

Resources Centre : Interview Tips

Be On time & Looking Right

Be on time for the interview. On time means ten to fifteen minutes early. Take some time to go to the office before the actual interview date so you know exactly where you are going and how long it will take to get there. Always know where you are going and prepare all the transportation routes so as to back up yourself in case you encounter any accidental problems. And make sure your interview attire is neat, tidy and appropriate for the type of firm you are interviewing with. Bring a nice portfolio with copies of your resume and references. Include a pen and paper for note taking.

Practice

Practice answering interview questions and practice your responses to the typical job interview questions. Remember to use actual examples/achievements that can best demonstrate your skills. Providing evidence of your successes is a great way to promote your candidacy. Try to think of answers that can relate to the job with your previous experience.

Confidence with Professional manner

During the interview, maintain eye contact with the interviewer. Listen to the entire question before you answer and pay attention. Show your confidence & present why you are suitable with. Always follow-up with a thank you note reiterating your interest in the position. If you interview with multiple people send each one a thank you note.

Do Your Research

Before going into any interview you should know as much as possible about who you're meeting and this means research. Start with the company's website – learn a little about their history, their products and services, what countries they're in, who their partners are, any recent news releases, etc. Then do a search on the company and their market – read any other news articles, find out about their competitors, find out about developments in the market that may impact them. You might want to call some people in the industry that you know to get the inside story. And of course you have to thoroughly understand the role that you are applying.

Finally do some research on the person you're meeting if possible – their background, any articles they've been quoted in, etc. If not accessible on the web your agency should be able to give you at least some information.

Note: It is possible to over prepare so generally we recommend doing your research a few days in advance and coming into the interview clear headed. You should always try to be focused on listening to / reading the interviewer rather than trying to remember endless facts and figures.

Be Prepared for Behavioural Questions

Some interviewers will use behavioural questioning techniques so it's always useful to prepare for these. As a guide have a think about things such as your proudest achievement, your biggest challenge and how you overcame it, a time you bent the rules (without being unethical!), a time you had to resolve a conflict with a customer, etc.

You have to be very specific about your involvement in your answers. Answering the question in broad terms, e.g. "We won a large deal with BHP" doesn't give the interviewer

any information about you and can lead them to think that your involvement was actually minimal.

Greet the interviewer properly

First impressions are critical and the small things go a long way. It sounds simple it can be easy to forget to shake hands firmly, look them in the eye and SMILE! It's amazing how easy it is to forget to smile but it goes a long way to creating rapport.

Ask questions

There's nothing worse than a candidate who doesn't have any questions at the end of the interview. Questions show you've been listening, that you're interested, that you know enough about the role to know what you don't know, etc.

Show your enthusiasm

In our experience, employers want to hire people that really want to work for them. Passion and enthusiasm go a very long way to ensuring you get offered the role. This can be conveyed in a number of ways such as the questions you ask, your level of energy, how you describe yourself and your goals, etc. The key thing is to have the interviewer walking away thinking you're the best person for the role. Once they've made that decision in their own mind, you're in a position of strength at the negotiating table.

Note: this doesn't mean you should bend over backwards to accommodate the employer in everything they ask for. You can still be very keen to take a role but at the same time very clear on what conditions you require in order to accept it.

Ask for feedback

In sales they call this "pre-closing". At the end of every interview you should ask for feedback and what the next steps will be if you're successful.

For example, ask questions like:

"Do you think my background is suitable for the role?"

"Is there anything you're not sure about?"

"How do I compare to other candidates you've spoken to?"

"Is it likely I'll be asked back for a second interview?"