

Interview Preparation and the Interview

Well done, you have been invited to attend an interview. By being proactive, by sourcing and applying for jobs has paid off! However, the hardest part is yet to come, and that is preparing yourself for the interview, then the interview itself!

"By failing to prepare, you are preparing to fail." Benjamin Franklin

Basic Interview Preparation Tips

- Research the company e.g. what business is it in, what products and services do they provide, when were they established, recent new or media articles about them
- Research the interviewers e.g. LinkedIn
- Analyse the job description. You need to sell yourself against what the employer is looking for. What are the essential skills and experience (technical and interpersonal) are they seeking, and match those to your own work experience.
- If you obtained the interview via a recruitment consultancy, ask your consultant for further information about the job, company and interviewers
- If you know someone who is currently doing a similar job or has done so in the past, speak to them
- Speak to anyone you know who is a current or ex-employee at the company to gain inside information
- Think about different questions including competency based questions which may be asked during the interview and prepare and write down what answer you would provide to each
- To the best of your ability, memorise the content of your resume
- Think about 3 or 4 good questions to ask the interviewer

By preparing and using your knowledge through research enables you to demonstrate the following:

- Genuine interest in the job and company
- That you have invested time and effort in finding out about them
- Conveys enthusiasm about working for the company
- That you can do the job effectively
- That you are well suited for the role
- You will approach the interview with more confidence and credibility
- That you are the best suited applicant for the position and company

Street Address:
Nexus Building
1.16 / 4 Columbia Court
Baulkham Hills NSW 2153

Postal Address:
PO Box 7279
Baulkham Hills
NSW 2153

Phone: 02 9421 5900
Fax: 02 9421 5999
Email: info@talentfocus.com.au

talentfocus.com.au

Basic Interview Guidance

Before the Interview

- Get a good night's sleep before the interview
- Make sure you have written down the name of the interviewer, office address, contact numbers, and planned your route to the office
- Aim to arrive at the reception of the office 10-15 minutes before the interview is due to commence so that you are not flustered or rushing to get there on time
- Breathe slowly and calmly and relax
- Remember that you have prepared in advance so feel confident about yourself and that you can only do your best

Presentation

"You Never Get a Second Chance to Make a First Impression" John W. Weikert

We all make our initial judgements about someone within 30 seconds of meeting them, which is why making a good first impression is critical during an interview as you won't have a second chance to do this. Psychologists have researched this subject for years to show what % contribution to the first impression judgement is. The following can be used as a guide:

- 55% What people see (appearance, posture, body language, facial expressions, eye contact)**
- 38% What people hear (tone, pitch, pace, articulation, volume)**
- 7% The words people use**

As you can see, what you look and sound like are initially far more important than what you actually say to make your first impression.

Active Listening

The ability to listen is important during an interview as by paying attention, this gives you time to absorb and understand, and not misinterpret a question.

You can demonstrate active listening by adopting the following:

- Concentrating
- Tilt your head to one side to show you are listening
- Make eye contact with the interviewer
- Seek clarification if you do not quite understand the question
- Listen to the whole question before you provide an answer
- Don't jump in if the interviewer is just pausing

Street Address:
Nexus Building
1.16 / 4 Columbia Court
Baulkham Hills NSW 2153

Postal Address:
PO Box 7279
Baulkham Hills
NSW 2153

Phone: 02 9421 5900
Fax: 02 9421 5999

Email: info@talentfocus.com.au

talentfocus.com.au

Answering Questions

This is when your interview preparation to answers to competency based questions comes into play!

- Take time before you answer a question, do not rush in with the first thing that comes to mind
- Stay calm and collected, slow down the pace of your speech so that you sound confident and articulate. This also helps you calm your nerves and not ramble.
- Avoid using “Umm” and Ahh”
- Be concise and to the point with your answers. You can observe the interviewers body language to see if they are engaged or not with what you are saying.
- Sound confident and use open body language
- Project enthusiasm and a positive attitude
- Frame your answers around actual experiences as opposed to opinions
- Have examples to back up your answers
- Once you have understood the question being asked, ensure that your answer covers your skills, experience, interpersonal qualities and achievements in that area
- Tell the truth. If you do not know an answer it is better to admit it than give a wrong answer.
- If you are being grilled or you are finding it difficult to read your interviewer, do not get flustered and panic. Instead continue in a confident, enthusiastic, articulate and professional manner.
- Smile – when appropriate! Not continuously or you will come across as a little strange or not taking things seriously!

Questions to Ask

You should always have about 2-5 questions to ask, even if the interviewer covers some of these points during the interview. What are appropriate and good question areas to ask about?

- Company structure and reporting lines
- The team
- Company/Department plans for the future
- Industry performance and outlook
- Reason for the role
- Performance appraisals
- The interviewers background
- Avoid asking about money, holidays and sick pay during interviews. You can go through these at offer stage, or if you obtained the interview via a recruitment consultancy, they can find this out on your behalf.

Street Address:
Nexus Building
1.16 / 4 Columbia Court
Baulkham Hills NSW 2153

Postal Address:
PO Box 7279
Baulkham Hills
NSW 2153

Phone: 02 9421 5900
Fax: 02 9421 5999

Email: info@talentfocus.com.au

talentfocus.com.au

Closing the Interview

Ensure that you end the interview positively to reinforce the good first impression you made initially. Always thank the interviewer for their time and let them know that you are interested and enthusiastic about the job opportunity and the company. Do not ask them how you have performed during the interview or pressurize the interviewer for a decision.

For most permanent vacancies there is usually more than one interview. If you are invited back then this confirms that you have made a good impression during the first and demonstrated skills, experience and interpersonal skills that are suited to the job and company.

Go in with the same positive attitude and prepare again for the next interview, however try to refine your interview techniques further.

Street Address:
Nexus Building
1.16 / 4 Columbia Court
Baulkham Hills NSW 2153

Postal Address:
PO Box 7279
Baulkham Hills
NSW 2153

Phone: 02 9421 5900
Fax: 02 9421 5999
Email: info@talentfocus.com.au

talentfocus.com.au