

Interview Guide

Interview Process

Your success in an interview will depend on the quality of your preparation. Planning, preparation and research will give you confidence during the whole process!

Review your CV

Before entering the interview, review your CV and ensure that you can talk in further detail with regard to the information already supplied. Analyse what you know about the company and decide which aspects of your experience to stress, tailoring it to their requirements.

Before the interview

Research, research, research - Most companies expect to see that you've done some research before the interview. In fact lack of preparation may create a bad impression. For any interview that we arrange, we will provide you with some company background information. For example: The company size, turnover, structure & culture. It is, however, essential that you conduct your own research as well!

Other tips include:

- Look on the internet at the company's site and other relevant information sites
- Read the papers and trade journals for information relevant to the industry.
- Try contacting the company's information or public relations department to obtain corporate brochures and information.
- Research the people you will be meeting and the company culture.

Anticipate some likely interview questions

On the basis of your CV and the job description, you can probably anticipate many of the questions the interviewer is likely to ask.

Put yourself in the shoes of the interviewer. What will she/he be looking for? Typical questions include:

- What qualifications or experience do you have that would make you a success in this company?
- What jobs have you enjoyed most? The least? Why?
- What have you done that shows initiative?
- Why do you want this position?
- What is important to you in your job?

It's also important to identify any subjects or areas that might create problems for you and make sure you have a response you are happy with. "Have you ever been made redundant?" "What do you think of your current boss?" "Are you ready for a job like this?" Your ability to give brief, focused and reassuring answers to sensitive questions like these will strengthen your prospects of success.

Remember not to talk down your previous employers!

The successful interview

The key to a successful interview is planning.

If you do get nervous before an interview (and most of us do) careful planning, preparation and research will give you confidence; ensuring the situation is less intimidating and arduous than you may have expected.

On the day - Interview technique:

- First impressions do count, from the moment you walk through the door you are being assessed.
- Punctuality is vital, ten minutes early is good practice - but no more.
- Presentation - always wear a suit, even if the environment is casual, you need to demonstrate that you can look professional.
- Use a firm handshake and smile to break the ice.
- Maintain a high level of eye contact - but don't over do it!
- Assume a relaxed posture - but don't slouch.
- Be careful not to fiddle with things - glasses, pen, coffee cup, etc.
- Use your common sense and initiative to answer technical questions. If you really don't know the answer say so, or ask for clarification.
- If you have any misgivings about the role/company during the interview do not show them. It is easy to reject an offer but difficult to retrieve an interview.
- Avoid answering with a simple yes or no. Support your answer with relevant information from your experience and relate everything you say to the job you are applying for.
- Keep your answers relevant and to the point.
- Remember; the interviewer is looking for someone who genuinely wants the job.
- The interview process - Most first interviews follow a clear structure:
- Questions to establish your ability and suitability for the job in question.
- Information about the role and the company.
- The opportunity to ask questions.
- Information on what happens next.
- Second interviews can take many formats. The meeting may involve a presentation, a case study or simply a discussion with the team or a more senior member of the company.

Asking questions

Ask questions at a reasonably general level relevant to the role, the company and/or the market. Use open-ended questions, i.e. ones that will illicit a response longer than just yes or no.

Ask about long term career progression within the company but be careful to maintain that you are very interested in the current role.

Do not discuss salary during the interview. If raised by the interviewer give a salary range to enable negotiation at a later stage. Your Next Ventures consultant, who is an experienced negotiator, will happily speak on your behalf.

Leaving the interview

Don't let your guard down yet. You want the interviewer to remember you positively, so thank them for their time and consideration and tell them how much you enjoyed discussing the job with them.

It's important to convey that you really are interested in working for the company, because - all other things being equal - the job is likely to go to the more interested candidate. For example, you could say: "Mr X, I find this opportunity very interesting. Your company is clearly doing exciting things and I believe that with my background and experience I could make a significant contribution to your team."

Tell the interviewer that you look forward to seeing him again, shake his hand and leave.

Feedback

After your interview it is important to contact your Next Ventures consultant to outline your views of the role and the company. In turn, your consultant will provide you with feedback from the company. Your consultant will also provide information on handing in your notice and maintain contact with you during the first few weeks in your new role, just to make sure everything is as it should be.