



## Interview Tips

Frequently asked questions, practical advice and suggestions about what to do in an interview situation.

## What is an interview?

It is a sales meeting between two people. One is selling the company (interviewer), the other selling their skills (interviewee). Preparation will significantly improve your chances of success.

## Types of interview

- ✓ Face to face, one on one interviews
- ✓ Panel interviews
- ✓ Telephone interviews
- ✓ Group interviews
- ✓ Sequential interviews

## Types of interview

- ✓ Once you get the invitation which can be by letter, phone or email, it is good practice to confirm that you will attend the interview.
- ✓ Read the letter/email carefully and note down all important points like date, time and place.

- ✓ Phone to ask for clarification if there are any issues arising that you do not understand.
- ✓ Plan your journey - look at directions and bus routes
- ✓ Note the name and number of the person interviewing you in case you are late
- ✓ Check whether you need to take any documents with you
- ✓ Research the company
- ✓ Prepare questions to ask our employer
- ✓ Plan your outfit

## Competency based interviews

The aim of a competency-based interview is generally the same as any interview; that is to give you the chance to tell the interviewer as much about your past work performance as possible. What will probably feel different about the competency-based interview is that it has a very structured approach.

## Use the STAR method to structure your answer

For example, if the interviewer asks you: 'Tell me about a time when you had to answer the phone to an angry customer.'



### Describe the exact situation that occurred

'I once took a phone call from a customer who was really angry because he had not received an important document we promised him would be received that day.'



### Describe your responsibility in relation to this role

'As a customer service advisor, I was concerned that the customer was upset with our service and knew I needed to resolve it as soon as possible'



### Describe what action you took

'I therefore let the customer explain the problem and listened carefully to their explanation. I apologised for the delay and told them I would investigate the problem and give them a timescale of when I would get back to them. I contacted the deliveries department and discovered that there had been a problem with some of the deliveries because a driver was off ill. I therefore arranged for a special courier to deliver the document and advised the customer'



### Describe the result of your actions

'I rang the customer to make sure he had received the document and he was absolutely delighted that I had worked so hard to get the document to him on time. In fact he was so impressed that he asked us to undertake some more work for his company.'

Interviewers will want to hear what you did. You should therefore use the word 'I' in your responses.

## Some example interview questions

- Q Tell me about yourself
- Q What interests/hobbies do you have?
- Q What do you want from your future?
- Q What is your greatest achievement?
- Q What do you enjoy and what do you not enjoy about your current job?
- Q Why are you interested in our company?
- Q Tell us what you know about the company/industry?
- Q What skills do you bring to the team?
- Q How do you respond/cope under pressure?
- Q How do you react to conflict?
- Q Why are you suitable for this position?
- Q What training and development needs do you have in relation to this role?

### Problems understanding?

If you need any of our information translating or if you need an interpreter, please contact us. We can also provide this information in large print or on CD if you need us to.

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