

Career Forward



Interview Preparation

- Know yourself _ CV
- Know the job
- Know the company/organisation
- Know how you can add value

‘An interview is a business meeting between two equals, during which both parties have the opportunity to discover whether the candidate is right for the job’.

Jill Dodds



Interview Preparation

Think like an employer.....

- What sort of person are they looking for?
- What needs within their organisation are they trying to meet?
- What sort of skills and experience will the ideal candidate have?

Employers are looking for:

- Evidence that you meet their criteria
- Knowledge and understanding of sector & organisation
- Your reasons for applying
- Evidence of your communication & interpersonal skills
- Evidence of analytical thinking

You are looking for answers to the following:

- Would I be happy working here?
- Is the job all that I hoped it would be?
- What are the people like? Do I feel I could work for/with them?

Approaches to interviewing

- Chronological or biographical
- Competency or criteria-based
- Structured, combination interviews

Chronological Interview

- Your CV sets the agenda
- Danger for you of being more in descriptive than selling mode
- Can be more like a social chat
- You need to stay focused on keeping the focus on your merits
- Not as popular nowadays as does not lend itself to ensuring equal opportunities for candidates

Competency-based Interviews

- Past success indicative of future performance
- Same or similar questions for everyone
- Interviewer looking for in-depth evidence
- Competencies are central to the job
- You can be well-prepared for this!
- Most common type of questions are behavioural

Behavioural approach

- Look for specific examples relating to each competency

E.g. *Tell me about a time when.....*

- Use a series of probing questions designed to gain more detailed information

E.g. *How exactly did you do that?*

SHARE model

- Situation
- Hindrance
- Action
- Result
- Evaluation

Common Competencies

- Communication Skills
- Influencing, persuading & negotiation skills
- Team working
- Decision making
- Problem solving and analysis
- Organisational skills
- Motivation and Drive

Answering Questions

- Listen carefully
- Take a few moments to think
- Maintain eye contact
- Be animated
- Avoid rambling or slipping into story mode
- Don't dwell on questions you feel you haven't answered well

Tell me about
yourself.....

Tell me about yourself.....

- Introduction _ qualification?
- Concrete things you've accomplished
- Nice things that have been said about you
- Why you made the choices you've made
- 50-60% of time on last five years

Closing the Interview

- Maintain rapport
- Stay professional
- Ask your questions if you did not have an opportunity earlier
- Have your USP answer at the ready in case you are asked to sum-up what you can offer
- Stay enthusiastic to the end
- Give a warm, firm handshake

Looking the ideal candidate is the
first step to being the
ideal candidate

Follow-up

- Do your own debrief
- Write a thank-you letter?
- Ask for feedback on your performance
- Target areas you want to improve on & create an action plan

Common reasons why people fail at interview

- Not answering questions fully
- Talking too much or not enough (group interview)
- Choosing poor examples for CBI
- Failing to sell key strengths
- Dressing or behaving inappropriately
- Lacking confidence or enthusiasm
- Lacking ability to develop rapport
- Not listening