - Do watch your audience for blank looks, however, and try to include additional information/explanation if you are receiving a number of them!
  - If you are discussing a brand new technique, etc. that your group is the only one to use anywhere, be sure to break it down for your audience somewhat
- Professionalism: This is a major part of the site visit
  - Practice with your lab as you would for a national conference!
  - Again, ensure there are NO errors on any of your slides
  - Use Power-Point and bring a set of overheads as a backup (you may want to bring multiple electronic versions as well)
  - Use a laser pointer
- Answering questions at end
  - Repeat questions to ensure you understand
  - Answer intelligently, concisely, and accurately

## Lunch and Meals

- It is acceptable to take food or beverage that is offered between interviews, but be sure to stop in the restroom to inspect yourself before the next interview (if you don't have time to do that, than politely decline)...Also, if offered water, do not consume it during the interview!
- Even if they tell you to "just relax" during lunch, remember that this is still definitely a part of the interview! Treat everyone you meet with respect, do not mention food allergies or dieting, and do not complain about bad service, food, etc.
- Follow the lead of your host for food selection & etiquette
  - If ordering from a menu, ask, "What do you recommend?" of your host but review the menu online before-hand if you're told where you'll eat
  - Do not select the most expensive item(s) nor the least
  - Try to select something that will be easy to eat...this is not an opportunity for you to try something new or – perhaps – even your favorite dish
  - You may not get to eat a full meal – rather plan to eat only enough that your stomach won't make audible noise during your afternoon interviews (and no 'take-home' boxes for leftovers – leave what you don't eat)
  - Do not order/consume alcohol (but stick to one only if you feel you must)
  - Generally, do not agree to dessert, either
- Eat with small bites so you can answer questions as they're asked and try to finish your meal around the same time as your host
- Be prepared with small-talk and have plenty of questions prepared to ask of your hosts so that you will also have a chance to eat!
- Follow general etiquette rules (*stop by our office if you would like additional information on this*)

## Some Final Tips...

- Only accept offers to interview on-site if you're remotely interested – otherwise, you could be taking away an offer from one of your friends.
- Don't make extra demands or unreasonable expenditure requests (big dinners, room service, first class flights, etc.), even if you're not interested in company
- Have plenty of cash on hand during site visits – taxi fees can run high in big cities and they usually only accept cash – so have at least \$100 in cash for taxis and plenty of \$1 bills for tipping
  - Airport: Skycaps - \$1 or more/bag, Electric Cart Transport - \$1-2, Rental Car Shuttle Driver - \$1/bag if they help with luggage
  - Taxi: Driver – 15% of fare, no less than 25 cents (if they help with luggage, add \$1/bag up to 5 and \$2/bag if more than 5 or over 50 lbs)
  - Hotel: Chambermaid/Housekeeping - \$2-5/night, more if long stays or extra cleaning provided, Room Service – 15% of bill (unless automatically added), Bellhop - \$10 for bringing you to your room with your luggage, additional \$5 for opening & showing the room, Lobby Attendant – none for opening door or calling taxi from stand, \$1 or more for help with luggage or finding a taxi on the street, Desk Clerk – none unless special service is given, then \$5, Concierge – not necessary for basic information, \$5-10 for special services
- Obtain a business card from everyone you meet