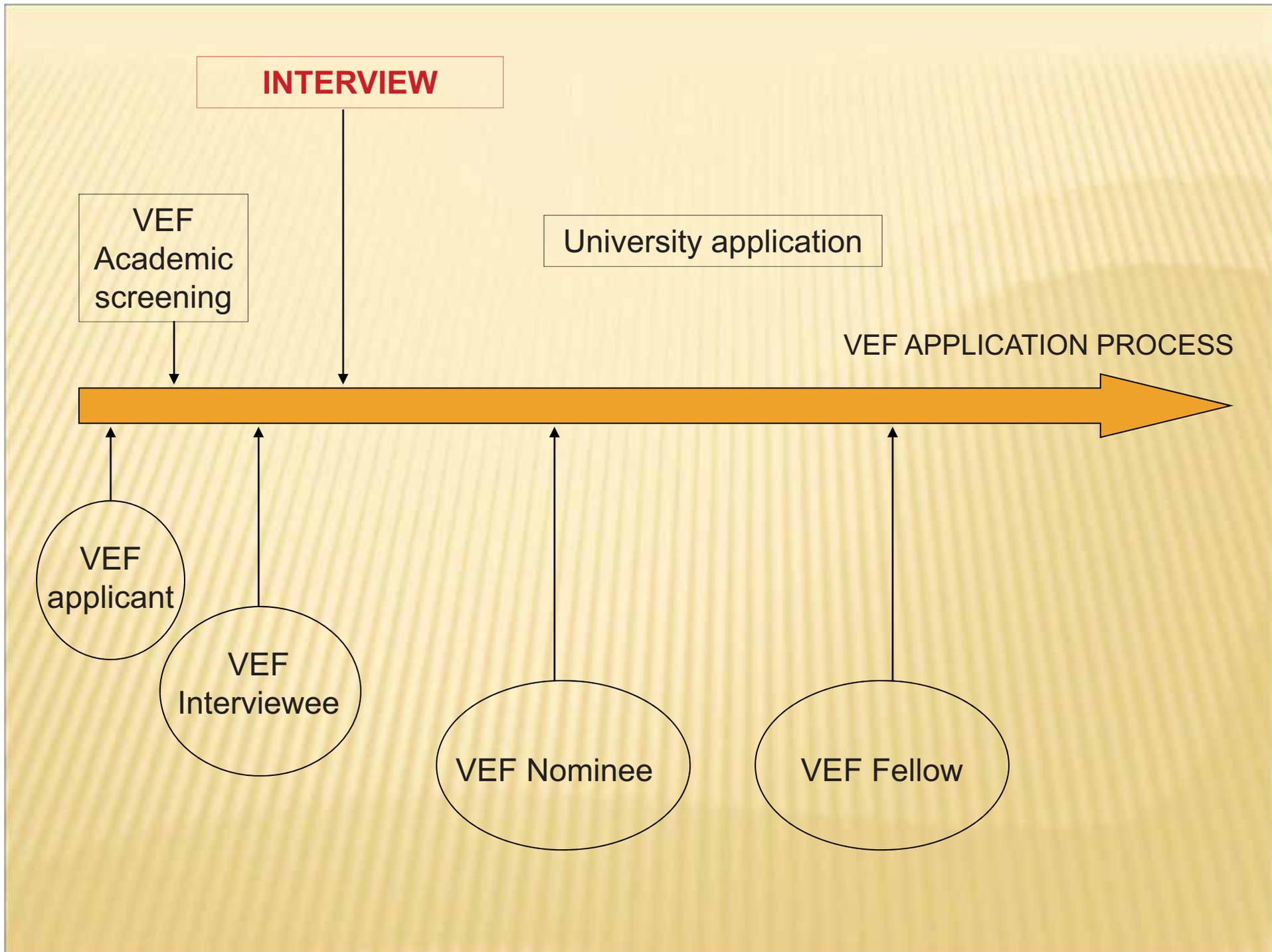

ORAL EXAM EXPERIENCE SHARING

NGO To Linh (linhnt13@gmail.com)
& BUI Manh Hung (h.bui@live.com)
VEF Fellows, Cohort 2011



