

spec recruitment

Interview Preparation

You never get a 2nd chance to make a first impression

No matter how many interviews you've been through, they are nerve-racking and stressful experiences. The best way to reduce stress is preparation. The more prepared you are the less nervous you will be.

Before your interview make sure you know the following:

- The exact time and location of your interview, transport options, parking and how long it will take to get there.
- The interviewer's correct title and pronunciation of his or her full name.
- Company facts – including its history, financial position, mission, markets, competitors, latest news etc. The company's website is often an excellent source for this information. If you know the name of your interview(s) it is well worth looking them up as well; it can only impress if you mention an article they have written or had written about them.
- Facts and figures about your present or former employer. Refresh your memory – you will be expected to know a lot about a company for which you have previously worked.

Review your CV and the job description

- Ensure you are equipped to answer questions on the details you have supplied.
- Be ready to use pertinent examples from your career or personal competencies.
- Also review the job description and core competencies of the role.
- Examine your suitability and prepare specific examples before the interview.

Make a list of possible questions you might be asked and prepare your answers, e.g.

- Your strengths and weaknesses.
- Breakdown the specific duties in your current role.
- Past Achievements - work related and personal.
- Reasons for leaving your current position - don't be negative!
- Which aspects of the potential job appeal to you most.

Prepare some questions to ask at the interview, e.g.

- What goals do the company have?
- Where do they expect to be in five years time?
- How will this role develop?
- Who are the company's direct competitors?

Dress

- First impressions have a real bearing on an employer's perceptions. Always dress like a professional, in a smart suit, with a clean, ironed shirt and tie (or blouse) and freshly polished dark shoes.
- Do not wear casual clothes even if you know that it is company policy. Aim for a neutral rather than flamboyant look.
- **REMEMBER YOU NEVER GET A SECOND CHANCE TO MAKE A FIRST IMPRESSION!**

Hints and tips for a successful interview

- Being late is inexcusable. Plan your journey in advance and give yourself plenty of time to overcome the hazards of train delays and traffic jams. If you are delayed, telephone us at Spec with your estimated time of arrival.
- Creating a good rapport is important. Greet your interviewer(s) by name, with a smile and a firm hand shake.
- Sit upright in your chair and look interested at all times.
- Try to put on your best performance by demonstrating your interpersonal skills during the interview.
- Be a good listener – actively listen to the question and answer it – as well as a good talker.
- Smile and maintain eye contact.

Marketing yourself

- Try and be original - discuss points raised in their literature or in editorial you may have read in newspapers or in the trade press.
- Describe your accomplishments and how you feel they could apply to the prospective role.
- Don't waffle or avoid difficult questions. When you are asked questions, remember that this is an opportunity to sell yourself. Try not to give "yes" or "no" replies. Know your CV - Dates etc..
- Always conduct yourself as though you are determined to get the job you are discussing. Never close the door on an opportunity.
- Remember to ask the questions you prepared before the interview.
- Avoid enquiring about salary, holidays and bonuses at the initial interview unless you are positive the interviewer wants to hire you. You should, however, know your market worth and be prepared to specify your required salary and salary range.

Closing the interview

- If you are interested in the job, make sure you let the interviewer(s) know before you leave by stating why you like the role and thank the interviewer(s) for their time. If you feel confident then ask if the interviewer thinks you are capable of the role and if you will be considered for a second interview.
- If the interviewer offers the position and you want it, accept it. If you wish some time to think over, be courteous and tactful in asking for that time. Set a definite date by which you can provide an answer, and then get back to them earlier.
- Don't be discouraged if no offer is made nor a specific salary discussed. The interviewer will probably want to consult colleagues or interview other candidates before making a decision.
- Thank the interviewer for their time.

After The Interview

- Contact your consultant immediately with your interview feedback. We cannot contact the client until we know your views.
- Don't despair if you do not get the job. Treat every interview as experience. Remember that practice makes perfect.
- Finally, if you are asked back for a 2nd interview, be prepared to answer further questions about yourself and your CV.