



## How To Make Your Next Job Interview A Success

Follow the enclosed Advice to ensure you perform to your full potential at your next Interview.



## Introduction

This document has been put together to provide you with the information you need to ensure you can prepare properly and put you in the best possible position to ensure you get through to the next stage, be that another Interview or securing the offer for the opportunity you are interviewing for. Between us we have over 20 years' experience of working with individuals to ensure that they are the best prepared they can be to enable them to perform to their maximum potential in the interview.

If you follow some or all of this advice you are going to be more confident going into the meeting and as a result perform to your full potential and ensure both you and the interviewer leave the meeting in a positive frame of mind. Guaranteed!

The employment interview is one of the most important events in a person's career, because the time spent with the interviewer may determine the entire course of one's life.

Interviewers are continually amazed at the number of candidates who come to job interviews without any apparent preparation and only the vaguest idea of what they are going to say. Other candidates create an impression of indifference by acting too casually. At the other extreme, a few candidates work themselves into such a state of mind that they seem to be in the last stages of nervous fright.

These marks of inexperience can be avoided by knowing a little of what is actually expected of you and by taking some time to prepare before the meeting.

There's a lot of competition out there now. Anybody lucky enough to get an interview for a coveted position will have to sell themselves.

We suggest candidates look at the interview as a consultative sales call. It's far more effective than the normal techniques.

Traditional advice urged candidates to be polite; to speak when spoken to. Candidates now are expected to question their interviewers, seeking clues to the kind of person the company wants.



The trick is to stand out. Develop your unique selling point and know how you are going to get that message across. The question “Tell us about yourself” is your opportunity to show the interviewing panel what makes you different. Hi, I’m me, I’m unique and here’s why you need me.

Think of the interviewer as a customer buying what you have to offer – your academic credential, your expertise and skills. Pitch accordingly, be in tune with your interviewers and adjust your sales patter to their style. Surplus confidence may smack of arrogance so if the interviewer sends out hostile vibes, reign yourself in and calm down.

This document will help focus your mind prior to the interview and provide some in-depth information of how to conduct yourself during your interview. Be prepared is the guiding motto.

## Preparation is Key

Preparation is the first essential step toward a successful interview. Some of these tips may be obvious when you read them; however; you would be surprised at how many people skip over some of these vital points. Thus, it is important to:

1. Know the exact time and place of the interview, the interviewer's full name, the correct pronunciation, and the interviewer's title. If you don't know all of these things ring the company and find out.
2. Do some research on the company you are going to see. It will be helpful to know how old the company is, what its products or services are, where its factories, offices or stores are located, what its growth has been and what its growth potential is for the future. There are a number of publications which provide information about prospective employers. Get online as most companies have a website which will give you a lot of the relevant information. Make use of Companies House and other sources of company information such as Dunn and Brad Street etc. as they will be able to supply you with pertinent information, probably for a small fee.

Have all of this information with you and visible to the interviewer(s)

3. Do you know someone who is working there now? Use them to gain insights into the company and person who is interviewing.
4. As with any meeting an interview is a 'two-way street'. Know what information you want to get out of the interviewer(s) and prepare the questions you will be asking during the meeting. This is important as the only way you will get the information you want out of the interview is by asking searching questions of your own.

Do you think the interviewer is just going to make up questions as they go along? No! They will have a structure they are working to ensure they appoint the best person in the position. You should do exactly the same so that you know the company is right for you.

You must determine through questioning whether the company will give you the opportunity for the growth and development you seek.

If you don't ask now you may not get another chance!

5. Some probing questions you might ask:
  - A detailed description of the position?
  - The reason the position is available?
  - Anticipated induction and training programme?
  - Their expectations of someone undertaking the role?
  - Advanced training programmes available for those who demonstrate outstanding ability?
  - Company growth plans and how do they plan to achieve them?
  - How does this position fit into those plans?
  - Future potential for somebody that exceeds their expectations?
  - The next step in the recruitment process?
6. Write your questions down and take them in with you to ensure you remember to ask all of the questions you want to find out during the meeting. You may well get answers to a number of these questions during the course of the meeting. This is fine, however, you are likely to still have some questions to ask when they ask if you have any other questions at the end of the meeting.

7. You only get one chance to make a good first impression.

### **DON'T WASTE IT!**

Men should dress in a business suit (NO CASUAL CLOTHES), white or plain shirt, conservative tie, dark socks, clean shoes and a neat haircut.

Women should dress in a tailored and conservative style.

Most employers make their mind up about you in the first 10 minutes of a meeting. Don't Blow your chance to make that first positive impression.

8. Plan to arrive on time or a few minutes early. Late arrival for a job interview is never excusable. Make sure you allow yourself enough time to park up, sign in at Reception etc. If you are unsure where you can park and what security you need to go through to get to the car park – ring and ask so you don't get caught out.
9. Ensure you know the interviewer(s) full name and correct pronunciation prior to arrival.

## **The Interview**

You are being interviewed because the employer wants to recruit people - not because he wants to trip you or embarrass you. Through the interaction which will take place during the interview the employer will be searching out your strengths and weaknesses, evaluating you on your qualifications, skills and intellectual qualities and the employer will probably probe deeply to determine your attitudes, aptitudes, stability, motivation and maturity.

### **Some "Do's" and "Don'ts" concerning the interview:**

1. If the employer presents you with an application form to complete, DO fill it out neatly and completely. DON'T relax and rely on your application form or CV to do your selling for you. Most employers will want you to speak for yourself.

