

Successful Interviews

Making the most of the interview



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What do you learn in these slides?

- Preparing for interviews
- The interview experience
- Questions to expect and to ask
- Different types of interview
- Assessment Centres
- Psychometric Tests
- Interview resources

Interviews

- Interview = A meeting with an objective
- Employer's objective is to find the best person for the job
 - Employer: reviews candidate's experience and abilities
 - *Can you do the job? (skills, ability, qualifications)*
 - *Will you do the job? (interest, attitude & motivation)*
 - *How will you fit into the organisation? (personality)*
- You: impress employer and assess position on offer
 - *What does this position offer me?*
 - *How does it fit with my career plans?*
- Congratulations - you have passed the first hurdle
- You must prove that you are the most suitable candidate for this position

Preparation is the key to success

- Review own skills, experiences and qualities
 - Check CV
 - Anticipate questions and identify relevant examples
 - Prepare key selling points
- Research organisation (IBPS/BANKS)
 - Websites, reports, articles, company literature, etc
 - Contacts with knowledge of organisation or sector
 - Relevant articles in the press
 - Personal visit or telephone call
- Research job and occupational area
 - Job description – or similar
 - Current issues
- Prepare your questions
- Practice

Watch the Body Language

- First impressions very powerful
 - *Halo effect or Devil effect*
- Allow time to relax
- Dress appropriately
- Entrance, introductions & handshake
- Smile and make eye contact
- Be aware of own movements
- Watch body language of interviewer

Typical Questions

- About you
 - *Tell me about yourself - Bring me up to date with your CV?*
 - *Why did you choose that particular degree programme?*
 - *What experience have you had that is relevant to this post?*
 - *What would you consider your major achievements to date?*
- About the job
 - *What interests you about this job?*
 - *What do you know about this organisation?*
 - *What other options are you considering?*
 - *How do you see your career developing – 5 years?*
 - *If you were Head of Department, what would be your priorities?*

Other Type of Questions

- “What if” Questions
 - No experience - how are you likely to respond to a situation
- Probing Questions
 - How exactly did you deal with the situation?
 - How did you know it worked?
 - How did you feel about the outcome?
 - Could you have handled it differently?

Competency-based Interviews

- Company identifies key skills required for job
- Designs questions to elicit evidence of skills
- Emphasis on past behaviour as predictor of success
- **Teamwork:** *Describe a team project you worked on. What problems arose? How did you deal with them?*
- **Communication Skills:** *Describe situation when you had to persuade others to support your view. Give an example of any reports you've written which illustrate your writing skills*
- **Interpersonal skills:** *What kinds of people do you find it difficult to work with? How do you handle those situations?*
- **Taking Responsibility:** *Describe a time when you took responsibility to achieve a challenging goal*
- **Problem-solving:** *Tell about a time when you had several tasks to manage at one time with conflicting deadlines.*

Preparing for Competency Interview

- Identify the competencies required for job
 - Review job description or ask for information
- Define each competency in behavioural terms
- Identify past experience to illustrate how you demonstrated that behaviour
- Prepare examples for each competency
- Practice talking about your experience
- Try to give a complete answer - **STAR**

Responding to Competency Q

- Q *Give me an example of a problem you encountered. How did you approach it. What was the outcome?*
- STAR response
 - S: Describe the **situation**
 - T: Explain the **task**/problem that arose
 - A: What **action** did you take?
 - R: What was the **result** or outcome?
 - What did you learn from this experience?

Matching Skills to Requirements

Employer needs

Communication

Team work

Leadership

Initiative

Customer Care

IT

Commercial awareness

Your evidence

Presentation to class

Example from Coop

Class rep, Committee

Fundraising for charity

Working in Superquinn

Designed website

Business pages

Your Answers

- Listen carefully, seek clarification
- Illustrate answers with real examples and evidence
- Be positive – constructive criticism
- Keep answers specific and succinct
- Take time to respond
- Be alert to interviewer's body language
- Speak clearly, smile and show enthusiasm
- Know what you want to say, and find the opportunity

Qualities Employers Seek

- Good all-round intelligence
- Enthusiasm, commitment and motivation
- Good communication skills
- Team work ability
- Ability to solve problems
- Capacity to work hard
- Initiative and self-reliance
- Balanced personality

Competencies required by Organization

- Adaptability
- Integrity
- Innovation
- Teamwork
- Initiative
- Drive for Results
- Know the Business
- Open Exchange of Information
- Makes Difficult Decisions

Your Questions

- Training programmes
- Career development opportunities
- Types of projects & responsibilities
- Reporting structure
- Performance appraisal
- Profile of staff
- Questions about topics raised in interview
- What happens next?

Interview Marking Sheet

| | |
|----------------------|--------------|
| Name | Mark-max 100 |
| Communication Skills | Max 30 |
| Problem Solving | Max 20 |
| Team Fit | Max 20 |
| Relevant Experience | Max 20 |
| Project Management | Max 10 |
| Total Marks | |

What creates a bad impression

- Poor personal appearance
- Negative attitude – evasive, using excuses
- Lack of interest and enthusiasm
- Lack of preparation
- Poor knowledge of role
- Failure to give concrete examples of skills
- Over emphasis on money/rewards
- Lack of career plan

After the Interview

Review own performance

- what went well

- what went badly

- what you wished you had said

- prepare for next stage

Other Types Of Interviews

- Group
 - 6-8 candidates
 - Group observed while discussing topic
 - Be aware of group interaction
- Panel
 - 2-5 interviewers, or as many as 13!!
 - Try to identify different roles
 - Respond to interviewer, include others through eye contact

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