

GENERAL INTERVIEW ADVICE





Before applying for a job:

Clean up your Social Media

Most employees will do a social-media background check on prospective employees. Online mistakes can last forever, so always be responsible in your posts and interactions. Nothing says “stay away” like seeing unsavoury exchanges on your candidate’s timeline. So, even before you apply for a position, do a personal social media audit and ask yourself the question: Would you hire the person you are seeing in those Facebook Posts and Tweets? If not, you should invest time in developing a more professional online presence.

You have landed the interview, now what?

Preparation

The more you know about the job and the company the better. Look at the company’s website for information. There will also often be feedback on Google from employees what is is like to work there. The research should include information like the company’s position in the industry, its markets, its locations, its competitors, its performance, major events, turnover and profits.



Review your work experience, qualifications, goals and accomplishments relative to the position and job requirements. Then review how well you match the employer requirements. Where you don't exactly match the requirements anticipate the questions they are going to ask about this.

Review your CV prior to the interview and develop answers to questions that relate to your CV. In particular be prepared to discuss gaps in employment and changes in career direction.

Secondly read the job description carefully and make sure you meet all the criteria and that you are technically qualified to do the job. You can think of mentioning examples from your previous job that demonstrates your ability to do this job.

Thirdly make sure you arrive on time, preferably early for your interview. Obtain clear directions for the location of the interview and plan your journey, allowing plenty of time to arrive. If you are unavoidably delayed, notify the company immediately giving the reason and your estimated time of arrival or immediately call your recruiter and notify them.



Presentation

Look smart for the interview and also remember to bring your prep work with you, a folder with some info on the company and your questions for them. This proves you are prepared and that you have put some work into the interview. A company is more likely to hire someone who is well presented and who will therefore best represent their company.

During the interview

- Introduce yourself courteously.
- Express yourself clearly.
- Show tact, manners, courtesy and maturity at every opportunity.
- Be confident and maintain poise. The ability to handle your nerves during the interview will come across as confidence in your ability to handle the job.
- Be prepared to show how your experience would benefit the company.



- Ask questions concerning the company or products and the position for which you are being interviewed for. An interviewer will be impressed by an eager and inquisitive mind. You will be able to demonstrate that you can contribute to the company or industry if you show an interest in its products and/or services.
- Take time to think and construct your answers to questions to avoid rushing into a vague and senseless reply.
- Demonstrate that you are sufficiently motivated to get the job done well and that you will fit in with the company's organisational structure and the team in which you will work.
- Show willingness to start at the bottom and work up.
- Anticipate questions you're likely to be asked and have answers prepared in advance. Uncertainty and disorganisation show the interviewer that you are unprepared and unclear what your goals are.
- Be assertive without being aggressive.
- Thank the interviewer.



Interview Don'ts

- Be late for the interview. Being late is a sign of irresponsibility or disorganisation and the employer could take it as what to expect in the future.
- Arrive unprepared for the interview.
- Say unfavourable things about previous employers.
- Make excuses for failings.
- Give vague responses to questions.
- Show lack of career planning- no goals or purpose could convey the impression you're merely shopping around or only want the job for a short time.
- Show too much concern about rapid advancement.
- Overemphasise money. Your interviewing goal is to sell yourself to the interviewer and to get an offer of employment. Salary discussion is secondary.
- Refuse to travel and/or relocate. Always be open for discussion concerning travel and relocation. The employer may be talking about future plans, not present.



- Show any reservations you may have about the role/company. You can always turn down second interviews and job offers after you have had time to appraise your concerns in the cold light of day.
- Demonstrate low moral standards.
- Express strong prejudices or any personal intolerance.
- Leave your mobile phone on during the interview.

Body Language Do's

- Ensure a firm handshake. A firm handshake shows confidence in yourself and your abilities.
- Walk slowly, deliberately, and tall upon entering the room.
- Maintain a high level of eye contact throughout.
- Remember not to be seen to be staring. Look away occasionally, looking confidently and calmly to the right or left, never look down.
- Listen.
- Be alert and enthusiastic- it's often a deciding factor in employing candidates. An indifferent attitude is instantly recognised, as "I don't care if I get this job".
- Smile, nod, and give non-verbal feedback to the interviewer.
- Do not hurry any movement.
- Relax with every breath.



Body Language Don'ts

- Have a poor/limp handshake.
- Display laziness.
- Be aggressive or act in a superior, conceited or overbearing way.
- Have a poor voice, diction or grammar.
- Look distracted, look down or avoid eye contact.
- Talk too much. Answer questions as asked, without being abrupt, expound only to the point that the Interviewer has a clear understanding of what you mean.
- Lose concentration or attention.

Your Questions

The interview is a two-way process. You will need to interview the company to find out if the company and the position are right for you. Prepare the questions that you want answered and ask them.



Consider some of the following:

- What will my responsibilities be?
- How has the position become vacant?
- How will you assess my performance?
- How does the role fit into the structure of the department?
- How does the department fit into the organisation as a whole?
- Who will I report to and are there persons reporting to me?
- Where does my line manager fit into the structure?
- What encouragement is given to undertake further training?
- Who are your customers?
- Where is the company going? Expansion plans?
- Where is the specific location of the position?
- Will the position entail travelling?
- How soon will you decide on the appointment?
- What is the next step?

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Closing the interview

What you do at the end of the interview, is just as important as what you do at the beginning. If you are interested in the position, express your interest. If you are offered the position and you want it, accept on the spot. If you need some time to think it over, be courteous and tactful in asking for that time. Set a definite date when you can provide an answer.

DON'T be too discouraged if no definite offer is made or specific salary discussed. The interviewer will probably want to communicate with their office first or interview more applicants before making a decision.

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 interviewer who is genuinely interested in your possibilities may seem to discourage you in order to test your reaction.



Sample closing questions you could ask:

- What is your ideal start date to hire someone for this position?
- Would you describe your interviewing process?
- Are you planning to set up second interviews?

Please give your recruitment consultant feedback as soon as possible. Include any areas that you feel did not go well and if you feel as though you left something out then let them know this, so it can be conveyed in the consultants call to the employer.

Follow Up

Follow up with a note and message of appreciation reiterating your interest in the position (usually to your recruiter).

In the note briefly reaffirm the value and contribution you can make to the company and your enthusiasm for the position. Professional and Polite follow-up will enhance your chances of success.

The company or your recruiter may contact one of your references to do a reference check. Alert your references and give them background about the job and the company so that they are well prepared to provide the best references possible for you.



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