

# Career Days Interviewing Strategies



College of Pharmacy  
UNIVERSITY of FLORIDA

# Objectives

- Understand what an employer is evaluating in an interview
- Learn what research to conduct before an interview
- Discuss how to answer common interview questions
- Review interviewing etiquette

# Interview Objectives

- You want a job, the employer needs the right person to fill a position
- The initial interview is an opportunity for screening
- It is a two-way process
- Your goals
  - Convince employer you are a good fit
  - Show you took time to research
  - Prove you're qualified for the job

# What the Employer is Evaluating

- Communication and interpersonal skills
- Intelligence
- Enthusiasm
- Flexibility
- Leadership
- Maturity
- Skill

# Interview Preparation and Execution

- Before the interview
  - Research the companies
  - Research yourself
  - Formulate an interview strategy
  - Review potential questions
- Dress and act the part
- Follow up

# Research the Companies

- General and employment issues
  - Products, services, unique offerings
  - Competitors
  - Mission and culture
  - Opportunities for advancement
- Where to find information
  - Corporate website
  - Industry and business literature

# Research Yourself

- Know your resume!
- Tidy up your online image
- Gathering information on yourself
  - Strengths and weaknesses
  - Why you chose to go into pharmacy
  - Challenges you have faced and how you dealt with them
  - Extracurricular involvement
  - What makes you unique

# Assimilate the Information

- Develop an interview strategy
  - List the skills, experiences and characteristics of a great candidate for that job
  - Write down examples of times you have demonstrated things on that list
- Rehearse
  - Role play with a peer



# Potential Questions

## “Tell me about yourself”

- Develop a one minute commercial
- This is your opportunity to steer the interview
  - Items you are best prepared to discuss
  - Interviewer likely to ask questions about these, and not random, topics
  - Reduces stress for all by providing topics for discussion

# Potential Questions

## **“What are your greatest strengths?”**

- Skill or personal quality
- Must be relevant to job success
- Give a specific example, not a generalization

## **“What are your greatest weaknesses?”**

- Shows self-awareness, maturity and responsibility
- Don't choose one critical to the job
- What have you done to overcome it?

# Potential Questions

**“Tell me about a time...” or “Describe a situation...”**

- Termed Behavioral Interviewing
- Use the STAR technique
  - Situation or Task
  - Action you took
  - Results you achieved

# Potential Questions

## **“What questions do you have for me?”**

- ALWAYS have questions ready!
- Avoid those which could be answered by company literature
- Topics
  - Typical workday
  - Employee evaluations and development
  - Company goals, upcoming projects, threats
  - Personal opinions

# Interview Day

- Look professional
- What to bring
  - Carry a portfolio, not a backpack
  - Lots of resumes
  - Pen and paper for making notes
- Arrive early
- Turn off your cell phone
- Interact with everyone as if they were your interviewer

# In the Interview

- Be positive!
- Establish rapport
  - Let the interviewer set the tone
- Relaxed body language
- Answer questions slowly and after a pause
- Ask questions
- Do not bring up money
- Get the interviewer's card

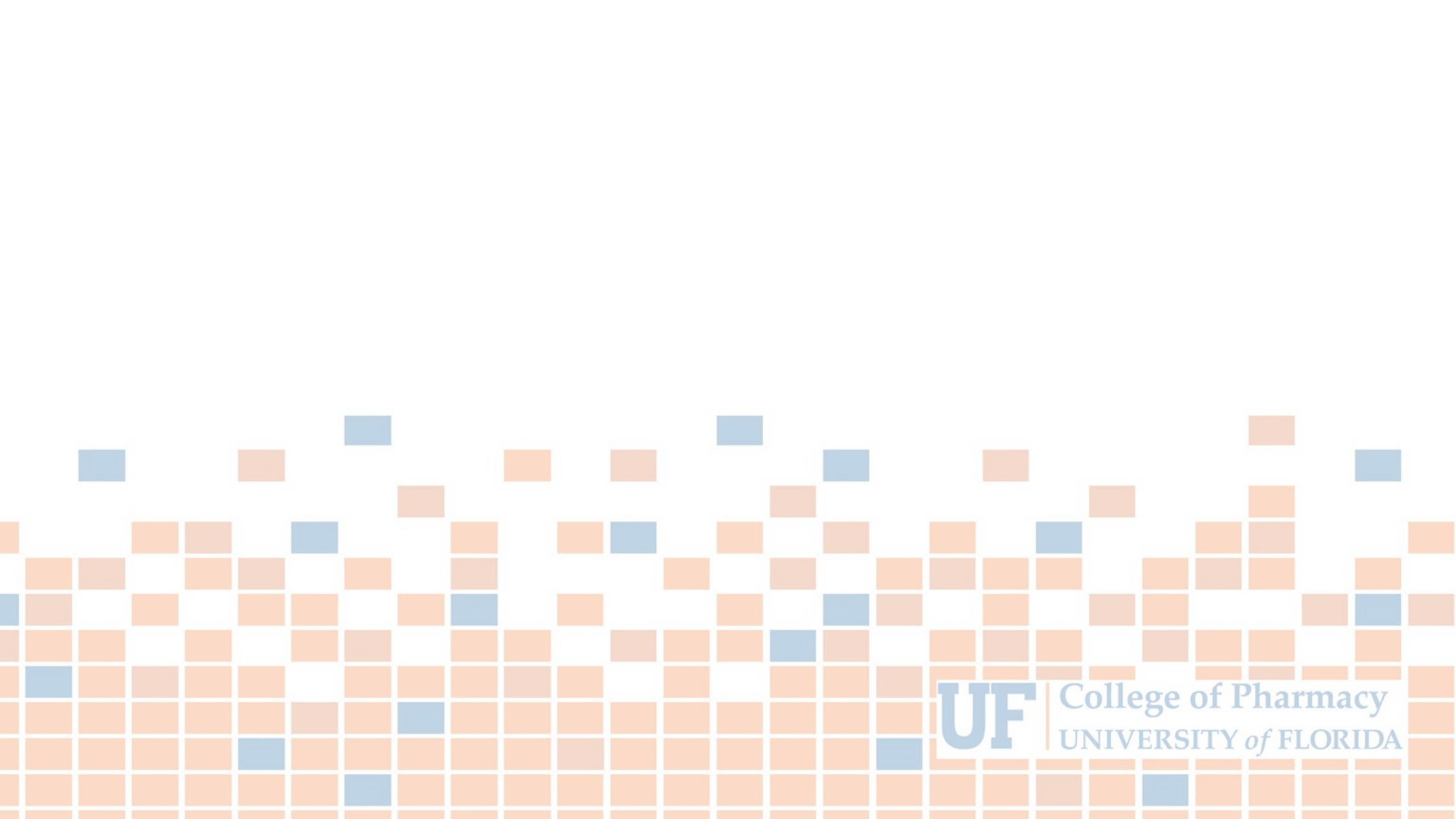
# The Thank You Note

- Why write one?

- It's gracious
- Brings attention to yourself
- Sets the stage for continuing relationship

- Contents

- Attention grabber
- Expand upon a topic you discussed
- Reinforce your credentials
- Conclude by restating your appreciation



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# Take Home Points

- Interviewing is a two-way process
- Research thoroughly before the interview
- Be prepared to market yourself
- In the interview: you are positive, relaxed, thoughtful
- Always follow-up
- Approach the interview as if starting a relationship, not as a one-time event

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