Interviewing extern candidates is very similar to interviewing candidates for permanent positions. This is a very important step in the recruitment process as you want to **make sure the extern will provide you with the skills and abilities you’re looking for**, as well as **fit in with the culture** of your organization. If you have not conducted an interview before, you’ll find a sample outline below, including helpful questions and tips on using the interview to find the best candidate.

1. **Open the interview (1–2 minutes)**
   a. Build friendly rapport through small talk.
   b. Provide an overview of the interview.
   c. Indicate that the student will have an opportunity to ask questions later.

2. **Ask behavioral based and open ended questions to gather information (15 minutes)**
   a. Tell me about yourself.
   b. Why are you interested in this position?
   c. Why are you interested in this organization?
   d. How has your coursework prepared you for this externship?
   e. What are your short- and long-term career goals?
   f. Tell me about a time you:
      • Had to deal with a conflict
      • Worked as part of a team
      • Used creativity to solve a problem
      • Dealt with a difficult customer/supervisor/colleague
      • Managed a stressful situation
      • Handled multiple tasks simultaneously
   g. What are your strengths/weaknesses?
   h. Ask specific questions related to technology/methodology used in your field.
   i. Questions to **avoid**:
      • How old are you? Do you have a disability? Are you married/have kids?
      • What is your nationality?

3. **Allow extern to ask questions (5 minutes)**
   a. Be prepared to answer questions about the position, expected training, company structure, and company products.
   b. Assess the quality of the extern’s questions.

4. **Give information (1–2 minutes)**
   a. Discuss candidate’s availability for the externship to ensure your needs are met.
   b. Discuss any academic requirements if the student is seeking course credit.

5. **Wrap-up (1–2 minutes)**
   a. Close on a positive note.
   b. Avoid making statements that may be interpreted as a promise that the extern will be selected.
   c. Inform the extern that they will be contacted by the Office of Human Resources in regard to their status (selected or not selected) at a later date.

6. **Evaluate the candidate against the requirements for the position**