

Interview Tips

Preparation, Presentation and Positivity!

Congratulations! You have secured an interview so now is your chance to secure the job! Interviews don't have to be scary. The better prepared you are the more confident you will be. The keys to turning an interview into a job offer are: Preparation, Presentation and Positivity!

Preparation

The importance of preparation cannot be overstated. The more prepared you are the more confident you will be which will show through at interview. Here are some tips:

- **Know your CV:** It may seem obvious but you must know your own CV inside and out. Be prepared to discuss your career history, the reasons for your job moves and be able to substantiate any general experience outlined in your CV with specific examples. Be prepared to give examples of your greatest achievements and greatest challenges.
- **Research the Company and the Job:** Employers want to hire people who want the job. In order to demonstrate your genuine interest in the opportunity you need to know about the company and the job you are interviewing for. Do as much research as possible. As a bare minimum make sure you have thoroughly checked out the company's website and have an outline of the job. Interview Tip: early in the interview ask the interviewer to clarify the most important things they are looking for so that you can relay your most relevant experience back to them throughout the interview.
- **Arrive early and know who you are meeting:** Make sure you know the names and titles of the people who are interviewing you. Also, look up the address and make sure you allow plenty of time to be walking into reception 10 minutes early. There is nothing worse than arriving late or flustered for an interview.
- **Practice answering questions:** Make sure you listen closely to the interview questions and answer them concisely. Don't give one word answers like, 'yes' or 'no' but avoid waffling or going off on a tangent. Make sure you can come up with real life examples rather than just generic statements. Some examples of questions are:
 - Why do you want to work for this company/why do you want this job?
 - What are the reasons for your previous job moves?
 - What are your short term and long term goals?
 - What are your salary expectations? (Nb. never raise salary until they do)
 - Who are your referees and what would they say about you?
 - What are your strengths/weaknesses?
 - What are your greatest achievements?
 - Tell me about a challenging situation or person you have had to deal with?
- **Ask the right questions:** You will often be given the opportunity to ask questions but please remember this is still part of the interview process so, make sure you ask positively framed questions which demonstrate your interest in the opportunity.

Presentation

Dress for success! You only have one chance to make a first impression so make sure you are looking your best. When you look good, you feel good and it shows. It's a great idea to plan ahead and choose your outfit the night before so you are not in a rush on the day of your interview. Check you have the basics covered:

Clothes: for corporate or professional attire a suit or tailored clothes are generally recommended

- Hair: neatly styled
- Nails: manicured
- Shoes: polished
- Make-up: professionally applied
- Breath: freshen your breath with a mint to give you a final confidence boost before the interview.

Positivity

Confidence and a positive attitude can win you the job over other similarly qualified candidates. Employers want to hire people with a "can-do" attitude who will be a positive influence on their team and business. Be confident and put everything in the best possible light. Here are a few tips:

- Be enthusiastic: show enthusiasm and demonstrate a keen interest in the job
- Be confident: think positively and be optimistic that you can get this job
- Be professional but friendly: a smile is a great way to break the ice and connect with people
- Make eye contact: this is extremely important – it engages people and demonstrates interest and confidence
- Use positive Body Language and a Firm Handshake
- Use positive Verbal Language: Always speak positively about your experience, your previous job moves and why you want this job (Never say anything bad about a former employer)
- Finish on a positive note: Thank the interviewers for their time and say you look forward to hearing from them

Good luck with your interview! Hopefully, you will be successful but don't worry if this one isn't for you. Make the most of the experience by learning from it and you will be even better prepared for your next interview.