

Interview Tips

"Success is where preparation and opportunity meet." (Bobby Unser)

Having secured an interview, you will want to consider how to best prepare for it.

The value of good preparation cannot be overstated.

When a client invites you for interview, they are already making an investment in you; it's not just your own time and effort at stake, but their own time and the resource cost involved, and it's in both parties' interests to make the most of the time you have to explore the role and your potential fit for it.

To enhance your chances of success, we will speak to you to help you to prepare for your interview. Think about the following ways you can make a great impression:

1. Make a positive first impression.
The interviewer is assessing whether you will be a real asset for their company.
Think about your presentation and body language.
Look professional. Be respectful.
Have a confident handshake, and keep good eye contact with the interviewers.
This is your opportunity to impress your interviewers.
And also, although it's an interview, remember to relax and smile!
2. Do your research.
Employers want to see that you want a role with them, rather than with any company who happened to have a vacancy.
You will want to enhance your own knowledge of the company and gain an understanding of its business by performing your own research into the company, from web based searches, their own website, and industry press.
3. Be prepared to really think about, and talk about, the job you have now, and your experience to date. Your CV is only a skeleton, on which you need to put "meat on the bones." Think how you would answer the question; "Tell me about yourself and the work you do." You will really want to focus on your strengths, and give the interviewer insight into your career to date, and what is important to you professionally. You want to demonstrate that you are the right candidate for them.

It sounds obvious, but spend time re-reviewing your CV, and the job description. Consider the skills and responsibilities you have now, the skills and responsibilities the new role requires, and how your current work corresponds to that. Think about your achievements, your "soft" professional skills, and your technical ability. Think about the detail behind the summaries you provided in your CV, so that when you are asked questions, you can have a detailed discussion with your interviewers, and really bring your experience to life in their eyes.

4. Expect technical questions, and be ready to provide the most direct answers you can. Never avoid a question, and if you do not know an answer, be honest and say so, potentially explaining how you would go about finding the answer in your daily work. It is important that the interviewer understands your expertise. Provide open answers, illustrating your depth of knowledge, but know when to stop. Yes or no answers will never impress.
5. Really listen to the interviewer. Before answering a question, stop and think, "What are they really asking me?", and this will help you answer in a focused and clear way. There is no rush to answer, and don't rush to fill a silence. Take your time, so you can give the best answer you can. Some candidates like to practice answering questions, to get used to having to talk about themselves, as not everyone enjoys that!
6. Consider your strengths and weaknesses. Some interviewers will ask you about that. You really need to be honest with yourself, and be prepared to think about areas where you have really excelled, areas where you feel there is scope to improve, and how you are addressing any such issues in a positive way. Remember that an interview is an opportunity for you to sell your strengths, so think about your personal qualities, and what your current manager or colleagues value about your work. Similarly, if you recognise a shortcoming in your CV (such as a short period at one employer), be prepared to explain why that was, in an honest and positive way.
7. Be yourself. Authenticity is of critical importance; both you and the employer need to know that if you join the firm, you are going to fit in well, be technically capable, and have the right attitude and positivity to join their organisation.
8. Think about any questions you might want to ask your interviewer during the interview. You will want to reflect your interest in the role, gain a better insight into their expectations, and into the company culture. Great candidates will often think about what their new manager will expect from them, and be curious about the manager's own role. Alternatively, think about how the manager will judge success in the role.
9. Conclude the interview well. If you enjoyed meeting your interviewers, say so. If you want to know more, then why not make it clear that you'd be interested in a follow up interview if they are? Shake hands and thank everyone, leaving a positive impression.
10. Things to avoid:

There are certain things that are guaranteed to ensure you don't get a second interview:

Looking scruffy. Being late. Looking fidgety. Avoiding eye contact. Checking your phone. Talking excessively and off-point. Avoiding questions, or failing to answer directly. Giving unrealistic salary expectations. Arrogance. Talking negatively about former employers, without judging the right balance of how to explain something. Failing to know enough about the company. Looking bored, or at the floor. Sniffing incessantly. Failing to show that you are serious about your job search for the right opportunity. Having unrealistic expectations of promotion, rather than focusing on the role on offer.

11. Things to consider:

There are certain things that all of our clients love

Enthusiasm; dynamism; honesty; a proactive, can-do attitude; a desire to work hard; a real enjoyment of the work you do; resilience; a passion for your profession; an ability to communicate well; adaptability; a collaborative approach; an ability to work independently; mentoring juniors; being honest about your experience or limitations; and striving to improve through learning and development.

Paraphrasing Benjamin Franklin, failure to prepare is preparing to fail, so do all you can to enhance your chances of success!

Enjoy your interview!

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