INTERVIEW

VEF
Academic
screening

University application

VEF APPLICATION PROCESS

VEF
applicant

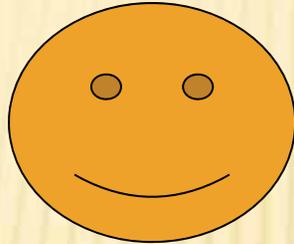
VEF
Interviewee

VEF Nominee

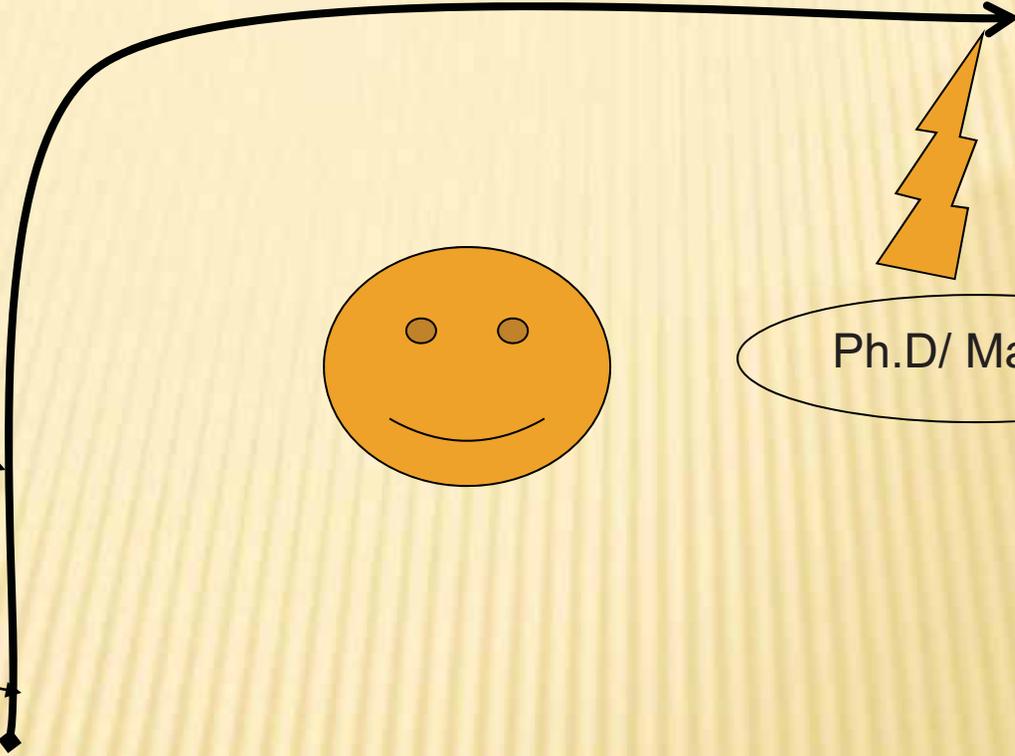
VEF Fellow

VEF Fellow

VEF Applicant



Ph.D/ Masters



BEING SCARED?



GO CRACK IT!



RESEARCH INTO YOURSELF

- ✘ Who are you?
- ✘ What can you do?
- ✘ Why do you want to pursue graduate study in U.S.A?
- ✘ Why do you want to study in that field/at that school/with that professor?

KEY TO SUCCESS: BE ADAPTIVE

What you can't change

- ✘ GPA
- ✘ Scores: TOEFL, GRE
- ✘ Research experience, publication

What you CAN change

- ✘ English
- ✘ Confidence & attitude
- ✘ How you describe your experience & motivation

The questions are out of your hand

The answers are (somehow) certain

The way you response is your key!

