

JOB INTERVIEW GUIDE

INTRODUCTION

The interview is the most important part of your job search. It is often the candidate who is most skilled at interviewing who will get the job. Your CV and cover letter lay the groundwork of your job application, but an interview provides you with a chance to shine. Because the interview is so important, your preparation is key. You want to sell your strengths, achievements and qualifications in a way that leaves a unique and impression on the employer. Your task is to show **who you are**, how you would **contribute to the organization** and **why you are the best candidate** for the position. For the employer, it is an opportunity to know more about your background your skills and qualifications. Determine if your qualifications fit with the requirements of the position, evaluate your personality and your motivation for the job.

KNOWING YOURSELF

The best preparation is to know yourself so well that you are able to concretely describe yourself in the job interview.

Consider your **interests/experiences, skills, achievements and values** that you would like to showcase to a potential employer. This is known as self-assessment, and the work you have already done for your CV should be helpful as you begin preparing for your interview.

- Read the job advertisement carefully and make a list of the important key words for the job.
- Make another list of your skills and qualifications to see those that are most important and relevant to the position for which you are applying.
- Consider how you want to present this information to the employer in an interview.
- How can you best demonstrate these skills based on your past achievements and experiences? Come up with examples.

THE IMPORTANCE OF RESEARCH

Researching the industry, company and the position before your interview is important. Being well prepared shows that you are both enthusiastic and professional and you signal to the employer that you are taking your application seriously. Make sure you know the company website well.

When researching the company keep the following questions in mind:

- What is the organization's culture, values, history?
- What is the size of the organization?
- Who are the major competitors?
- What opportunities are there for advancements?
- What are the organization's community interest or involvement?

You should be able to communicate your interest in the job. Research the general tasks and responsibilities. Research things that will have an impact on your decision, such as location, travel, overtime etc.

PRACTICE

According to polls, most job candidates spend as little as one hour to prepare for an interview. It's no surprise that unprepared candidates often give poor interviews. Proper preparation will not only improve your performance but it will also reduce your anxiety on the day of your interview.

Create a list of common interview questions. Practice your answers and say them out loud. Also prepare yourself for surprise or awkward questions and think of ways to deal with them.

Practice a strong introduction that highlights your skills and how you developed them (Answers the most common of all interview questions "Tell me about yourself".)

FREQUENTLY ASKED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

There is no one correct answer to these questions. Each person is unique and responses will vary. The important thing is to know **how you** would answer these questions if they were asked. Keep in mind is that a well prepared response to a specific question in an interview may be the deciding factor of whether a person is hired for a job.

- Tell me about yourself.
- What are your career objectives?
- Why are you applying for this job? And what are your expectations for this job?
- What are your most significant work/non-work achievement?
- What are some of your strengths and how will they relate to this position?

- How do you work under pressure?
- What do you expect from your manager?
- Give me an example of a time when you utilized your leadership skills.
- What weakness would you want to improve? How?
- Why should we hire you?
- What sets you apart from other candidates?

QUESTIONS TO ASK THE INTERVIEWER

A good advice is that you also prepare question for you to ask the interviewer. Asking questions shows that you are genuinely interested. It also helps you to decide if the company is a good fit for you.

Examples of questions to ask:

- Follow up questions about the job position.
- Possibilities of training and professional development?
- What the expectations on your performance are?
- What is the company culture like?
- Why do people like working there?
- What are the biggest challenges facing the company?

Avoid asking questions that are easily found on the company website.

FOLLOW UP AFTER AN INTERVIEW

Within a day or two, send a thank you note to the interviewers thanking them for their time and indicating your continued interest in the position. Email is usually a good form of communication.

If the company has given you a set time frame and exceeded it by longer than a week, a well-written follow-up note is reasonable. It should be concise and friendly. Avoid following up multiple times after each interview.

After the interview take time for your own reflection. Write down points of the interview that you felt good about and what you need to improve on.