

# Interview Techniques

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The interview is one of the most important aspects of getting a job, and making a good impression is vital to your chances. Effective employment interviewing involves preparation and practice and to be prepared for an employment interview you need to acquire knowledge about yourself, about the job, and about the employer you are interested in. The following are various techniques that can help you make a good interview impression.

## **Research the Company and the Position**

The more you know about the company and the job you are applying for, the better you will appear in the interview. An interviewer will be impressed by your interest and motivation, and you will be able to explain what you can do for the company.

You should find out the following information before your interview:

- The typical duties and salary range for the job you are interested in;
- The background of the organisation;
- The products or services the organisation handles;
- The philosophy of the organisation; and
- Any recent news regarding the organisation.

## **Presentation**

Dress corporately, neatly and cleanly. You will be judged in some respects by what you wear so if in doubt dress conservatively. Personal hygiene is also very important so always wear deodorant and clean your teeth before an interview.

### *Women's Dress*

- Wear a straightforward business suit;
- Wear sensible shoes;
- Be moderate and tasteful with makeup and perfume;
- Wear simple jewellery; and
- Hair and fingernails should be well-groomed.

### *Men's Dress*

- A clean, ironed shirt and conservative tie are essential;
- A simple jacket or business suit is highly recommended;
- Shoes should be polished;
- Face should be clean-shaven and facial hair should be neatly trimmed;
- Hair and fingernails should be well-groomed; and
- Use cologne or aftershave sparingly.

## **Greetings**

Always greet the interviewer with a handshake. Use statements such as "It's a pleasure to meet you" with a warm smile. It is important to make a friendly impression at the first meeting. During the interview make eye contact as much as possible so that the interviewer knows you are interested.

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### **Interview Questions**

An interviewer must secure answers to four basic questions, either directly or indirectly through other questions and comments. You should be clear about your thoughts and prepared to give articulate answers to these questions.

1. Why do you want to join the organisation?
2. How much experience do you have in this area?
3. How do your skills and values fit with the organisation?
4. What are your salary requirements?

### **Difficult Questions**

If you are unsure about a question politely ask for the question to be repeated or for more information. It is always better to understand the question than try and answer one that you don't. Take your time with your answer and think about what you are saying. Never rush questions as you might miss out on saying what you wanted.

The best way to handle difficult questions in an employment interview is in an honest, positive manner. Some difficult questions employers ask include:

*Tell me about yourself.*

The employer wants to gain information about your work experience, not your personal life. Talk about experiences and goals that relate to the specific job you are applying for.

*How would you describe yourself?*

Discuss positive, work-related attitudes. For example, you could suggest that you enjoy working with people of all ages, are loyal, committed, etc.

*Have you done this type of work before?*

Link the skills you possess to the abilities needed for the job. Answer truthfully about how your experience relates to the position.

*Why did you leave your last job?*

Be honest, professional and positive in your response, even if you were fired or quit in anger. Avoid any statements that may say something negative about yourself, your work, or your ability to get along with others.

*You seem to be overqualified for this position. Why do you want this job?*

The employer may be questioning your goals or challenging your long-term commitment to the job. Indicate your sincere interest in working for the organisation. Emphasise the unique attitudes, abilities and interests that led you to apply for this job.

### **Ask Questions**

You should use the interview to get answers to some of the questions you have about the job you are considering. Make sure you are prepared with some questions you would like answered in the job interview.

### **After the Interview**

End the interview with a handshake and thank the interviewer for his or her time. Reiterate your interest in the position and your qualifications. Follow up with a phone call if you are not contacted within a week of when the interviewer indicated you would be.

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