

Fact Sheet No3: Getting the most out of your interview

Preparation

“Fail to prepare...prepare to fail”. Having gained that all important interview, it is very important to prepare correctly.

- Research the company. Its size, products & services and competitors etc.
- Ensure you know the exact location of the interview. They may have several offices.
- Work out the best route to travel.
- Who will interview you and what is their position. Remember you may see more than one person.
- Read the job specification carefully. Draw up a list of the qualities/experience the employer is looking for, then think about how you can match your skills to the requirements.
- Have some questions prepared that you can ask during the interview.
- Prepare for questions you may be asked.

Appearance/Presentation

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

- Take pride in your appearance.
- Wear smart, clean and comfortable clothes appropriate for the interview.
- Try to avoid overpowering perfume or aftershave, excessive makeup or jewellery
- Greet the interviewer confidently and more importantly with a firm handshake.

Punctuality

“Don’t be late”. There are no excuses. If necessary confirm the appointment the day before and check your transport route for delays. Arrive 5 or 10 minutes early.

If you are unavoidably delayed, take the time to call either the agency or the company to inform them of your delays as this will look a lot more professional.

Top Tips

“Concentrate on your strengths, there is no room for modesty in an interview”.

- Remember to SEE
Smile
Eye Contact
Enthusiasm
- Read a newspaper on the morning in case you're asked about topical issues.
- Speak clearly and confidently.
- Don't waffle or digress in the interview and try not to speak for too long without being prompted.
- Avoid asking negative questions or mentioning reservations at the first hurdle. Once you have an offer you are then in a position to negotiate.
- Never mention salary yourself, wait till the interviewer raises the subject.
- If you miss what the interviewer says, ask for clarification rather than waffling on with the inappropriate answer.

Questions You May Be Asked

Many questions are fairly standard in interviews although it's a good idea to be prepared for a variety of questions. Your consultant can help you with these questions.

- Why do you think you would like to work for our company?
- What do you look for in a company?
- What specifically do you have to offer us?
- Why did you choose this particular area of work?
- Why are you looking to move?
- Why do you want this particular job?
- What sort of duties do you enjoy most/least and why?
- What tasks do you find difficult and why?
- Describe your last/present boss?
- How would they describe you?
- Did you implement any changes in the routine of your last position? Did these changes benefit the company or yourself?
- What bothers you most/least and why?
- Describe your ideal job?
- What are your strengths/weaknesses?
- What is important to you in a job?
- What pressures have you encountered in your last/present job?
- Are you a good communicator?
- How do you feel about working long hours and weekends?
- Where do you see yourself in 5 years?

Difficult Questions You May Be Asked

- Why have you not been selected for any other job?
- Why have you changed jobs so often?
- What have you been doing during your spell of unemployment?
- Why did you stay so long in your last job?
- Is there anything else I should know about you?

Questions You May Ask the Interviewer

- Can you tell me about the company?
- Where would I fit into the structure?
- Is this a new or existing role?
- Who or how many will I be working with?
- Are there opportunities for development/promotion?
- Do you encourage staff training?
- Are there any times when the department is busier?
- What hours would I be working?

Dos & Don'ts in an Interview

- DO avoid yes or no answers.
- DO relax.
- DO answer all questions honestly.
- DO thank the interviewer at the end.
- DON'T criticise your last/present employer.
- DON'T slouch or fold your arms.
- DON'T get defensive or aggressive when asked difficult questions.



Closing the Interview

Always finish on a positive note, making sure the interviewer knows you are interested in the position.

Find out what happens next and finally thank the interviewer for their time.

After the Interview

We encourage all candidates to ring their consultant *immediately* after the interview to establish your interest in the position and so we may give feedback immediately to the client.

Your consultant will be able to give you some idea of when a decision will be made as to the next stage of the process.

Further Information

If you require any further information or assistance please do not hesitate to contact one of our consultants.

Good Luck with your interview!