

INTERVIEW HINTS AND TIPS

The amount of planning and preparation you do prior to an interview can vastly increase your chances of success. Recruitment is highly competitive - you may well be up against candidates with more relevant experience than you, however if you are better prepared and demonstrate a genuine interest in the organisation and the role you will stand out from other candidates.

Some key points to consider:

- **First impressions count** - What you wear to the interview will have an impact. Play it safe and wear conservative colours, black or dark blue suits will not offend anyone. Wear a white shirt, black socks and polished black shoes. Avoid wearing fun/cartoon ties and coloured suits!
- **Time keeping** - Make sure you arrive 10-15 minutes before the meeting, don't be too early or arrive at the last second. Plan the route and give yourself plenty of time. If you know you are running late ensure you make a call to us or the client to inform them.
- **Sell don't tell** - An interview is a sales meeting and as such, it is sell not tell. The interviewer only has limited time to identify your relevance for the role; they want you to be the right candidate (vacant roles cost companies money and cause managers headaches!).
- **Brag file** – People believe what they see far more than what they hear. Consider putting together a brag file that shows the interviewer what you have achieved. This could include company league tables, testimonials or thank you letters from customers or specific examples of work you have done.
- **Research the business in detail** – Read through their website, annual report and any trade brochures you can locate. If possible talk to customers of the business to see what their perception is. This will show that you are prepared to go the extra mile.
- **Match your experience to their requirements** - Ensure that you have as much information about the role itself. Wherever possible ask for a role and person specification. Analyse the person specification and identify your strengths and weaknesses against this. Prepare evidence of how you meet the specification and make sure you discuss this during the meeting. Don't assume the interviewer will gather this evidence; the majority of interviews are conducted by people who are not trained in interviewing.
- **Prepare for objections** - Be prepared with answers to overcome any potential objections. For example, if the ideal is to have experience of selling a specific product and you are from an allied market, research the product area before the meeting so that you can talk knowledgably about it, talk about how you have successfully moved into new product areas in the past (if relevant).
- **Know your own CV!** Many interviewers start by asking you to run through your CV. You shouldn't have to refer to it constantly. Plan what you will say beforehand, think about each role you have had, what your responsibilities were and most importantly what you achieved in the role.



- **Make the interview 2-way** – Remember that you have to come away from the meeting happy that the company and the role are right for you. Be prepared, have your questions listed and typed up, not hand written on paper. Ask questions on the strategic direction of the business, their expectations of you in the role and how you can grow and develop in their business. Don't ask how many holidays you get!
- **Close the meeting** - It is imperative, especially when pursuing a sales opportunity to end the meeting with a close. For example: what is the next stage from here? What reservations about me if any do you have?

GOOD LUCK!

