

INTERVIEW GUIDANCE

Making it through to the interview stage means that the employer likes you enough to take the time to meet you. You are one step closer towards securing the job but no matter how strong your skills and experience are, your success will be determined by how well you perform at the interview. Thorough preparation is the key to interview success.

PRIOR TO THE INTERVIEW

- Make sure you know the interview location, time and date and the name and job title of the interviewer.
- Make sure that you are aware of the type of interview (informal, formal or competency) and if there will be any tests, assessments or presentations to be carried out on the day.
- Research the company and the interviewer (Website, Annual Report, Google, LinkedIn) and take notes on company history, products / services, key facts and recent news as well as the interviewer's background.
- Research the industry sector using trade publications and websites. It's a great way to impress the interviewer and show that you really understand the environment in which they work, the challenges which they face and their competitors. Good and relevant research is one of the most important things you can do to improve your chances of getting the job.
- Ensure that you have a full job description and are familiar with the key requirements of the role. Think about how you would answer questions to highlight that you meet these requirements, giving practical examples. Be prepared to answer questions about you, your experience and career aspirations.
- Read over the CV and covering letter you sent to the company. Make sure you know all of the salient points and dates as it's what they will question you on.
- Prepare answers to competency-based questions if required.
- Write down a list of questions to ask at the end of the interview. Try to make them open questions (who, why, what where, when) in order to encourage discussion.
- Plan your travel route and method of transport, taking into account time of day / traffic considerations. If you are unsure of where you are going, it will be beneficial to do a trial run a couple of days in

advance. This will ensure that you arrive on time, feeling composed and prepared.

- Make sure you have smart business attire to wear and have laid out your clothes the night before. This should consist of a smart suit, blouse / shirt and a neutral tie for men. Shoes should be clean and polished.
- Things to take with you include copies of your CV, a pen, passport, references and any application forms.

DAY OF THE INTERVIEW

- Make sure you are dressed smartly and appropriately. Remove any unusual piercings and cover tattoos. Avoid excess jewellery.
- Leave early and get there in plenty of time.
- Do not smoke before the interview or walk in chewing gum.
- Be pleasant to everyone you meet.
- If driving, park your car considerately. Do not park in reserved spaces!
- Inform reception / security of your arrival.
- Follow all security requirements and sign in procedures.
- Check personal appearance - make sure you are neat and tidy.
- Note any company literature, awards etc.
- Switch off mobile phone.
- Sit in an upright chair in reception.
- Look and act in a confident manner.

MEETING INTERVIEWER

- Stand up.
- Smile.
- Shake hands firmly.
- Establish eye contact.
- Speak clearly. On Way to Interview Room
- Build Rapport.
- Say something positive - "Nice office", "Have you been based here long", "Great weather today".
- Find common ground or interest.
- DO NOT STAY SILENT!!

IN THE INTERVIEW ROOM

- Ask where it is ok for you to sit.
- Do not sit until you are offered or the interviewer does.
- Move chair if positioned awkwardly.
- If offered something to drink, always accept even if you do not feel like it. You never know how you will feel later on and taking a sip of your drink is a good way to buy time when thinking of the answer to a question.

DURING THE INTERVIEW

- Appear confident - try not to let your nerves show.
- Listen and make sure you are answering the question that is being asked. If you are unsure of the question, ask the interviewer to clarify.
- Keep answers structured and to the point - don't waffle.
- Speak clearly and use appropriate business like language - do not become too overfriendly or curse.
- Sell yourself - make sure that you highlight your key strengths and back this up by giving examples of what you have done in practice.
- Be honest - lies are easily found out.
- Try not to be negative about your current employer.
- Ask relevant questions - it shows genuine interest.
- Maintain eye contact (50 - 70% of the time).
- Maintain positive body language i.e. don't slouch or cross your arms. Note the interviewer's body language - MIRROR!
- Be positive, enthusiastic and try to build rapport with the interviewer.
- Never jump to unfavourable conclusions, as first impressions are not always accurate. Line Managers are not professional interviewers - keep this in mind and rather evaluate the job opportunity. Make a positive impression no matter what. Always aim to secure the offer, then sit back and decide.
- If you are lucky enough to receive an offer during an interview, never turn it down outright. No matter what doubts you may have, show your enthusiasm and promise to give an answer within 24 hours. If you like what you hear and see, don't hesitate to accept immediately.

CLOSING THE INTERVIEW

- Ask if the interviewer has any remaining reservations.
- Thank them for agreeing to meet you and consider you for this position.
- Reiterate your interest in the role and the company and let the interviewer know that you are confident that you would be able to perform well.
- Ask what the next stage in the process is and what the decision timescales are.

LEAVING THE INTERVIEW

- Continue to build rapport.
- Say something positive.
- Find common ground or interest.
- DO NOT STAY SILENT!!
- Thank the interviewer again.
- Shake hands.
- Sign out and / or return security badge.
- Remember to thank the receptionist on the way out.
- Do not light up cigarettes when still on the premises or within view.

AFTER THE INTERVIEW

- Write up notes following the interview on your performance. Highlight any questions / areas you felt you did not answer particularly well as these may be focussed on if you are asked back to a 2nd interview. Note any outstanding questions or reservations that you may have.
- In order to improve your chances of securing an offer you may want to follow up the meeting by sending an email or letter thanking the interviewer for their time and reinstating your enthusiasm for the role. This is however a matter of personal choice.
- Remember not to give up if you don't get offered the role. It's unlikely that you will be offered every role you interview for, no matter how perfect you think you may be for it. Ask the company politely for feedback and take onboard the comments made when applying for your next role.



If you require any further guidance on interview preparation, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Good luck!