WEAKNESSES

- ✘ No publication
- ✘ So-so GPA
- ✘ So-so scores

STRENGTHS

- ✘ Unique field of study
- ✘ Research experience
- ✘ Strong motivation



TURN YOUR WEAKNESSES INTO STRENGTHS

DOUBLE-BLADED SWORD

My field of study is unique, important, and traditional in Vietnam

→ So why must I go to US?

My major is crop science

→ So why should I switch to ethnobotany?

My scores are not high

→ So why can I become a successful student?

ANSWERS ???

The answer is important

The way you answer is MORE important

BRUSH UP YOUR ENGLISH

- ✘ Watch movies/TV shows and imitate
- ✘ Serious learning: Well-said, esl-lab.com,...
- ✘ Teamwork
- ✘ Practice every day!

INTERVIEW SKILLS

- ✘ Set a list of possible questions: All should be about you!
- ✘ Mock interviews (as many as possible)
- ✘ Get feedback and improve
- ✘ Record and improve
- ✘ Practice, practice, practice!

TAKE IT EASY

✘ *Take it serious*

Work hard

Then take it easy

- ✘ Before the interview: dress appropriately, feel confident about yourself, including your appearance.
- ✘ Be calm and relaxed. Go to bed early.

DURING THE INTERVIEW

- ✘ Apply what you have prepared: answers, English, skills
- ✘ Keep your attitude appropriate: confident, open-minded, modest
- ✘ Don't be afraid: they just want to know about you!

MY INTERVIEW

- ✘ Self introduction
- ✘ What is the most interesting project you have worked on?
- ✘ Could you tell us what (your field) is?
- ✘ How was your work like? What you would do after completing the project?
- ✘ What are the implications of your work in Vietnam?
- ✘ What do you expect to contribute to Vietnam after you come back? Provide examples.
- ✘ Do you want to publish the final report of your work?

MY INTERVIEW

- ✘ Do you feel the courses you took help you in your research?
- ✘ Tell us about the universities you choose to apply: why you choose them and how you choose them?
- ✘ Do you find your project demanding and how you face the difficulties?
- ✘ Do you think your interest is of ethnobotany or crop science?
- ✘ Have you had a chance to experience leadership? Describe.
- ✘ Do you have any questions for us?

OUR LITTLE COMPARISON ?

NGO To Linh

- ✗ Female
- ✗ Newly graduate student
- ✗ Ethnobotany
- ✗ University in Vietnam

BUI Manh Hung

- ✗ Male
- ✗ Graduate student with working experiences
- ✗ Molecular Biology
- ✗ University in England

YOUR UNIQUE

PERSONALITY

ACADEMIC BACKGROUND

EXPERIENCES

RESPONSIBILITIES

LEADERSHIP

EXTRA-CURRICULUM ACTIVITIES

**HELP YOU GREATLY WITH YOUR
APPLICATION**

WHAT DO INTERVIEWERS LOOK FOR ?

WHO you are ?

WHAT you have done ?

WHY you are there ?

YOUR KEY TO SUCCESS IS
TO MATCH **WHAT YOU HAVE**
TO WHAT THE INTERVIEWERS LOOK FOR

WHAT YOU SHOULD DO ?

- ✘ DO YOUR HOMEWORK
- ✘ CONFIDENCE
- ✘ MAY THE LUCK BE WITH YOU

WHAT IF

YOU ARE NOT SUCCESSFUL

IT IS NOT THE END OF THE WORLD !!!

RESOURCES

- × Official guide from VEF:
<http://home.vef.gov/news.php?id=95>
- × Group of VEF fellows 2011:
<http://groups.google.com/group/vef-2011>
- × VietPhD: <http://vietphd.org/forum/>
- × USGuide: <http://usguide.org.vn/forum/>
- × Google 😊

THANK YOU!!!