

## Interview Tools

Did you know that the best candidate does not always get the job? The candidate who gets the job is the one who performs the best at the interview.

You are expected to "sell" yourself, build rapport, reveal attitudes and opinions and talk freely. You must demonstrate the benefit and relevance of your skills and experience.

The purpose of the interview is not to get the job, but to win the job offer. Be positive and enthusiastic - don't mention any reservations until you have received the offer.

You have to demonstrate that you can do the job, that you want the job and that you will fit in.

## Preparation, Presentation & Personality

### **Preparation is the first step toward a successful interview.**

- Know the exact address and time of the interview, the interviewer's full name, the correct pronunciation and his or her title
- Research the best route and transport connections to get you there on time
- Use the internet to research the company, its products or services, competitors, company financial reports
- Find out why the client is interested in you
- An interview is a "two-way street" - know in advance what questions to ask.
- Always wear proper attire and greet your interviewer with a firm handshake and an enthusiastic smile
- Anticipate the questions you will be asked, and prepare your answers accordingly. Think carefully about your responses
- Finally, make sure you know your own CV.

### **Presentation**

First impressions count. Typically, recruitment decisions are made in the first 5 minutes.

If a candidate looks the part, the interviewer will assume he or she can do the job. If you don't look successful, the interviewer has no reason to think you are.

Be smart, well groomed in appropriate business attire. Guys, remember a tie and a jacket. A suit is recommended for more conservative roles. Ladies, employers still like to see you in a suit or dress with appropriate pantyhose and shoes.

Play it safe and dress conservatively until you check out the corporate dress code at the interview.

### **Personality**

The interviewer is not merely assessing your skills and experience, but whether they think you'll fit in.

Try to develop a rapport with your interviewer. The more the interviewer feels comfortable with you, the better the interview will go. Look for clues in the interviewer's office - family photos, framed certificates, prints on the wall and discuss common interests.



Take note:

- a firm handshake
- eye contact should be maintained
- don't digress, stick to the point
- avoid jargon
- don't fidget, and
- watch the interviewer's body language

### **Key Questions You Could be Asked**

- Tell me about yourself?
- What motivates you?
- How would your work colleagues/manager describe you?
- Do you prefer to work alone or in a group?
- Have there been instances where you have had to manage or supervise others? Give examples.
- What do you feel you have done particularly well in your current/last job?
- In what areas have you achieved the greatest success? Why?
- What are your reasons for wanting to leave your last/present job?
- What are you looking for in a company?
- What are your salary expectations at the moment?
- What do you see as your best qualities?
- Apart from knowledge or experience, what traits do you feel could be improved upon?
- What is the toughest decision you have had to make while at your present/last company?

### **What Questions Should You Ask?**

A lack of questions may be mistaken as a lack of interest. It is okay to take notes at the interview. The interviewer will provide you with lots of information about the job opportunity and the company. You will need this to make your decision later. Rehearse these questions in your mind before the interview:

- What would I be expected to accomplish in this position?
  - What are the key performance indicators (KPIs)?
  - What are the greatest challenges in this position?
  - How do you think I fit the position?
  - What is the reporting structure within the company?
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- What is the vision of the company?
  - Could you tell me a little about the company culture?
  - What sort of opportunity is there for advancement within the company?
  - What are the opportunities for future training and development in the company?



## Critical Dos and Don'ts

**During the interview, the employer will be evaluating your negative factors as well as your positive attributes.**

- Do plan to arrive on time or a few minutes early
- Do be well groomed and appropriately dressed
- Do fill out the application form neatly and completely, if asked to do so. Don't rely on your resume
- Do greet the interviewer by last name. Give the appearance of energy as you walk. Smile. Shake hands firmly. Be genuinely glad to meet the interviewer
- Do sit upright, look alert and interested at all times
- Don't fidget or squirm
- Don't cross your arms or lean across the desk when being interviewed.
- Do look a prospective employer in the eye while speaking
- Do follow the interviewer's leads. Try to get the interviewer to describe the position and duties to you early in the interview
- Do make sure that your good points come across. Sell yourself. Stress your achievements and provide details
- Do conduct yourself as if you are determined to get the job
- Do show your personality; however do not let it take over. Show warmth and honesty so that the interviewer feels comfortable with you
- Do show enthusiasm
- Do bring a copy of your resume!
- Don't smoke or chew gum
- Don't answer "yes" or "no". Explain
- Do speak up and don't mumble
- Don't lie or hide the truth. It is okay to have made mistakes in the past as long as you are up front about it
- Don't make unnecessary derogatory remarks about your present or former employers. When explaining your reasons for leaving, limit your comments, don't get personal.
- Don't over-answer questions
- Do avoid politics or controversial issues
- Don't enquire about or discuss salary, holidays, bonuses, or retirement. Sidestep the issue. You're more interested in opportunity than in a specific salary. Negotiate your salary package after you receive an offer

## Closing the Interview and Follow-Up

- Towards the end of the interview is the most appropriate time for you to ask questions regarding the position and the company
- If you are interested in the position, ask for it - and tell the interviewer why
- Find out the next step of the interview process
- Be sure to close the interview with positive reaffirmation of your interest in the position and what you would have to offer
- Always end the interview with a firm handshake
- Thank the interviewer for their time

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## **After the Interview**

Most importantly, call your Consultant at Active Recruitment immediately after the interview and provide feedback. We need to talk with you before the interviewer calls back. It will assist us if we know your feelings about the position, together with your perception of what the client's reaction is likely to be.

After the interview, review your notes and jot down all the pluses and minuses of the role and the company. We will assist you in answering all those "I should have asked that at the interview" questions.

## **Follow-Up**

If you are really keen on the job opportunity it can be a good idea to follow up with an email or letter to the interviewer.

- thanking him/her for their time
- reinforcing your relevant strengths and
- restating your interest in the company and the position

Send the letter the same day. The interviewer will be impressed by your efficiency and enthusiasm. It will also help to set you apart from the other applicants.

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