

Navigating the Interview

Telephone Calls:-Sometimes a preliminary interview is conducted on the phone or you may have to use the phone to confirm the interview arrangements.

- ✚ Be professional, be guided by the Recruiter, don't be over familiar

Before the Interview:

- ✚ Preparation, Preparation, Preparation
- ✚ Re read your CV
- ✚ Do thorough research on the Company
- ✚ Know your CV/Application Form back to front
- ✚ Practice potential answers – strangely enough if you have the key stuff practiced the more it enables you to be completely spontaneous in other areas
- ✚ Prepare your interview kit: CV, pen & paper, references, a list of questions for the interviewers
- ✚ Dress smart/formal: unless it is an internal interview and dress code may be more relaxed

When you are at the Interview:-

Ground yourself quickly – whose there, observe the desk, what colour is the wall, is there carpet, get a sense of where you are, this will help you to settle more quickly

Use a firm but not too tight handshake

Don't sit down until you are asked to

In a panel interview address the questioner and make periodic eye contact with the other members of the panel

Sit well back in the chair with your back upright - let your lungs work

Keep your head up and maintain appropriate eye contact

Don't ask about salary – at least not too soon

The Stages of the Interview:-What the Interviewer is looking for:-

Opening Stage:-

Introductions
Overview of the Job /Company/General
"Gentle" questions to make the candidate feel at ease
e.g. broad introductions, etc.
Forming Rapport

Middle Stage:-

Detailed examination of:-

1. Education
2. Work Experience
3. Strengths/Weaknesses
4. Motivation/Personality
5. Health
6. Interests

} Attitude

Closing Stage:-

Any questions from the candidate
Summarising
Overview of next step

Some Interview Questions – Opening Stage

Introductions:-

Did you travel down today?

Did you find the hotel easily?

Where did you find out about the job?

Will you tell us a little about yourself?

Will you introduce yourself to us?

Why are you interested in the job?

Others:-

Will you tell us a little about yourself? (Practice this)

If you are not prepared this question will trip you up

It is a one minute advert that enables you to sell yourself, your experience, your skills and why you are here

Practice these one minute intros again and again

A good start augers well for the rest of the interview

Some Interview Questions – Middle Stage

Education:-

Will you give a broad outline of your education?

Can I explore your education in detail?

What were your favourite subjects? Why?

What were your least favourite subjects? Why?

Any extracurricular activities while you were at school?

Will you tell me about your technical training/education?

Others:-

These questions or similar will enable you to outline your educational qualifications, achievements during your time at school/college as well as showing how aspects of your education can be applied to your current job.

Some Interview Questions – Middle Stage

Work Experience:-

You worked at Factory X from April 2004 – April 2005. Will you tell me a little about the Company and your specific job responsibilities?

“I’ve noticed some gaps in your work experience?”

What did you like (not like) about that job?

Why did you leave Factory X?

That appeared to be an interesting Training Course – Will you tell me a little about it?

Explore items of interest, e.g. “Factory X operated a TQM system will you tell me a little about it?”

You were a Group Leader – What did this entail?

What are you most proud of in your career?

Others:-

Why did you leave Factory X (and what did you not like about your last job?)

Be careful not to sound negative about your last job experience.

Be professional and avoid emotion

In all of the above the Recruiter will be looking for examples of achievements in the past as an indication of achievements in the future

Some Interview Questions – Middle Stage

Strengths/Weaknesses

What do you feel you have to offer us?

Generally how do you feel your experience matches the job at ...?

What are your personal strengths?

Your technical experience is in the Food Industry, why are you interested in a job in Electronics?

You talked about your strengths – Are there any areas where you feel you need to develop?

Others:-

Strengths: Remember to talk in terms of words you used in the CV and which generally match strengths desired by the employer

Weaknesses:- Some weaknesses can be the overuse of a strength – “I am sometimes too focused in my work – but I’m getting better and learning to manage this more effectively”.

Obviously if a weaknesses demonstrates a lack of “Core Competency” avoid it

Show you are normal and working against weaknesses to ensure that they are not detrimental to your strength or performance

Some Interview Questions – Middle Stage

Personality/Motivation

Do you like to work in teams or on your own?

How would you describe the essential Mr. X?

What are the important factors you require in a job?

What are your ambitions?

Where do you see yourself in ten years time?

What do you want to achieve in your career?

Do you mind working shift work?

Why did you apply for this job?

Others:-

At your very best what could you achieve in the job? (Practice this)

What do your references say about you?

