

## Interview Tips

Being well-prepared is the best way to make the most of an interview. You only get one chance to make a first impression, so here are some valuable tips.

### **Do your homework**

We are only too happy to help you do your homework on the company you are interviewing with. Research the company by visiting its website and browsing through all sections. Take notes about the various sections i.e. background to the company; company news or newsletters; products; about us; and about our people. Read and reread the relevant details to familiarise yourself and commit to memory. Annual reports and brochures can also be helpful and are a good source of information. Take a look at all social media accounts for the company, not only will it give you an insight into the business, it may help give you an idea about their culture. Don't be afraid to tell the interviewer that you have researched the company – they will be impressed!

### **Practice your interview techniques**

Practicing interviews with friends or family members, and recording yourself is a proven way to improve communication skills. It will build up your confidence and help you get your thoughts clear in your mind. You will hear whether you're speaking too quickly or if your sentences are too long or if your answers are hard to follow. Practice until you feel confident with your points and answers.

### **Learn to handle behavioural interview questions**

This is where the questions require you to provide an actual example from your work or life experience. Questions will start with words such as "Tell me about a time when..." or "Give me an example of..." The technique is built on the theory that the best indicator of future performance is past performance. It is good to have some situations in mind as preparation. Your consultant should be able to help you with examples based on the role you are interviewing for.

### **Pre-interview check**

Always make sure you have the correct name and position for each person you will be meeting with. Check that you have the full correct address and confirm the time. Read the details back to the person giving them to you to ensure that they are correct. Again, your recruitment consultant will provide these. If you are dealing directly with the company, it's perfectly acceptable to ask its HR department to provide these details.

### **Appearance**

It is really important that you feel comfortable and confident, so wear something that you know makes you feel that way. Check that your clothes are clean and well-ironed. Avoid visual distractions such as loud ties, chipped nail polish, heavy makeup, jewellery that jangles, overpowering fragrances, and unwashed hair or hair that flops into your eyes or needs constant pushing back.

### **Be punctual**

On the day of the interview, relax – make sure you allow plenty of time to arrive at the interview without being stressed or rushed. Check how long the trip will take prior to the day of your interview. On the way to the interview, take your time and smile, the receptionist at the company will be nice to you and you'll feel good. Remember it's normal to feel nervous, it means that this interview is important to you.

### **During the interview**

- Listen to every question
- Be honest about reasons for leaving previous roles but avoid saying anything negative about a past employer, it can reflect badly on you
- Don't interrupt anyone while they are speaking
- Keep your answers short and to the point but avoid answering with just a "yes" or "no". If the interviewer wants more information, he or she will ask for it
- Maintain good eye contact
- If there is more than one person at the interview, address all of them no matter how junior or seemingly incidental.

**Prepare something for when you are invited to ask questions – two to three questions is enough. Some questions could include:**

- Who you will be reporting to
- Questions about the team you would be joining
- Career path options
- Projects you could be working on

Be careful not to ask a question they have already answered unless you are asking for further clarification or information.

Never ask a question about salary and benefits at initial interviews, unless you have been offered the job. They are best saved up until you have ultimate bargaining power, at the very least, second interview stage. The most appropriate time and your strongest bargaining point is between being offered the job and accepting it.

**Enjoy the experience and.... Good Luck!**