

WHERE TO

A resource dedicated to student-athletes and their Life after Notre Dame.



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GOING TO THE GAME PLAN: PREPARING FOR AN IMPACTFUL INTERVIEW

By Ashley Morgan, Head of Career Transitions



We are again consulting the Project LAND game plan, which is customized for each former student-athlete or manager who accesses the services of our Career Transitions pillar. This time, we offer a step-by-step guide below on how to prepare for an interview that will make a lasting impression on a potential employer. Proper preparation is key to this success, as it boosts your confidence while showcasing your enthusiasm and competence for the role.

- 1. RESEARCH THE COMPANY** — Before heading into an interview, it's crucial to understand the company and its culture. Research the organization's mission, values, products or services, and recent achievements. Familiarize yourself with the company's history and its latest news or developments. This knowledge will enable you to tailor your responses to align with the company's goals and demonstrate your genuine interest in the position.
- 2. UNDERSTAND THE JOB DESCRIPTION** — Thoroughly review the job description and requirements to identify the key skills and qualifications the employer is seeking. Make a list of your experiences, skills, and achievements that align with the job. During the interview, use specific examples from your past to illustrate how you possess the qualities they're looking for.
- 3. PREPARE FOR COMMON INTERVIEW QUESTIONS** — While you can't predict every question you'll be asked, there are common interview questions that frequently arise. Practice your responses to questions about your strengths and weaknesses as well as your achievements and the challenges you've overcome. Use the STAR (Situation, Task, Action, Result) method to structure your answers, providing concrete examples to showcase your skills and experiences.
- 4. DEVELOP YOUR ELEVATOR PITCH** — Craft a concise and compelling pitch that highlights your professional background, skills, and characteristics that set you apart from other candidates. This brief introduction is an opportunity to make a positive first impression and set the tone for the interview.
- 5. DRESS APPROPRIATELY** — Choose an outfit that reflects the company's dress code and industry standards. Dressing professionally not only shows respect for the interview process but also demonstrates your understanding of the company's culture. Ensure your attire is clean, well-fitted, and free of distracting accessories.
- 6. PREPARE QUESTIONS FOR THE INTERVIEWER** — Most interviews conclude with the opportunity for the candidate to ask questions. Prepare thoughtful inquiries about the company culture, team dynamics, or specific aspects of the role. This demonstrates your genuine interest in the position and helps you evaluate if the company is the right fit for you.
- 7. PERFORM MOCK INTERVIEWS** — Conduct mock interviews with a friend, family member, or career advisor. Practice answering questions, work on your body language, and receive constructive feedback. You'll find this exercise will help alleviate nervousness and refine your responses, so you're well-prepared for the real thing.
- 8. KNOW THE LOGISTICS** — Doublecheck that you have all the necessary details for the interview, such as the time, location, and format (in-person, phone, video). Test any technology if it's a virtual interview, and plan your route if it's an in-person meeting. This preparation helps ensure you'll be punctual and reflects your professionalism and reliability.

Successful interviews are the result of thorough preparation, self-awareness, and effective communication. By researching the company, understanding the job description, practicing common questions, and paying attention to the details, you can position yourself as a strong and confident candidate who'll make a positive and lasting impression at your next interview. We're so excited to hear how it goes!

OUR CAREER COACHING PYRAMID - PLAYBOOK FOR SUCCESS

Our Career Coaching Pyramid below reflects the candidate's personalized game plan, which includes essential phases for a successful transition after sports. Read my previous articles on **Phase 2** and **Phase 3** on the pyramid and watch for future editions of Where to LAND for my summaries of additional career best practices.

HOW TO GET STARTED WITH THE CAREER TRANSITIONS TEAM

An eligible* former student-athlete or manager ("candidate") completes their application via the **Project LAND website**. Applicants to the program receive an email within 48 hours to set up the first meeting with Program Director Brandyn Curry (Harvard Basketball '14) and me.

*Eligibility: Any former student who has participated in practice or played in a game for a varsity sport at the University of Notre Dame. This also includes any student that served as a manager for a varsity team while enrolled at the University of Notre Dame. The applicant is no longer eligible for sport and graduating.



POST-ATHLETIC CAREER TRANSITIONS PYRAMID

