Interviewing for a Job:
The Basics

- **What is the purpose of an interview?**
  - The purpose of the interview is for the potential employer to evaluate the prospective employee, looking at whether he/she will fit into the company and is suitable for the job.
  - Your purpose is similar. You are evaluating the company to find out whether you want to work there, if you would fit in and if you have the skills to do the job.

- **What kind of questions will an Employer ask?**
  - The interviewer will ask questions about job history, personality, and work style. Structured interviews ask situational (based on a set of circumstances and could be futuristic) and behavioral questions (based on "critical incidents" and tend to be oriented in the past) "How would manage this or handle that" kind of questions.
  - There are many websites, like about.com, that have interview questions and the best answers, too.

- **What do I want to know from the Employer?**
  - You want to get as much information about the job as possible so that you can decide if it is a job you might want to accept. You need to ask key questions. You also want to know their timeframe for making a hiring decision. You want to ask questions that will close the deal.

- **When do I discuss my accommodation needs related to my Disability?**
  - You do not want to discuss accommodations immediately. You also do not want to do the "I have a disability and you should hire me" routine either. This is about skills, abilities and fitting into the company. Remember that the ADA says that as long as you can perform the essential functions of the job with or without a reasonable accommodation, you are qualified to be hired. So discuss it when the time is right for you, but give yourself a chance to get hired.

- **How should I dress for the interview?**
  - We all know the term "Dress for Success." The first impression you make on a potential employer is the most important one. The first judgment an interviewer makes is going to be based on how you look and what you are wearing. That's why it's always important to dress professionally for a job interview, even if the work environment is casual.

- o What's the appropriate dress code for an interview? You'll want that first impression to be not just a good one, but a great one. The candidate dressed in a suit and tie is going to make a much better impression than the candidate dressed in scruffy jeans and a t-shirt.
- o The type of job you are applying for is the key to how you dress. There are many "dos" and "don'ts" around what you wear. If you were going to interview for a carpenter's position – maybe you wouldn't wear a suit. For a professional position, you would dress professionally.

- **What kind of Interview Materials will I need?**
  - o It is best to have paper and pen/pencil, if you want to take notes, along with a copy of the application, if you have one, copies of your resume, the job posting or announcement, information about the company and a list of questions that you would like to ask at the end of the interview.
  - o If you have a portfolio of your work – bring that too.
  - o It is always best to have extra copies of your resume and cover letter as the person interviewing you may not have a copy and you could give that to them. Makes for a better interview.

- **What are some of the common Interview Mistakes?**
  1. Not being prepared to answer questions and no questions prepared
  2. Not knowing yourself
  3. Tardiness
  4. Talking too much or saying too little
  5. Focusing on the past
  6. Not listening
  7. Being too humble
  8. Stepping out of "sell mode" too soon
  9. Low energy or Passion
  10. Not being realistic about expectations
  11. Not asking for the job
  12. Incorrect attire
  13. Forgetting to research the company
  14. Slips of the tongue
  15. Ringing of cell phones and answering
  16. Checking the time
  17. Asking about salary, benefits, or vacation too soon
  18. Dropping too many names
  19. Giving your demands
  20. Talking about other job offers
  21. Fidgeting, lying or faking
  22. Being arrogant or rude