

STEP 1 AND 2 RUBRIC (/80)

	Excellent (5-4)	Proficient (3)	Developing (2-1)
Target Selection & Research	Professional selected is highly relevant to CS. Email demonstrates clear, specific research into the professional's role, company, or background.	Professional is relevant to CS. Email shows general research, but it may not be deeply specific.	Professional is loosely related to CS, or the email shows little evidence of research.
Email Personalization	The "why them" hook is authentic, specific, and compelling. It masterfully connects the students' curiosity to the professional's unique experience.	The hook is personalized and polite. It clearly states "why them," but may lack a strong, specific connection.	The hook is generic (e.g., "You work in tech") or buried in the email. Personalization is minimal.
Professionalism & Formatting	Email is flawlessly written: formal tone, perfect grammar/spelling, and follows the 4-part builder structure. Subject line is clear and professional.	Email is professional with 1-2 minor errors in grammar or formatting. Subject line is appropriate.	Email has several errors in grammar or tone that detract from its professionalism. Structure is disorganized.
Pair Representation	Email clearly and professionally introduces the students as a pair (e.g., "My project partner and I...") and includes both partners' names in the sign-off.	Email mentions a partner, but the introduction or sign-off is slightly awkward or only includes one name.	It is unclear that the project is for a pair until the "ask" (e.g., "We would like to meet...").
Professionalism & Etiquette	Students were punctual, dressed appropriately (smart-casual for on-site), and used a professional setting (clean background for virtual). Etiquette was flawless.	Students were on time and professional. Minor issues with setting (e.g., slightly distracting background) or etiquette (e.g., forgot to silence phone).	Students were late, or their appearance/setting was unprofessional (e.g., t-shirt for on-site, in a car for virtual).
Consent Protocol	Students <i>clearly</i> and <i>politely</i> asked for	Students asked for recording consent. The	Students recorded but forgot to ask for

	recording consent <i>before</i> the interview began. They waited for an affirmative "yes" before recording.	request might have been slightly awkward or happened after the first question, but consent was obtained.	consent, or the request was mumbled/unclear.
Question Quality & Depth	Questions were highly thoughtful, open-ended, and based on the project goals. They sparked genuine conversation and could not be answered by Google.	Questions were relevant and open-ended. Most were appropriate, though 1-2 may have been basic or Google-able.	Questions were mostly basic, closed-ended (yes/no), or read directly from a list with no adaptation.
Question Requirements	Both partners were fully engaged and clearly <i>each</i> asked 4 or more thoughtful questions, resulting in a balanced interview.	Each partner asked the minimum of 4 questions. The requirement was met.	One or both partners asked fewer than 4 questions. The minimum requirement was not met.
Partner Coordination & Flow	Both partners were highly prepared. Transitions were seamless. They built on each other's questions and had balanced speaking time.	Both partners participated. There may have been one or two awkward pauses or uneven speaking times, but coordination was evident.	One partner dominated the conversation, or transitions were consistently awkward. Preparation as a pair seemed minimal.
Active Listening & Follow-ups	Students were exceptional listeners. They asked relevant, unscripted follow-up questions based on the professional's answers, creating a true dialogue.	Students listened well and asked 1-2 relevant follow-up questions. The conversation felt natural.	Students were clearly just reading their script. They did not ask follow-up questions, even when the answers invited them.
Time Management & Closing	Students respectfully managed the time, kept the interview within (or very close to) the 15-20 min window, and concluded with a professional "thank you."	The interview ran slightly over time (20-25 mins), but students concluded professionally with a "thank you."	The interview was cut awkwardly short (<10 mins) or ran excessively long (>25 mins) without acknowledging the time.
Professional Eye Contact	Maintained consistent, natural eye contact. (Virtual: Looked at	Eye contact was generally good, but sometimes averted.	Eye contact was minimal. Students often looked down or away.

	camera when speaking, screen when listening. On-site: Looked at professional).	(Virtual: Looked mostly at the screen, rarely at the camera).	(Virtual: Stared at their own video feed or off-screen).
Engaged Posture	Sat upright, centered in frame, and leaned in slightly to show interest. Posture was professional and engaged.	Posture was generally good but sometimes lapsed into slouching or leaning back.	Slouched, leaned excessively, or was poorly framed (virtual) for most of the interview.
Attentive Facial Expressions	Used appropriate, dynamic facial expressions (smiling, nodding, focused look) that showed active listening and genuine interest.	Facial expressions were positive but limited (e.g., a fixed smile, occasional nod).	Facial expressions were blank, bored, or mismatched the conversation (e.g., frowning, looking confused).
Gestures and Poise	Used natural hand gestures to complement speech. Remained poised and still when listening. No distracting fidgeting.	Gestures were appropriate. Some minor fidgeting (e.g., light pen tapping, slight chair swiveling) but it wasn't distracting.	Showed obvious signs of fidgeting (e.g., playing with hair, shaking leg, clicking pen) that were distracting.
Professional Presence & Focus	Remained completely focused on the interview. Avoided <i>all</i> external distractions (e.g., phone, other monitors, room noise).	Was focused for the most part, but was briefly distracted once or twice (e.g., a quick glance at a notification or another screen).	Was clearly distracted multiple times (e.g., looking at phone, typing, looking at another monitor, people in the room).

Total: /80