

## Interview Preparation Guide

The key to a successful interview is preparation! Almost without exception, the candidate who has done the most will be the person who gets the job. The effort put into preparing for an interview will increase your confidence and your ability to deal effectively with the questions asked.

Below is a step by step guide on how to prepare for an interview:

### Step 1 - Research

Start with researching the company; take a look at their website, online press, magazine articles and other available literature to understand both type of clients that they work with and the work that they get involved in.

Use the web, Social Networking and your consultant's knowledge to understand the company's culture & values as well as the type of people that work there and their backgrounds.

### Step 2 - Understanding the Role

Once familiar with the company make sure you have a clear understanding of the role that you are interviewing for. Take an exam approach and go through the job spec with a fine tooth comb. This will provide you with a good understanding of exactly what the role involves and the skills and attributes that are required.

### Step 3 - Understanding your skill set

Consider how your skill set matches their requirements and be ready to relay this to the interviewer. They have invited you to interview based on a positive opinion of you based on your CV, make sure to capitalise on this by knowing:

- Your CV accurately
- Your key strengths and examples you can use to demonstrate these
- Your motivators, drivers and future aspirations
- The reason you want to join their company above their competitors
- Positive reasons for leaving previous opportunities
- The reason you want this job and not just any job.

### Step 4 - Planning & Preparation

Planning and preparation will ensure you make the best possible impression and make the most of your time in front of the prospective employer:

- Print out the address & contact details
- Print out a map as a back-up in case your Navigation device fails
- If you can, do a trial run so you know exactly how long it will take to get there.
- Always take relevant telephone numbers with you, if you hit unexpected traffic then call us!
- Print several copies of your CV and place them in good quality plastic wallets.

## Step 5 - First Impressions

It has been commonly reported that when meeting someone for the first time they are likely to form an opinion on you within the first 7 seconds, make this time count by ensuring that you are:

- 15 minutes early for your interview and ready in reception
- Confident when greeting the interviewer (firm hand shake, eye contact, smile)

## Step 6 - The Interview

This is the part in which the decision on your future will be made, be sure to avoid the following common mistakes to maximise your chances:

- Using any offensive language (even if you feel you are getting on with the client)
- Interrupting (show that you are a good listener by counting to 2 before speaking to ensure the client has finished)
- Wearing anything other than a suit, tie and shoes (even if you won't wear one for the job)
- Using too many negatives when describing previous employers
- Showing inflexibility (make sure they know that they can count on you)

## Step 6 - Closing the Interview

Not only does this give you an opportunity to show that you can ask great questions, it also gives you the chance to cover off any concerns that the prospective employer may have and to gain instant feedback on the meeting.

“Thank you for your time today, I am very keen on the position, at this point do you have any reservations regarding my experience that would prevent me from moving to the next stage of the process?”

## Quick Check List

- Is your research sufficient?
- Have you been through the job spec and matched your skills to what they are looking for?
- Have you planned and timed your route?
- Do you know the name(s) of the interviewer(s)?
- Have you planned what you want to communicate in interview and carefully thought how to make it clear and concise, without talking too much?
- Can you demonstrate your suitability for the role by matching your skills to those stated on the job spec?
- Are you aware of your natural body language and know how you will present yourself positively and enthusiastically in interview?
- Lastly; have you planned how you will close the interview?