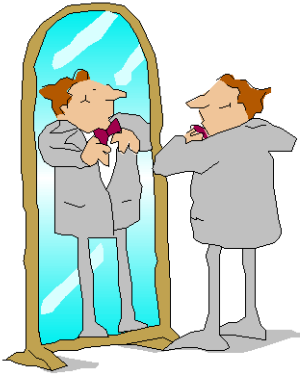


# PREPARATION OF INTERVIEWS FOR THE CANDIDATE



## BEFORE THE INTERVIEW

Research the organization and have questions ready that demonstrate you have taken time to find out about what they do and that you are serious about the job opportunity offered.

Make sure your portfolio is up to date and relevant for the position and put it into a neat, presentable folder.

Dress appropriately for the interview, so that you fit in with the culture of the organization. If you are not quite sure what the dress code is, rather dress too smartly than too casually.

Preparing well and looking good will give you confidence, and every employer appreciates this.

## Questions to Think About

There are five basic questions that need be answered during the interview, by both the interviewer and yourself. Make sure that each point is discussed until you both have the information you need.

Interviewer wants to know	You want to know
Why is this person here and not somewhere else ?	What does this job involve ?
What can he/she do for us ?	Do my skills truly match this job ?
What kind of person is he/she?	Are these the kind of people I would like to work with ?
What makes this person different from the other people who want this job ?	Is there something I can offer that makes me different from all the others who want this job ?
Can we afford this person ?	Can I persuade them to hire me at the salary I need or want ?

The following are questions that the interviewer could possibly ask. Fill in what you could say, under the heading : “Your Response”.

Question	Reason	Your Response
<p>1. I see form your CV that ....  (various details will be extracted)</p>	<p>To break the ice and to get a feeling of your background and you as a person.</p>	<p>Respond to the aspects mentioned and where relevant emphasise the work you have enjoyed.</p>
<p>2. What are your personal long, medium and short-term goals? How did you go about setting them? What results have you achieved?</p>	<p>The employer wants to see if you have the ability to set goals.</p>	<p>Focus on a specific example of where you set yourself a goal, how you went about achieving it and what results you attained.</p>
<p>3. Have you ever found ways to make your job more rewarding?  What did you do?</p>	<p>The employer wants to know if you are skilled in taking action, are a self-starter or proactive.</p>	<p>Be specific. Give examples of situations where you took responsibility to implement new ideas or different ways of doing your work.</p>
<p>4. Have you ever had to deal with conflict in your team? What did you do? What was the outcome?</p>	<p>The employer wants to know how you handle conflict, and if you have the interpersonal skills to ensure open communication.</p>	<p>Identify an incident where you had to resolve a conflict . Remember to stress your interpersonal skills you used in the conflict situation. Give the result.</p>
<p>5. Can you give me an example of an important decision you have had to make recently? How did you make your decision? What was the result?</p>	<p>The employer wants to know how you go about making a decision. Also trying to assess your judgement or rationality.</p>	<p>Be specific and concise. Talk about how you made the decision, what you considered e.g. Pros and cons.  Give the result.</p>



These examples of questions and responses will give you a broad idea of what you may expect in a job interview. You will also need to anticipate other questions that could be asked, that link directly to the position advertised. Take note of the specific qualifications, skills, behaviours and qualities required and pose questions to yourself using the same questioning technique.

Role playing and practicing the interview questions and situation with a family member or friend, is a very good way to prepare for the real thing.



## Knowing How Much to Say

The 50/50 rule applies; expect to listen for half the time and to speak for half the time. When you answer a question, do it in two minutes or less.

## Discretion

Don not criticise your previous employer or boss. This is indiscreet and tacky and will not impress the interviewer.

## Negotiating Salary

Work out the minimum you can afford to earn and the maximum market related salary you can earn in terms of your skills and experience, (ask others doing similar work, what they are earning). Knowing these two figures will prevent you from accepting a salary which is unnecessarily low and from trying to negotiate for one which is unrealistically high.

Avoid discussing salary until :

- they have indicated that they want to employ you.
- you are sure that your skills match the position.
- you are certain you want the job.



**If the salary issue is raised earlier, politely say that you would only like to discuss it when you are sure of what the job entails.**

**Once salary has been agreed, ask to have this included in a letter of agreement or employment contract.**

**Try not to be the first one to mention a figure; research has shown that the one to do this, usually loses the negotiation.**

## Salary Increases and Promotions

If you accept a position, from the day you start, you must make notes of all your accomplishments, and then summarise them for presentation during performance appraisals. This will ensure that you do not forget any of your achievements and it will also serve to motivate you to achieve as often as possible.

## Ending the Interview

Before you leave the interview be sure to say and ask certain things so that you have all the information you need :

- Questions about the job, company and person you will be working for.
- State your interest in the position and company with enthusiasm.
- When they will contact you; if they are vague tell them you will contact them by a certain date if you have not heard from them.

## AFTER THE INTERVIEW

Write to the employer:

- A thank you note the same day or the next morning. This helps you stand out from the other contenders for the job; it helps the employer to remember you and is evidence that you have good people skills

- A brief summary reflecting the qualifications, skills, experience and qualities you have that are pertinent and relevant to what is required by the job. This also serves to help the employer remember you and justify to others why you should get the job.