

Using Mock Interviews with School Administrators to Prepare Pre-service Teachers to Successfully Navigate the Teaching Position Interview Process

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Introduction

- The teacher selection process is complicated and is filled with numerous steps (Strong & Hindman, 2006)
- Interviews are typically used to screen and select candidates (Strong & Hindman, 2006).
- Early-career teachers may encounter more issues with interviewing than experienced teachers (Talbert et al., 2022).
- Talbert et al. (2022) provided several recommendations when preparing to interview, including: (1) preparing a quality materials packet, (2) dressing professionally, and (3) engaging in mock interviews to help anticipate and overcome any negative habits.
- Perhaps using mock interviews to prepare pre-service teachers for formal interviews would be a useful approach.



How it Works

- During the Fall 2022 semester, the lead author developed a mock interview activity for the 13 pre-service teachers in his instructional methods course.
- The lead author reached out to high school administrators in Arkansas. Two administrators with strong ties to their school's Agricultural Education programs agreed to collaborate.
- The mock interviews took place during a two-hour timeframe on Thursday, November 10, 2022.
- The administrators met individually with each pre-service teacher in two separate rooms. One administrator interviewed six pre-service teachers while the other interviewed seven of them. Each interview lasted 15 minutes.
- After all the mock interviews concluded, the administrators debriefed the pre-service teachers and shared their advice regarding further interview preparation practices.



Implications, Future Plans, Advice, & Costs

- Immediately after the mock interviews concluded, all 13 pre-service teachers indicated that they believed this activity would be helpful as they prepare for future teaching position interviews.
- Eight pre-service teachers sought teaching positions during the Spring 2023 semester. Anecdotally, they indicated that the mock interviews exposed them to the realities of formal interviews.
- The lead authors plans to keep conducting this activity for his pre-service teachers in the future.
- The lead author recommends that other agricultural teacher educators consider employing this activity to prepare their pre-service teachers for teaching position interviews.
- The lead author provided lunch for the participating administrators at a cost of approximately \$60.00. He used six hours of his time to arrange and facilitate this activity.

References

Strong, J. H., & Hindman, J. L. (2006). *The teacher quality index: A protocol for teacher selection*. Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Talbert, B. A., Croom, B., LaRose, S. E., Vaughn, R., & Lee, J. S. (2022). *Foundations of agricultural education* (4th ed.). Purdue University Press.