

INTERVIEW PLANNING & PREPARATION

Interview Planning and Preparation – for an Interview with a Company

Congratulations on being selected for an interview with a company. To support you in this process and to help you do your very best we have outlined a number of tips for you that we hope will be useful. Good luck!

Please take with you: A spare copy of your resume, a notebook to record any information, a copy of their job specification (you may want to refer to it) and your original copies of all your qualifications, certificates and any written references. The Client may want to view these and take a copy.

Before the Interview – Remember preparation is key and will enhance your performance during this process. Ensure you have **all** the Company interview details – address, contact name, title and telephone number.

Leave plenty of time to get there, arrive 15 minutes early if you can! Make a good impression early on. Make sure you have all the details and know exactly where you are going - just ask us to clarify any details you are unsure of! Ensure you know who you are meeting, what they do and ensure you know the correct spelling of their name, correct pronunciations and title.

Do research on the company by looking at their website and company brochures. Read through the job specification to help you get a good understanding what is required, what the client's expectations are and how best you can approach the interview. Ensure you read about the company's size, products, services, uniques in the market, and overall see if you can find out about its culture and the uniques that make up its branding.

Re-read your CV and ensure you have identified the key skills (competencies) that you can highlight in your interview. Make sure you can clearly describe each role you worked in confidently, your responsibility in each and of course do showcase any key achievements in each role. Be clear about your reasons for leaving.

Dress code – dress accordingly – well groomed and conservative business attire recommended.

Prepare some well planned questions in advance that you want to ask – don't be afraid of writing these own and referring to them during your interview. Here are some example questions:

- What need is this role trying to fill in the organisation? Why is the role available?
- What do you see as the 3 key skills that are needed for this role?
- Could you describe the ideal person you see as being suitable for the role?
- How would you describe the culture of the company or department?
- How would you describe the induction and training programs offered?
- What ongoing personal development programs does the company offer?
- Do you offer advanced programs (uni) for those who demonstrate outstanding ability?
- How is the company positioned against its competitors?
- What company growth plans do you have? New products/services? How is the company planning for this growth?

- What are the key challenges or drivers for the company at present?
- What sort of people have done well in the company?
- What are the next steps in the process?
- Let them know you would welcome meeting the rest of the team if applicable

During the Interview – structure and useful tips

Today most of our clients will prefer to conduct competency based interviews, also known as behavioural based interviews as past behaviour is the best predictor of future behaviour. You will be required to run through examples of past experiences and you will be asked to describe very specific examples of situations that showcase your competency/skill in that area. You will be asked to complete questions that relate to job specific skills (competencies) that are key to the success of this position for the company. Think about your work experiences and prepare specific examples and practise them prior to your interview.

To help you with this process outlined below is the structure used called the STAR technique. The client will expect you to;

- S** - give an overview of the **situation**/set the scene
- T** - outlined the specific **tasks** you owned for this
- A** - describe the **actions** you did or owned
- R** - finally give the **result**/outcome of the situation

Examples of Competency Based Questions

- **Leadership** - Give an example where your leadership strength made a considerable impact or key difference in your position/company
- **Teamwork** - Tell me about a time when there was conflict in your team and what steps you put in place to resolve this
- **Customer Service** - Describe a specific time when you managed a challenging issue for customer and when you went the extra mile to resolve the issue
- **Sales Development** - Give me a specific example of a client where due to your persistence and negotiation skills you successfully won a new business
- **Financial Acumen** - Provide a clear example where due to your financial ability and eye for detail you identified an area that required changing that resulted in a considerable growth or change for the business

Be prepared as you may also be asked the following type of questions;

- What are your career aspirations?
- Why do you want to work in this company? What do you know about us?
- What interests you about us and our company? Products/services?
- What value could you add to the role/to the company?
- Describe your relevant competencies and experience that relate to this role?
- What are your strengths/weaknesses?

- Where do you feel you need development?
- What sort of management style do you work best with?
- What sort of management/leadership qualities do you have? (if applicable) Give examples of leadership projects?
- How do you manage conflict? Conflicting deadlines? How do you manage resolving issues with customers/colleagues?
- What does teamwork mean to you? Give examples of successful teams you have worked in?
- What have been your major achievements to date?
- What motivates you?

Offer ideas - Tell them what you could bring to their company and why you feel you would be the right person for the role. Offer explanations – tell them the value and the benefits you will bring to the role and their company.

Interested? Do let them know you are interested in the role throughout the interview and ensure you let them know why you should be considered (do constantly highlight your key skills that relate to their opportunity).

At the end of the interview of course thank them for the time they have made to see you. Let them know you would welcome the opportunity of meeting them and/or other members of the team again. Remember you want to stand out from the rest and want them to feel a refreshing change in the approach to the interview process – many clients comment on the fact that candidates don't always show passion in an interview or even display a real interest!

Style/Behaviour – Just as you will be evaluating the overall role and the company during the interview the client will be doing the same.

Consider the following – are you demonstrating during the interview knowledge of the company/role, a clear understanding of what is required for the role, an ability to clearly express yourself, confidence, passion about the role, good clear open communication, eye contact, enthusiasm, firm handshake and overall courtesy.

Feedback - It is key for to get your feedback immediately after the interview. If you are working in partnership with a recruitment firm do call them with your feedback.

If you're working with Wholeoranges please call us immediately after an interview on 09 309 0266 or call Therese on 021 777 290 or just drop back to the office for a debrief (we will have a cup of tea waiting!)

We can then immediately let the customer know of your interest to help with their and your decision making process as well as relooking at your career choices if the role does not suit. It also supports you in the next stage so we can get a clear understanding of your interest and feelings for the role along with what you feel the reaction/feedback from the client may be.

Relax and enjoy. During the interview the client will be looking at your whole approach and performance, therefore some of these may also help: be responsive, polite, listen, maintain eye contact, be confident, be planned and knowledgeable about them. Know your career aspirations and express them clearly.

Last but not least a big Good Luck from the Wholeoranges team