

INTERVIEW TECHNIQUES

We highly recommend spending as much time as you need analysing all aspects of your interview and the specifics of the role you are applying for. Some of these may seem like basic considerations but they are often overlooked.

PREPARATION

Researching the company for which you are interviewing

Having considerable knowledge of the company you are interviewing for is a great way to demonstrate your genuine interest in the role you are applying for. This is a chance to show the interviewer that this isn't just another job, but one for a company that genuinely interests you and a job that you are hungry for.

Preparing yourself

Spend some time thinking about what attributes or skills are necessary for the job you are applying for and think of examples of how you have excelled with these. This is a great way to set up your interview with a solid foundation.

Personal appearance

The clothes in which you dress can be a real indicator both of your respect for formality and that you are thoroughly invested in doing things properly. Research the attire of those already employed at the company by looking at pictures of 'the team' if you can find any online. If this is of a casual nature, always err on the side of formal/smart – better than to be dressed up than down.

BODY LANGUAGE

Body language is a surprisingly strong factor in communication; so you may have already set the bar before you even start talking. Many interviewees are unaware of how their demeanour gives off negative signals; it is important to look confident without trying to appear authoritative.

REASONS FOR HIRING

By looking at the things from the perspective of the interviewer, it is easier to gauge and understand what they are looking for. This will allow you to tailor your answers to their specific requirements.

Ability & suitability.

Be aware that you will not be the only prospective employee with all of the necessary attributes for the role you are applying for. Think of specific examples that exemplify your suitability for the role. Think about the company and what you are expected to achieve with these.

Willingness

Commitment, drive, resolve and application are all extremely valuable and desirable traits for an employee. Prepare a list of examples of when you have gone beyond the call of duty in order to achieve something that exceeds the expectations of your role.

Problem solving

How can your attributes make you the person who overcomes the hurdles that others cannot? Think of examples – preferably relatable to the role you are interviewing for – of when you have overcome problems thanks to these attributes.

COMMON COMPETENCIES

There are several competencies that will be required or desired for most roles. You will need to prove that you possess these before being in a good position to go beyond base position in an interview. These include:

PERSONAL PROFILE:

Drive
Motivation
Communication skills
Teamwork
Energy/enthusiasm
Determination

PROFESSIONAL PROFILE:

Reliability
Honesty/integrity
Pride
Dedication
Analytical skills
Listening skills

You will be asked to convince the interviewer that you possess these, so think of examples of past endeavours that convey that you do.

COMMON QUESTIONS

Below is a list of questions commonly asked at interviews. Prepare your answers for these before you are interviewed.

What did you dislike about your old job?

Try not to be too negative and put a positive spin on how your experiences can positively shape your performance in the future.

Have you done the best work you are capable of doing?

The answer to this has to be no. The best impression to leave is one of someone who aims for constant improvement.

Where do you see yourself in five years' time?

This is an opportunity to express interest in the future of the company and how this can guide your own progression.

What are your greatest accomplishments?

Try not to be generic here. The more detailed you can be, the more you will distance yourself from the competition. Don't exaggerate, but do your best to make your answer convincing.

Can you work under pressure?

Again, specific examples will put you in a more favourable position than a simple "yes".

What most interests you about this job?

Show that you have read the job description thoroughly and how, through your research of the company, how you can take pleasure in covering all aspects of it.

Describe a difficult problem that you have had to deal with.

Really think about an example that shows off an ability that has led you to being victorious in circumstances that others would not prosper under.

What have you done that shows initiative?

This is an invitation to really express your individuality. Perhaps think of one work-related and one general example.

What qualities do you think are needed to be successful in this field?

Listen carefully to the interviewer and take note of his job description. Be sure to research the company and their position in the market.

Do you work better on your own or as part of a team?

You should always be sure to let the interviewer know that you are equally as comfortable working both ways. Employers value those who enjoy, benefit from and provide positive input into a team scenario as well as appreciating the application and initiative of someone who can take control and even create valuable work for themselves.

Tell me about a time when you had to communicate with people from different levels.

This is a chance to show that you have both interpersonal skills and respect for and comfort with authority. Never give the impression of superiority; no one likes someone who pulls rank.

Give me an example of an event that really challenged you.

Be specific and pay special attention to making it clear how difficult this event was, but don't let them think you were daunted by it.

How have you benefited from your disappointments?

Be general, this is a life question and not a chance to let it known what has disappointed you. Don't paint a negative picture.

What is your greatest weakness?

Express a weakness as something you are not excellent at, not that you are bad at. Give examples of how you can improve upon and eliminate your weaknesses.

What would you do if you were going to miss the deadline?

Let the interviewer know that you wouldn't panic and that you would notify everyone who this is relevant to in good time, enabling them to make allowances.

What has been the biggest decision you have had to make?

Think of something significant, preferably something that benefits the company beyond the call of duty. Signify the magnitude of the decision but don't make it sound like it overwhelmed you.

When did you last take a risk at work and explain the risk?

Do not mention any risk you have taken with potentially damaging ramifications. Do not exaggerate. Let them know that it was an educated risk and one that you were confident the benefits for were a likely outcome.

What frustrates you at work?

Don't be negative. Express a frustration that you have overcome – something that you feel may have affected your performance. This goes to show that the outcome of your work is of great importance to you.

What are your ambitions?

Make sure to involve the company in these; nothing generic or personal.

What hours do you normally work / how flexible are you?

Be honest and consider whether or not the job is worth making time sacrifices for.

THE CLOSE

This is a chance to show off just how much research you have done. It is also an opportunity to redeem yourself if things haven't gone to plan up to this point. Ask plenty of pertinent questions.

An assumptive close would be a question that refers you having the job such as "what would my first assignment be?"

We hope you find this information useful and wish you success at your interview