



HOW TO ACE A JOB INTERVIEW



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If you are like the millions of hopefuls all over the world who stress about job interviews, here are a few tips for making the process easier.

We cover the process from seeing a job advertised and applying for it, right through to the interview itself.

Responding to Job Adverts

Every company has its own recruitment process but they usually follow a similar structure.

Many companies advertise in hospitality or job opportunity groups on Social Media, and on their own Social Media accounts. Some companies also have a recruitment section on their website too.

Usually they will advertise providing the job title, location and the minimum requirements for their desired applicants.

They will tell you how to apply for the job in the advert, post or image.

They may ask you to email them with your resume, photos and covering letter. Or they may ask you to email or call them for more information about how to apply.

Read the advert or post carefully and make sure you understand and follow their instructions for applying.

Asking “how do I apply?” or commenting “Interested” when the post already clearly explains the application process does not create a good first impression!

If the advert doesn't list the minimum requirements and just asks you to email them for more details or an application pack, make sure to follow their contact instructions.

This may include writing the name of the position you are applying for in the email subject heading. You should do this anyway. Especially if you are applying for lots of jobs at the same time.

Job Application Packs

Some companies may send out Application Packs. This is quite common for Management Positions.

The Application Pack may include:

- A Job Description
- A Person Specification
- An Application Form to complete
- Information about the company
- Information about their Recruitment, Selection and Interview Process

Read all the information carefully.

Check the information for details such as the Application Form Deadline and scheduled Interview Date.

For Higher Management positions you may have several Interview Panels to meet with.



How to get selected for Interview

Your resume, application form or covering letter, is your key to being selected for an interview.

Resume Applications:

Make sure your resume is up-to-date and has your correct contact information.

Check that the skills and experience you have, and which the company is asking for, are very clearly mentioned in the resume.

Select a clear, professional head-and-shoulders photo if this is requested.

You can also send a covering letter/email, indicating previous positions you have held which complement the job you are applying for.

If you are hand delivering or posting your resume, make sure it is a crisp clean copy. Don't drag a crumpled resume out from the depths of your bag and hand it over.

Remember your resume is a reflection of you!

Application Forms:

If you have to complete an Application Form, make several blank copies of it first so you can practice. Or print off a copy and practice on that, if it is an online Application Form.

Read the Job Description and Person Specifications carefully. Many companies want candidates to provide examples of how they meet the Essential Requirements listed in the Person Specification.

The Selection Panel may use a scoring system, giving marks for each requirement that is met to select people for interview.

So it is important that you explain how you meet each requirement, to secure a job interview.

If there is an Application deadline make sure you get yours in ahead of that deadline. Applications sent minutes before that deadline don't create the best impression.

It suggests you are disorganized or don't particularly care about getting the job.

Preparing for a Job Interview

There's nothing more disappointing for an Interview Panel, than being faced with an applicant who knows nothing about the company or business.

Or an applicant who can't remember the requirements for the job they have applied for.

Do some research before your interview.

- What does this company do better than its competitors?
- What is so unique about this company?
- Does this company share an inspiring mission and vision statement that speaks to you?
- Are their clients people you've worked with before, or want to work with?
- Do they have role-model employees; people you aspire to be like?

Because you can almost guarantee that the question "Why did you choose our company?" will be asked in your interview.

Other things to plan or have ready:

- What you will wear (make sure it is clean and pressed). Remember: *"Dress for the job you want, not the job you have."*
- What transport or route you will take to get to the interview
- How long it will take to get to the interview.
- The exact location of the interview, especially if you have never been there before.
- A fully charged phone (which you will switch off before going into the interview).
- The contact number of the HR Department or head of the Interview Panel
- Emergency Cash
- Items to 'tidy' yourself up when you reach the interview location; comb, lipstick, bobby pins etc.
- A copy of the Job Description and your application or resume. You can read through these whilst waiting to be called in.

Attending your Job Interview

Be on time!

We

Can't

Stress

This

ENOUGH!!!

Don't just be on time, be ahead of time! If your Interview is scheduled for 10am plan to arrive for 9.45AM at the very latest.

If something happens on the way and you are running late, contact the HR Department with a call, or the head of the interview panel with a text, to explain.

Turning up late for an interview, without phoning ahead and explaining why, will not earn you any points with the interview panel. Explaining that you will be late because you haven't finished your lunch, however, is not a good reason for being late.

Tardiness, or a careless attitude to punctuality and other people's time is the fastest route to rejection.

Starting the interview off right

(TURN OFF YOUR CELL PHONE FIRST!)

On entering the interview room, smile and say "hello".

Interviewers will notice a few things about you from the way you shake their hands and interact with them.

A strong handshake speaks of confidence but overly strong may also suggest aggression.

A weak handshake can suggest a lack of confidence and shyness, which could cost you that job.

Aim for something in the middle. A firm grip and a healthy shake, will let your future boss know you are not afraid of responsibility and you're ready for the challenge.

Be alert for the panel to indicate where and when you should sit down.

If nothing is said, ask clearly “may I sit?” and nod towards the most obvious chair.

Even if your chair is the most comfortable chair on earth, don’t slouch or lean back. You don’t want to appear overly relaxed, overconfident or arrogant.

To project the best image, sit your bottom in the middle of the seat, with your back straight.

You will appear alert, interested and passionate about the questions they’re asking, and the answers you are giving.

Forget scripts but know your resume

Your Resume is your personal advert. It’s also the first thing used by companies to judge if you are a fit for their company.

Knowing your resume well should be one of the first things you accomplish in preparation for your interview. Most people are worried about how to answer interview questions.

You can prepare for an interview by thinking about the types of questions they will ask you. You can even ask a friend to do a Mock Interview with you to practice.

But try not to memorize scripted answers.

Your responses may sound too prepared and insincere to the interview panel. Memorizing a script also brings the risk of forgetting parts of it.

Especially if you are nervous!

You don’t want to mentally-space out in the middle of an answer because you have forgotten what comes next, do you!

Just listen to each question and pause to think, before you answer.

What is important is to know your resume or application, and to have confidence in your skills and experience and what YOU can bring to the job. After all, you were invited to interview because of your resume or application, right!

If you don’t have direct experience or if this is your first ever job, talk about the skills, abilities and aptitudes you have that you believe will be an asset. Do their practices align with your practices? Are their approaches to marketing or sales the same as your personal mottos?

Showing them that you’re aware of those things means that you’ve done your homework on the company and you are keen to work for them. And there’s nothing

more impressive than that!

If you know who they are and what you can deliver, you can customize your answers, delivery, posture, clothing choices and even your resume to ensure you impress your prospective employer!

Finishing the Interview

Finishing the interview well is as important as starting it well!

You may be given the chance to ask the panel some questions. Use that opportunity wisely.

Ask about mentoring, progression, opportunities for further training or cross-department training. All topics which show you are considering a future with them.

You can also ask when you might expect to hear if you have been successful.

Don't ask how much leave you will get or what your salary will be. You can ask the HR Department later. But if you are offered the job it will be detailed in the Job Offer letter.

Before leaving, remember to thank the panel for their time and consideration.

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