

AN ALTERNATIVE LOOK AT INTERVIEW TECHNIQUE

THE INTERVIEW

There are possibly three main areas to consider:-

- ***Body Language**
- ***Thinking on your feet**
- ***What to say**

BODY LANGUAGE

An experienced interviewer will be looking at how you compose yourself during the interview and these are some of the points you need to consider.

POSTURE - Sit up-right; look keen and interested but not too wooden. If you lean back this may be seen as a casual attitude and, therefore that you are not very interested in the job

HANDS - Keep control of hands as they have a tendency to let people down at interview by almost having a mind of their own. It sometimes works to clasp hands lightly together but be careful when folding arms as this can be seen as someone being defensive and evasive. An open stance normally suggests that a more open and honest discussion will take place. It is advised that you should not keep touching your face as this is a sign of nerves just as playing with hair or fiddling with something like a pen or button etc. May also be construed as nervousness and a potential weakness. If the interviewer shakes your hand, do not shy away always shake hands firmly and maintain eye contact.

FACE - Always maintain eye contact with the interviewer as this not only shows that you are interested in what is being said but also looked upon by some people as a strength of character, however do not stare. It is important to smile and look as if you are enjoying the interview even if you are extremely nervous!

TIME TO THINK

The company should already have received a copy of your CV, plus a brief Personal Profile that we put together on you. The client will be looking to see how you compose yourself how well presented you are. Other than that the interviewer will have specific questions that they will ask to gather more information or to test your aptitude and/or opinion in certain areas or on specific issues. They will be trying to envisage you doing the job, fitting into their culture and adopting their working practices successfully. They will check your experience (if relevant), expertise, specific skills, attitude and how you are likely to interact with the other members of the team. Be sure that you are prepared, which will reduce the time you have to think on your feet. Prepare beforehand answers to the questions below. (You will be asked some if not all of these questions in some way shape or form)

What are your strengths and weaknesses?

Be honest! Relate your answers to a working environment. Don't say that you can't wallpaper but you are good at painting walls! This is not relevant to the interviewer so they do not want to hear it!!

Why do you wish to leave your current employer?

Do not bad mouth your current employer even if you are devastatingly unhappy.

Why do you want this job?

Be positive, tell them it provides a challenge or pick on one point that really interests you and be specific. If you're vague you won't be convincing.



What motivates and de-motivates you?

Again be honest but relate it to work issues. Draw on previous experience and don't be afraid to use examples.

What do you enjoy most about your current job?

Try to relate this to work issues and bring in (if you can) similarities between the job you are being interviewed for.

What has been your greatest achievement?

What has been the biggest mistake you've made?

What did you learn from this?

This isn't designed to catch you out, the interviewer is looking to see how you overcome a crisis, there's no wrong or right way to answer this. If you haven't made a mistake then tell them, but make sure you are being honest because everyone knows that we all make mistakes.

What skills can you bring into this company?

Focus only on skills that are relevant.

This list is not exhaustive and therefore it may be wise to sit down beforehand and think about questions that you may be asked or have been asked at previous interviews.

WHAT TO SAY

It is likely that you will be talking for two thirds of the interview. It is important, therefore that you are precise and offer detailed and exact answers to questions without waffling. Before answering think "Why have they asked that question and what information are they looking for?" You need to be natural when in conversation and be positive with your replies. There is nothing worse than someone who doesn't answer the question and gives vague replies. 'Sitting on the fence' will do you no favours and may demonstrate their indecisiveness or lack of conviction. It is important to be assertive without being confrontational. Also don't ramble keep answer brief and relevant don't go off at a tangent!

INTERVIEW TIPS

Here is some information which may help you to successfully get over the hurdles of attending an interview. Some of them you may find blatantly obvious, but sometimes we can forget the most obvious things!

Appearance

Your appearance speaks volumes even before you've said a word. So:-

- Be smart and well groomed. Always wear a shirt, tie and jacket or a smart suit.
- Wear something you feel comfortable in.

Preparation

Find out the basic information about the company - employers are impressed by those who show initiative.

- What is the company's product or service?
- Number of staff employed?
- Is the company part of a larger group?

Find out about the job - learn all you can about the job in question and decide why you are right for it.

- Read the job spec.
- Make Notes of your relevant experience.
- Note down valid points that you feel are relevant to the job in question.



Punctuality

Even if you are kept waiting, you **cannot** afford to be late!!

Structure of the Interview

Interviews generally follow a set pattern. The interviewer will:-

- Tell you about the company and the job.
- Ask you questions to assess your abilities, personality & motivation.
- Ask if you have any questions.
- Inform you of the next stage of the process & when a final decision will be made.

At the Interview

The questions you ask at the interview are equally as important as those that you are asked. The interview is a time for you to find out if you want the job as well. By asking the right questions you can ascertain exactly what the job will entail. Here are some pointers when asking the interviewer for more information.

- Be confident, positive and look directly at the interviewer when you talk and listen.
- Speak clearly, be enthusiastic & express a keen interest in the position.
- Try to keep your hands still.
- Question anything that you do not understand.
- Keep to the point don't ramble!!

Some Possible Questions

1. Can you tell me more about the company?
2. Can you describe my area of responsibility?
3. Is this post a new or existing one?
4. Who will I report to?
5. Can you show me where I will be working? (Better on a second interview)?
6. Are there any times when the company/department is busier?
7. What are my promotion prospects?
8. Do you run any training schemes?
9. Will you be holding second interviews?

Obviously do not ask all these questions just select a few which are relevant and you feel comfortable asking.

Some Questions that may Require Answering

1. What do you know about us?
2. Describe your present duties and responsibilities?
3. Why do you want this particular job?
4. How would you describe yourself?
5. What are your strengths and weaknesses?
6. In a job what is important to you?

I hope that at this stage you feel slightly more confident about attending an interview. Please call me immediately after your interview to let me know how it went. I would appreciate your honesty at this stage. Good Luck!!