2. DO Smile! Shake hands firmly. Be genuinely glad to meet the employer and the chances are that you'll find him / her to be interesting person. Ensure you present a positive, energetic body language.
3. DO wait until you are offered a chair before sitting. Sit upright in your chair. Look alert and interested at all times. Be a good listener as well as a good talker. Smile!
4. DO look a prospective employer in the eye while you talk to him.
5. DO follow the employer's lead but try to get the employer to describe the position and the duties to you early in the interview so that you can relate your background, skills and accomplishments to the position.
6. DON'T answer questions with a simple „yes“ or „no“. Explain wherever possible. Tell those things about yourself which relate to the situation.
7. DO make sure that your good points get across to the interviewer in a factual, logical, sincere manner. Stress achievements. For example: sales records, processes developed, savings achieved, systems installed etc. Have evidence with you that support your claims.
8. DON'T lie. Answer questions truthfully, frankly and as 'to the point' as possible.
9. DON'T ever make derogatory remarks about your present or former employers or companies.
10. DON'T over answer questions. The interviewer may steer the conversation into politics or economics. Since this is a ticklish situation it is best to keep your answers to the point and honest.
11. DON'T inquire about SALARY, HOLIDAY, BONUSES or RETIREMENT etc. on the initial interview. If the interviewer brings up the salary question confirm what you are currently earning (full package). Stress to them you are there for the opportunity and that if you are the right individual for the position they would offer an appropriate package.

12. DO always conduct yourself as if you are determined to get the job you are discussing. Never close the door on an opportunity! You never know where it might take you!
13. DO be yourself – Start the way you mean to go on!

## Questions to be Prepared for:

1. Why did you choose this particular opportunity?
2. Why do you think you might like to work for our Company?
3. What do you know about our Company?
4. What qualifications do you have that make you feel that you will be successful in your field?
5. What do you think determines a person's progress in a good company?
6. Can you get recommendations from previous employers?
7. What contributions to profits have you made in your present or former position to justify your salary level there?
8. Can you take instructions without feeling upset?
9. What is your major weakness?
10. What are your major strengths?
11. Are you willing to relocate?
12. Tell me about yourself?
13. How do you spend your spare time? What are your hobbies?
14. What job in your company do you want to work toward?

15. What jobs have you enjoyed most? The least? Why?
16. What are your own special abilities?
17. What types of people seem to rub you up the wrong way?
18. Define co-operation.
19. Do you like regular hours?
20. What have you done which shows initiative and willingness to work?

**This is not an exhaustive list.**

In addition to these you need to think about the worst question that you could be asked. Write it down and then prepare your answer now so you are more confident when they ask it. If they don't ask it you've lost nothing! If they do you are more confident and ready to answer it. Avoid these mistakes

During the course of the interview, the employer will evaluate your negative factors as well as your positive factors. Listed below are negative factors frequently evaluated during the course of the interview and those which most often lead to the rejection of a candidate from the process.

1. Poor personal appearance.
2. Overbearing - overaggressive - conceited 'superiority complex' - 'know it all'.
3. Inability to express thoughts clearly - poor poise, diction or grammar.
4. Lack of planning for career - no purpose or goals.
5. Lack of interest and enthusiasm - passive and indifferent.
6. Lack of confidence and poise - nervousness.
7. Overemphasis on money - interested only in 'big bucks'.

8. Evasive - makes excuses for unfavourable factors in record.
9. Lack of tact - maturity - courtesy.
10. Condemnation of last employer.
11. Failure to look employer in the eye.
12. Limp, fish handshake.
13. Lack of appreciation of the value of experience.
14. Failure to ask questions about the job.
15. Persistent attitude of 'What can you do for me?'
16. Lack of preparation for the interview - failure to get information about the company resulting in inability to ask intelligent questions.

## Closing the Interview for the Job Offer

We recommend maintaining the confident pitch to the end of the interview. Closing on a positive note is vital. You need to ensure that the interviewer(s) leave the meeting with a positive mind set about you and what you can do for them.

1. Check with the interviewer before you go for the final close that they have all the information they need or if they need any clarification on anything you have said or not answered fully during the meeting. By doing this you ensure they have all the information they need to make an informed decision. If they confirm they have all the information they need you can then go in for your final close.

A sure-footed confident stance can help you to secure the position.

2. If you are interested in the position, ask for it, or ask for the next interview if the situation demands. If you feel the job is worth your efforts and you want to receive an offer, say something like: 'Mr

Employer, I'm very interested with what I have seen here today, your company, its products and the people I've met. I am confident I could do an excellent job in the position you have described to me. How soon will I be able to start?' or something similar in your own style.

The employer will be impressed by your enthusiasm. If the employer makes the offer, don't dive in, explain you are extremely interested, but ask for time to reflect, say 24hrs to ensure you are making the right decision for you. You can always respond sooner, this is just to give you some time to reflect on a life changing decision.

3. Don't be discouraged if no definite offer is made or specific salary discussed there and then. The employer will probably want / need to communicate with his office first or may have other interviews arranged before he can make a decision.
4. If you get the impression that the interview is not going well and that you have already been rejected, don't let your discouragement show. Once in a while an employer who is genuinely interested in your possibilities may seem to discourage you in order to test your reaction.
5. Request feedback. Even if a decision is yet to be made at least this will give you some indication of the interviewer's initial thoughts and feelings towards your suitability for the role.
6. Thank the employer for his time and his consideration of you. If you have answered the two questions uppermost in the employer's mind:
  - Why are you interested in this company?
  - What can you offer? – You have done all you can.
7. If you are interested enough in the position to want an offer, right after the interview write (post or email) to the employer expressing your thanks for the interview and reconfirming your interest and briefly what contribution you would bring to the position and company.

We would suggest that you keep this brief and to the point.

8. Be Professional at all times.



## Summary

Be Prompt

Be Polished

Be Positive

Be Polite

Be Prepared

Be Proactive

And above all

**Be Professional**

Good Luck