

INTERVIEW TECHNIQUES

1. Preparation

It is important to spend time preparing for interviews. Take the time to find out about the company. For example: -

- Research the Prospective Employer/Company.
- What products or services the company deals with.
- The size, location, style and reputation of the organization.
- Look on the company website for information about the company.
- Research who would be their main competitors and the types of products and services they have to offer.
- Rehearse 5 good reasons why you want to work for this employer.

Be prepared with answers for commonly occurring questions. For example:-

- What interests you about the job?
- What would your current Company miss about you?
- What do you have to offer the company?
- What can you tell me about our company?
- What are your strengths and weaknesses?
- Why do you wish to move?
- Why did you leave your last position?
- Tell me about responsibilities you have held?
- How do you cope under pressure?

Practice talking about yourself, get a friend to help they may take the role of interviewer.

Have questions ready to ask. List your questions in a notebook and take them with you.

Good Questions to ask are:

- What makes your company different from competitors?

- What significant changes has the company made in training and development over the last 3 years?
- What type of training and assistance would I receive in this role?
- What are you expecting from the successful candidate over the next year within this role?
- Who would you be reporting to and working with if successful in obtaining this position?
- How would they describe the company's working environment?
- What is the next process will there be a 2nd interview?
- When will a decision be made?
- Is there anything else they would like to know about you?

2. Day of the Interview.

Plan a reliable way of getting to the interview, with a practice run if need be. Make sure you are 15 minutes early.

First impressions do count. Make sure you are well groomed, with neat hair, and that your clothes are conservative. Practice your handshake to make sure that it is firm. Smile and make eye contact, but don't start. Once invited to sit down, sit upright with your hands on your lap.

If you are a smoker make sure that you do not have an odour on your clothes.

Make sure you listen carefully and do not interrupt. Keep your answers clear and to the point. Answer questions with examples.

3. The Interview

- Smile and deliver a firm handshake.
- Be pleasant to everyone you encounter-try and remember names.
- Do not eat or chew gum.

- Use proper grammar.
- Enjoy the interview- Be positive and confident.
- Body Language- lean forward slightly to express your interest in the position.
- Avoid fidgeting and overstating the case with the use of your hands.
- Look to mirroring the interview's speech by matching your tone and volume. There is one exception. Always maintain a positive demeanour and high level. You may be the interviewer's sixth interview that day. So, your positive energy may lift the energy level of the interviewer.

- Remember to answer questions clearly and do not waffle or ramble-keep it precise and to the point.

- Practice active listening-when listening to the question acknowledge with nods and affirmative comments.

- Maintain eye contact-if more than one interviewer-address the main speaker with the bulk of the questions; however remember to acknowledge the second party with part of the answer.

- Leave questions about salary and benefits until a later stage. If asked to say what salary you desire, answer with a question like." What range do you have in mind for this particular role?" If the interviewer persists or requires an answer on the form, give a range. Use a realistic range based on the current market.

4. The end of the interview

- Remember to thank everyone for his or her time.
- Deliver a smile and a firm hand shake and reassure the employer once again that the position discussed is ideally what you are looking for and you would like to think you would be considered for the next stage in the process.

- Remember last impressions are nearly as important as first, so make sure you finish on a confident platform.

DRESS TO IMPRESS

First impressions count. Image consultants say that 55% of the impact we make is the way we dress, act and walk through the door, 38% is quality of voice, accent, use of grammar, and overall confidence, and a mere 7% is from what we actually say.

Interviewers make their decisions about a candidate within 10-30 minutes even when the interview takes longer. So, how can you create a good impression from the start?

Look out for certain principles and it will help you well beyond the interview situation.

Body type

- When clothes suit your body type your confidence is boosted.
- In today's society we have endless TV shows frequently featuring information about how to choose clothes and give makeovers to people.
- Why not try on a range of clothes in specialist shops while gaining the assistance of staff. Say what you need it for, to get the most from their experience. Get the best advice you can and take it!
- Consult with your family and friends-get their views on a range of clothes that you feel comfortable and confident in.
- Dress the part. Give your prospective employer the feeling that you look like the type of person that already is employed by their company, this is possible by doing some research on the company either through a prospective fact finding call to the employer or to your consultant dealing with this particular assignment.

Taste

- Avoid at all times flamboyancy or untidiness.

- Your own taste might not be anywhere near your prospective employers taste, choose something relatively conservative for an interview.
- After all, an interviewer wearing outrageous clothing would definitely distract you!
- Conservative dress might not be everyone's taste; nevertheless it is still a safe bet in today's ever-changing marketplace.

Fit

- Buying a new interview outfit might sound like a great idea-nevertheless we might not all be in that lucrative situation-the important part is that your clothes fit you well and in turn enable you to carry off that professional and comfortable impression.
- Buying a new suit might be something we may want to consider if we are able to get ourselves through the initial interview rounds.
- Remember when wearing shirts or blouses always adhere to conservative colours white, blue and ivory.
- Wearing new shoes for an interview can be a mistake. Plan ahead and make sure fit adjustments are made before you sit through an interview. The last thing you need on your mind is your feet are aching.

Accessories

- Before your interview, check your outfit is coordinated: i.e. Shoes, handbag, shirt, tie etc match.
- Get as much advice as possible.
- A co-ordinated look is likely to be more conservative in effect.
- Avoid heavy aftershave or perfume.

Overall Impression

- Remember the first few seconds are vital.

- Take a good look-is your hairstyle appropriate for both the job and the image you create with your clothes? If not, don't worry about changing it, you can always change it back once the job is yours!
- Most people feel nervous meeting new people so make sure you rehearse initial greetings and get confident about your appearance.
- Remember no one knows more about yourself than you do-so go on give it your best shot-Just be yourself.

When all is said and done, they can only ask you questions about yourself and what you have told them you have to offer via your CV. Be relaxed as you can and remember to answer all questions clearly and confidently.