Learning from Failure

Failure feels awful. The good news, though, is that it can actually improve your performance. Below, you will find some strategies and questions to help you use failure to lift you up, rather than knock you down.

Some things to do after performing poorly in a job interview:

- Think carefully about any outside factors that might have negatively impacted your performance: Did you get enough sleep? Were you running late for the interview? Did something bad happen in your personal life right before?
- Reflect on whether you were well-prepared for the interview: Did you research the company beforehand? Did you review important terminology? Did you rehearse with a friend?
- Make a list of the questions you remember, and write down the main points of your answers.
- Think about which questions went well, and which ones you had trouble with. Did you forget to mention something? Did you mention something you shouldn’t have?
- Consider how you would answer these questions differently next time.
- Think about calling the company’s hiring manager for feedback on your interview.

Questions you might ask a hiring manager:

Note: when you do not get a job, it can be useful to call and ask for feedback on your interview. However, remember that someone is taking time away from their day to talk to you and help you to be more successful!

- Do you have any advice for how I can improve my performance in future interviews?
- What can I do to seem more (insert quality here)? Use the feedback from first question -- e.g. confident, prepared, friendly, positive.
- What did I do well?
- Always thank the employer for the opportunity and for their time -- and never call if you are feeling angry or defensive.