

## **OPCD Podcast: Episode 6 - “Interviews” (10/2/2014)**

Interview with Mr. Brandon Broach, *Account Manager in Commercial Sales with Stanley Black & Decker* and

Mr. Timothy Ullmann, *Director of Professional Development in the Office of Professional and Career Development, Harbert College of Business*

**Voiceover:** So all your hard work is starting to pay off and you've secured an interview with a company you'd love to work or intern with. Way to go! And the OPCD is here to help you keep up that momentum. We've got a few tips on how to prepare and stand out of the crowd, as well as one interviewer's insight on how the most successful candidates handle the process.

Walking into an interview may seem like a daunting prospect, but Mr. Timothy Ullmann of the OPCD offers us a more positive spin on the situation.

**T. Ullmann:** The fact that you've been invited for an interview means that you're on the company's short list. They want to talk to you, now it's up to you. You have to sell yourself.

**Voiceover:** So let's go beyond the basics that were covered in expo prep - professional dress, polished resume and confident demeanor. Assuming those are all in place, what's the best thing to do in terms of preparation?

**T. Ullmann:** The first thing you really need to do is you have to know your resume cold. You'll have to be able to talk to every line in your resume of all the different achievements that you have. And speak to them as short as two minutes or for as long as an hour. Again, they want to know about you, your capabilities but, mainly, are you going to be a good fit for the company.

**Voiceover:** And on the topic of the company, knowing their story is just as important as knowing your own. Mr. Brandon Broach is an Account Manager in Commercial Sales with Stanley Black and Decker. As someone who often interviews potential candidates he offers this advice.

**B. Broach:** Well it's always impressive, as an interviewer, when the candidate has done their homework on the organization and the job opportunity. In today's world everything is digital. All the details are online, you can find out as much as you need to about a company. So from an interviewer's perspective I do appreciate candidates who know about the company. They may have questions about the organization which leads to good dialogue. But for a candidate who may come in with little background knowledge about the company or in a sense where I, as the interviewer, have to walk through the complete overview of the company history that tends to set us back a step.

**Voiceover:** So know your resume and do your research. Anything beyond that that stands out to employers?

**B. Broach:** The two things that really pop when you get introduced to someone are confidence and passion. Because those are two things that as a corporation we can't teach. We can give people all the resources in the world about our products, about our process and how we go to business but what we are really looking for is passionate, driven people. And that's something that has to come across in an introduction.

**Voiceover:** Of course for most of us the fear is of the unexpected. Especially the unexpected question that you may not have an answer prepared for. But when it comes to what you may be asked, its important to remember that these often stay within just a few categories: what kind of training or education do you have, where have you come from and where do you see yourself going, do you possess problem-solving skills that equal your ability in your career field, and how would these factor into your role as part of the company? And don't forget that the interviewer isn't the only one who asks questions.

**T. Ullmann:** As you conclude the interview, nine times out of ten they're going to ask you "do you have any questions for us?" The answer you always say is "yes." Have some questions prepared in advance. You can find some of these on the internet but mainly you can find a lot of these by doing your own company research and asking your own genuine questions. Because what you're trying to sell is how you can help solve some of their problems and why you are that absolute great fit.

**Voiceover:** And as it turns out, your chance to leave a memorable impression doesn't end with the interview.

**T. Ullmann:** Follow up with an email immediately, same day. Also, do a handwritten card. It's simple, it's easy, just say "thank you for your time, appreciate the opportunity to speak with you, look forward to talking with you in the future." Simple, easy, distinguished, professional.

**Voiceover:** And remember, don't get so caught up in memorizing all the answers that you forget the simple things. Take a deep breath, be confident and smile. If you ace the interview - congratulations, and if it doesn't go as well as you'd hoped - you still gain the practice and experience that will help you in the future. So keep that in mind. Either way it's a win-win. If you'd like to work on your interview skills but don't want to wait till the day of the actual interview, the career coaches of the OPCD would love to help you out. Mock interviews are a great way to brush up those skills and get valuable feedback - just stop into Lowder 101 to make an appointment. I so appreciate Mr. Broach and Mr. Ullmann sharing their insight with us today and we'll follow up next week when we talk specifics on second interviews. Hope you have a great rest of your day and I'll see you back here next week!