

Campus Visits: A Discussion of Do's and Don'ts
Mark Houston, Eunice and James L. West Chair of American Enterprise, Professor of Marketing
Neeley School of Business, Texas Christian University
8/11/13

Five Top Points

- 1. Don't act like a window shopper**
 - a. Be prepared (do background research on school, community, and each faculty member).
 - b. Be interested (you may be pleasantly surprised – you can always say no if they make an offer).
 - c. Build relationships (people hire colleagues, not assistant professors).
- 2. Ask personal and professional questions of each interviewer** (don't dominate, but don't wait until asked "do you have any questions." Ask things like "what brought you here?" "What is your role in the department/doctoral program/research culture..." "What sort of things are you working on?" "Your recent JCR has generated a lot of discussion – are you working on followup studies?" "Do you have interactions with other faculty members outside of work?" etc.)
 - a. Signals interest in learning about them as a potential colleague.
 - b. Shows that you are not entirely self-centered.
 - c. Allows you to connect.
- 3. Practice (over and over) the first 1-2 minutes of your research talk**
 - a. Practice the whole thing multiple times, but make sure that you think through and practice exactly what you will say in those critical first moments when the person in charge introduces you to a room full of faculty and turns the floor over to you.
 - b. Keep control of flow (e.g., "That is a great question – let me present the next two slides and I think your question will be fully answered. Let me know if this doesn't address it adequately.")
 - c. Don't be defensive (stand ground respectfully, acknowledge good points – write them down and promise to look into them, offer to continue discussion off-line).
- 4. Be ready on time for appointments, dinners, etc.**
 - a. Be waiting in hotel lobby 5 minutes before you are scheduled to be picked up.
 - b. Manage time in interviews – politely wrap-up to stay on schedule (to degree possible).
- 5. Treat every administrative or staff person (and clinical faculty) with whom you come into contact with respect, kindness, and professionalism**
 - a. Shows fundamental human decency.
 - b. These people are vital (and often beloved) team members without whom most departments would crumble.

Other tips:

- Don't drink too much alcohol (shows bad judgment; may get tipsy and loose-lipped).
- Don't "fake it" if you don't know an answer.
- Call your interviewers by their first names (not Professor or Dr).
- Hand-written (sincere) thank you notes may stand out in an e-mail world.