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Professional Development Seminar

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Mock Interview

Before my interview last Tuesday, I was getting quite nervous. Palms sweaty, knees weak, breathing becomes difficult. I did not realize how calm and collected I would actually be once the interview started. Once I thought of the employer as an actual person it became easier to relate to them. We had friendly banter about small town life and as time passed I got less and less nervous. The employer asked me to talk about myself, which was difficult at first. I finally found my rhythm and it sort of flowed out of me. It was interesting to learn so much about Nucor from an actually employee, whether it was discussing the IT side or the chemistry side of what they do.

I learned from this experience that the interview process does not have to be as nerve racking if you do not allow it to become so. Confidence really is key. If you walk into the interview thinking you got this, then it will go smoothly. I also learned that it is crucial to play to your audience during the interview. My employer and I were able to connect over small town life. If my employer had been from a big city then I would stress the time in my life when I lived in Lincoln, Nebraska. Play to your audience.

After the interview, my employer stressed how much he enjoyed my easiness and my attentive listening skills. My strengths were that I definitely did my research about the company beforehand, I was able to boast statistics about the company to him, and that I know how to communicate well. My employer confided in me that I was the best candidate he had seen up to that point.

My weaknesses were shared to me after my interview as well. I was told that I need to keep pushing myself and to always have projects on the side that keep my interest. My knowledge of hardware is very limited so I need to put myself in uncomfortable situations where I may need to learn about hardware. This will help me become an overall better programmer and computer scientist. It was suggested as a side note that I should also keep in mind building my network funnel and keeping in touch with potential employers.

All in all, the mock interview was a very exciting opportunity and I garnished a plethora of knowledge from it. I am glad that I was given this opportunity to practice my interview skills and to get a glimpse at what I may be doing in the future. It was definitely worth doing.