Motivational type questions are designed to see what drives you – Are you confident, a team worker and how the job ties in with your motivation

Don't come over as Superman but rather someone who is committed to the job for which you applied

Some Interview Questions – Middle Stage

Health

Most companies will have a medical examination as part of the recruitment process

Some Interview Questions – Middle Stage

Interests:-

How do you like to spend your spare time?

Will you tell me about your hobbies/interests/clubs?

Do you feel that your skills from hobby X could transfer to the job? (Same for Clubs) e.g. teamwork, problem solving, chairmanship?

Your hobbies/club activities appear to take up a lot of time?

The interviewer may explore interesting “different” hobbies? and examine the transfer of skills to the job

Do you play football every Sunday?-here the Interviewer may be trying to get a sense of commitment to your hobbies/club and examine if this will impact positively or negatively on the job

Others:-

Some Interview Questions – Closing Stage

Wrap Up:-

John, are there any questions which you would like to ask us?

John, is there any items which you fell we did not cover sufficiently?

Peter, is there anything else you would like to add?

Questions you might like to ask?

What project will I be involved in initially?

You mentioned the Project Training Plan earlier - can you tell me more about it?

To whom does the job report?

What are the growth plans for the Company?

Are there development opportunities in the job?

Be Careful:-

Walk before your can run. If you generally are too ambitious if might indicate that you are not going to stay too long in the current job but rather use it as a stepping stone to another

Show that you can do the job first- and pose your questions accordingly.

Nine of the Best – Watch for these

The following 9 questions are increasingly likely to be asked of the candidates undergoing job interviews. They result from a survey of interviews by the US Employment Management Association and have lately been passed on to the UK recruiters by Personnel Management Magazine.

Why are you interested in this position? *Or if the post is not being filled by a hush hush executive search method* – Why did you respond to our advertisement?

Tell me about your current and previous bosses:- What kind of people are they?

Has your job performance ever been appraised and if so, how were you assessed? What are the minuses?

What are the most satisfying and the most frustrating aspects of your present job?

Describe a time when you felt ineffective? What did you do about it and what was the outcome?

Can you describe, in the same way, a time when you felt particularly effective?

Were your assignments handled individually or were they a team effort?

What are the most important factors you require in a job? How should it be structured to provide you with satisfaction?

Most people have some long range goals. What do you want to be in 5 or 10 years time?

The Stress Interview – for those in the fast lane

This is really a normal interview with the volume turned up. It is really trying to test the real you. Even though it might be excruciating it is not personal. It is trying to test you in circumstances similar to the areas in which you will be working in – if you are successful

The stress part of the normal interview

The normal interview can have “stress” parts in it

What are your greatest weaknesses?

What decisions do you find difficult?

You have been with the Company of 15 years – it is a long time is it not?

Will you be able to cope with a change?

How do you handle conflict and rejection.?

The chair I'm sitting in –sell it to me

Why have you switched jobs some frequently? (Use CLAMPS:- Challenge, Location, Advancement, Money, Pride & Prestige, Security)

You might be asked questions which are legally suspect:- in relation to your age, religion, marital status. If asked don't quote the law but show you know of it .

"I am a Christian but I don't normally involve my religion in my work".

"I am in my fifties with 20 years experience".

Generally interviewers will steer away from areas covered by anti- discrimination legislation, e.g. age, gender, religion, martial status, sexual orientation, etc...

Assessment Centres:-

Sometimes referred to as the second interview. Assessment centres are now more commonly used in recruitment.

Generally candidates are observed, evaluated and judged over a whole day, through involvement in a number of exercises and scenarios:-

- + Role Playing
- + Group Exercises
- + Case Studies
- + Numerical and Reasoning Exercises
- + Presentations
- + Personality Tests
- + Self Development Tests, etc

Aptitude Tests and Personality Tests:-

Most employers blend aptitude and personality tests with the interview in order to increase the relevance of the process

Aptitude Tests:

Generally used to assess logical reasoning or thinking performance. These are generally administered under test conditions and have strict time limits.

These are generally normative – your results are compared against the group norm.

Preparing for Aptitude Test:

The following activities will help you to prepare for the aptitude tests.

Crosswords etc
Word Games

Consult Saville and Holdworth site and do practice Questions—
Test Your Aptitude –Kogan Page

Personality Tests.

Be yourself and follow the instruction given. Likely Tests examples DISC by Thomas International, MBTI, 16 PF, SHL Tests etc

Negotiating the Job Offer