

# THE SECOND INTERVIEW

## A. PURPOSE OF THE SECOND INTERVIEW

It feels great when you are invited back to a company for a second interview, because this means your interviewer/s were obviously impressed with you during the first round, and it's lovely to bask in this warm and fuzzy feeling for a bit.

Once you get back down to Earth though, you will realise that the competition intensifies now, because all the top candidates are being compared with one another, not only by the original interviewer/s but very likely by other key members of staff you will meet during this phase of the recruitment process.

So, you need to manage the process properly and find ways to stand out from the rest of the best.



## B. MANAGING THE SECOND INTERVIEW PROCESS

### Before The Big Day

#### I. Confirm Salary Range on Offer V Salary Expectations



Often the salary range on offer for a position is advertised up-front, so you are aware of this before you apply, but sometimes employers don't want to divulge this info. at the onset, and will say something like the salary is 'market related' or 'negotiable, depending on qualifications and experience'.

If this is the case, and you are not sure your salary expectations will be met, the time to clarify this is before the second interview, so that time is not wasted on continuing with the interview process if they are offering a salary you cannot afford to accept, or if it is out of line with the market related salary for the position (consult with others in a similar role and do some on-line research, e.g. [www.payscale.com](http://www.payscale.com), to establish what this is, if you are not sure).



This is quite a sensitive subject and you have to be careful how you broach it – you don't want to come off like all you are interested in is the money. It means you have to be respectful and tactful about how you word your query; maybe something like: "Thank you, and I am thrilled that I have been considered for a second interview! Before we continue though, please can I have clarity on the salary range offered, just to be sure we are in agreement about this, as I do not want to waste your time, if it is different to what I can afford to earn".

#### II. Practical and/or Theoretical Assessments

If you are happy with the salary on offer, and decide to go for a second interview, find out if you will be expected to do an assessment of some kind, and whether it will be theoretical and/or practical.



#### III. Interview Format and Who will be Conducting the Interview

It's also a good idea to establish who will be conducting the second interview and what format it will take, i.e. one-on-one, panel interview, etc. Once you have this information, do some research on the interviewer/s, e.g. via LinkedIn, so that you know better what to expect, and also to enable you to make small talk, if necessary.

#### IV. *Anticipate and Prepare for Questions that may be Asked*

It works quite well to put yourself in the shoes of the interviewer/s and design 5 to 6 questions you would ask a potential employee for the position, if you were them. Get a family member to play the part of the interviewer, and practise answering.



Some questions they may ask are:

##### ***What skills and experience do you think are necessary for this role?***

(Right answer: 'I think that X, Y and Z are the most important skills necessary for this role. I think these are all things I can actively bring to the role, which I demonstrated when...' – giving relevant examples from your own experience gives your answers credibility.)

##### ***Why should we hire you?***

Say you feel you are the right person for the job because of what you can offer and give examples, based on:



- The current job requirements, compared to your past experience
- What you were told in the 1st interview about the type of person they want

##### ***What would you change about the company?***

A particular favourite for more technical or design-based roles, this question has the potential to come up whatever the position. It's time to show your research skills. So whether it's a part of the website you don't feel is particularly user-friendly or a window display which you feel brings nothing to the store, have a

few things prepared before the interview.

Whatever you suggest, remember to back up why you've said it and what value you feel this change could bring to the business.

(Right answer: 'I found the sign-up process on your website to be very long and I imagine a lot of users may be put off by this. If you made the form slightly shorter, I think you could increase registration numbers')

Wrong answer: 'Where do I start...?')

##### ***What are your career goals, or where do you see yourself in 5 years?***

What they really want to know is if you're in it for the long haul. At this point you can say you would like to make progress within their company and take on more responsibilities, etc. as time goes by. Then ask what the opportunities for growth there are in the company and use this answer as a basis to describe how you would like to see yourself progressing within their organisation.



## V. Prepare Questions of Your Own



**DRESS** *for* **SUCCESS**

Sit down and really think about what matters to you in a job and come up with a new list of questions to ask your potential future employer, e.g. scope for growth, the companies long term vision, etc.

### On The Big Day

#### I. *Some things will be the same as for the first interview, like:*

- Dress for success.
- Arrive 15 minutes early.
- Cell phone off, etc.
- Greet, shake hands, make eye contact with and smile at the interviewer.
- Express that you are excited to have been invited to attend a second interview.
- Answer questions fully, but concisely.
- Wherever possible, give examples from your own experience, or show documentation to back up your answers.

#### II. *Negotiating Salary*

Hopefully it has been established before the second interview that the salary range on offer is acceptable to you, and in this case all you will need to do is confirm this, and settle on an exact figure.

If the salary on offer has not been established, the interviewer will probably raise this towards the end of the second interview and you need to be clear in your own mind, the salary you are willing to accept.

They may ask what your current salary is, but as soon as you give up a past salary figure, you lose all your negotiating leverage. Most employers will not hire you for more than ten percent over your last salary, even if they love you. They feel that ten percent is enough of a pay increase to go from one job to another.

So, it is better not to mention a figure, but respectfully point out (if it is true) that what you are currently earning is not entirely relevant, as what you would be doing for them, and the level of responsibility is different compared to what you do for your current employer, which are a different company with their own budgets and salary guidelines.

Alternatively, or additionally, you can say that you would expect to earn a market related salary for the position and role (which you have thoroughly researched), mention what that is, and ask if the salary they are willing to pay is within that range.

#### III. *Ending off the Interview*

Once the salary negotiations are over, all that's left is to find out is when they will let you know whether or not you have been successful, and if you are successful, when the start date is.

When you have this information, be sure to once again thank them for the opportunity and politely greet and shake hands with the interviewer/s before you leave.



### After The Big Day

Follow-up after the interview by sending an email to thank the interviewers and to re-inforce briefly why you would be the best person for the job. This show good manners, and may be one of the things that sets you apart from the rest.