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INTERVIEW TIPS

The interview is your opportunity to shine and sell yourself to a prospective employer. However, interviewing well is a skill like any other, and it takes knowledge, commitment and hard work to come out on top. Research shows that people make their mind up about someone within the first few seconds of meeting them. Therefore, it is always best to get off to a good start!

Remember, every employer is going to ask themselves two things about you: Are you qualified for the job? And are you enthusiastic? Taking the time to prepare a perfect interview will successfully answer both these questions.

Be well presented

If you look untidy, that's how you'll be remembered.

Find out about the dress code of the company and dress accordingly. If in doubt, it's always better to be too smart than too laid back.

Be well prepared

Check the time and place of your interview. Make sure you have the address and telephone number for the company. Find out how to get there - do a dry run if necessary. Make sure you know who you are meeting with and their position in the company.

Research the company, have a look at their website, how long they have been established, any recent news articles about the company etc.

Remember to switch your mobile phone off before you go in. If you do forget and it rings, do not take the call - switch it off immediately.

Prepare Questions

Plan some questions about the company, for example; company culture, projected growth of the company, training and development. Show an interest in what they do and an appreciation for what they have achieved. Ask questions that are related to the things that are most important to you in your next job. Prepare as many questions as possible as you'll find most of your prepared questions will be answered during the course of the interview, and they're crucial for showing your interest in the role.

Be punctual

Make sure that you are punctual for the interview. If you experience difficulty getting there for any reason, make sure you telephone the person you are due to meet and apologise and rearrange if necessary. Always try to talk to your contact - do not just leave a message with the receptionist.

First Impressions

First impressions are important; make sure you greet your interviewer with a strong firm handshake and a smile.



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Body Language

Never underestimate the importance of positive body language. You have to look keen and engaged, so mirror the body language of the person interviewing you, lean in towards them at times and don't cross your arms. Do not fidget. Always accept a glass of water, it can create a useful barrier during an uncomfortable question and buy you a few crucial seconds while you take a sip. Speak clearly and confidently during the interview and maintain eye contact.

Use Examples

It's no good just using abstract terms to talk about how organised or efficient you are. Prepare some examples from your previous experience to immediately back up your claims. Emphasise what unique talents you'll be bringing to the company but also show humility - talk about an area you've struggled at, and the way you overcame the problem.

Listen to the questions carefully and answer them confidently but remember to be concise, do not go into a full life story.

Always be positive

Be prepared to answer questions about why you are looking to leave your current role and remember to remain positive and complimentary about your current and previous employers or managers. Being negative about your old boss can look unprofessional.

Think of positive reasons – make it all about the new company, your new career prospects and your ambition to succeed.

Ending the interview

Let them know you are keen on the job (assuming that you are!) and try asking if they have any reservations about you – this will give you the perfect opportunity to give an immediate riposte to their concerns and provide you with a clean finish to the interview. Find out what the next stage in the selection process is and thank the interviewer for their time.

Call us

Phone your contact at Cherry Pick People as soon as possible to let them know how it went. This can really help your chances when we talk to the client.



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HOW TO ANSWER INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

It is always advisable to plan and go through some question and answers to ensure that your answering techniques are good and you incorporate everything into your answers.

Below are some of the more common questions that interviewers frequently ask, including some suggestions to help you plan your answers before an interview.

Question – Tell me about yourself

Answer - (Remember your answer should contain more about your skills and knowledge rather than your personal life). Talk about your career to date, your experiences with previous employers, giving examples of achievements and the skills you've picked up along the way, what motivates you and why you enjoy the type of work you're interviewing for. Keep your answer to under five minutes. Don't go into too much detail – your interviewer will probably take notes and ask for you to expand on any areas where they'd like more information.

Question – What are your strengths?

Answer – Prepare three examples that demonstrate what your strengths are and how you have used these strengths in a work situation. For eg, talk about your sales ability, how you negotiate with people; how you have developed business and how you generate leads. Do you work well under pressure and possess good organisational skills. Are you highly motivated? Perhaps you can build rapport quickly and have good communication skills.

Question – What have your achievements been in your career to date?

Answer – Select achievements that are work related and as recent as possible. Some examples could be consistent billing, hitting or over achieving targets, and high placement on a company league board; bringing on new business for the company. Fast promotion within a company.

Question - What are your weaknesses?

Answer – A common mistake is to say that you have none – this will only lead to more questioning and can come across as arrogant. Try to only mention a “good” weakness that can also be seen as a strength, for example “I have difficulty working with people who do not pull their weight; I have high work standards and I expect others to have equally high standards. I am learning to speak up and request that others contribute more before I let myself get angry by a workload being unequal”

Questions – Where do you see yourself in five years time?

Answer – It's best to talk about both short-term and long-term goals. Talk about the kind of job you'd eventually like to do and the various steps you will need to get there, relating this in some way back to the position you're interviewing for. Show the employer you have ambition, and that you have the determination to make the most of every job you have to get where you want to be.



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Questions – Why do you want to work here?

Answer – The interviewer is listening for an answer that indicates you’ve given this some thought. If you’ve prepared for the interview properly, you should have a good inside knowledge of the company’s values, mission statement and development plans. Use this information to describe how your goals and ambition matches their company ethos and how you would relish the opportunity to work for them. Never utter the phrase “I just need a job.”

Questions – What are three positive things your boss would say about you?

Answer – This is a great time to brag about yourself through someone else’s words. Try to include one thing that shows your ability to do the job, one thing that shows your commitment to the work, and one thing that shows you are a good person to have in a team. For example, “My boss has told me that I am the best negotiator he has ever had. He knows he can always rely on me, and he likes my sense of humour.”

Some other examples of questions you could prepare for are:

- What do you enjoy about estate agency?
- What makes you a successful negotiator?
- How do you motivate yourself?
- What are your personal goals and career aspirations?
- How do you work under pressure and ensure you meet your targets?
- What are you looking for in your next Company?
- How do you feel about working long hours?
- Are you a self starter? Give me examples to demonstrate this
- What do you know about this company?
- How would you add value to the company/team?