

Interview Advice

Find out as much about the company as you can. Get hold of annual reports (available in large libraries or directly from the company itself), research the company on the internet. If you have applied through a recruitment consultancy (such as Harvey Nash) most of this research will have been done for you. The type of information you might want to research: nature of the business, number of people, revenue of company, revenue forecast, number/location of offices, general dedication to career development.

Allow plenty of time to travel to the interview location - plan to arrive 15 minutes early. Always wear smart business attire (even if the company allows casual dress).

Make sure you are clear on who is interviewing you and what the interview process is. How many interviews will you have? What are the interviewers' names/job titles? How will these people contribute to the decision making process? Will there be any tests? If you have applied through a recruitment consultancy (such as Harvey Nash) most of this research will have been done for you. Bring along a spare copy of your CV.

At The Beginning Of The Interview

Upon arrival, if you have brought a coat/umbrella try to find somewhere to put them before you meet the interviewer. Sit down, look relaxed (even if you're not!), think twice about accepting a drink (what do you do with the cup when the interviewer arrives?)

Upon first meeting your interviewer make sure you shake his/her hand firmly - make eye contact, smile. Be prepared to make polite conversation - 'Did you find us OK?' - always try to answer these questions with more than just Yes/No answers. Perhaps you might want to comment on the attractiveness of the office environment or the ease by which you got there.

In the interview room, play safe with your etiquette. Don't take your jacket off without asking, sit down after or at the same time as the interviewer.

Pay close attention to your physical communication throughout the interview. This means good eye contact (ie looking at the interviewer for over 70% of the time - if you have more than one interviewer always try to address all of them with your answers). Don't cross your arms (it looks very 'defensive'), don't slump in the seat, smile

During And After The Interview

Be clear about what your major selling points are. If, by the end of the interview, these haven't been covered make a point of talking explicitly about these.

Be to the point, make sure that you answer the interviewer's question (it sounds obvious but nervousness and a keenness to communicate your selling points can often lead you away from the point.)

If you are asked to talk about a specific project it is worth explaining what the business aim and scope of the project was before you start talking about your involvement - it helps to set the scene.

Never say something in an interview which can't be backed up by examples. If you say you are a 'good team player', 'creative' or 'enthusiastic' you will inevitably be asked for proof.

Be positive. Don't overly criticise your current employer. Generally, every time you talk about a problem or issue you should always be looking to say what your involvement was in overcoming this issue.

Sell yourself. Try to avoid giving cliched answers to interview questions (it is likely your interviewer has heard these responses more than you care to imagine). Use examples from your own experience, give your opinion.

Common Interviewer Questions

- Why do you want to work for us?
- Why do you want to leave your current employer?
- What is the most difficult thing that you have done in your current position?
- What attributes make someone a good ?
- What are your most significant accomplishments?
- As a manager, what do you look for when you recruit people?
- How would your team describe you?
- Describe your personality?
- What are your goals?
- What are your three main strengths/weaknesses?
- Where do you see yourself in 5 years?

Common Interviewee Questions

- Why has the position become vacant?
- How will the position evolve in x years time?

- What opportunities are there for training/career development?
- Do you have an appraisal system?
- What could I expect to do in the first 6 months?
- Describe the corporate culture.

At The End Of The Interview

Ask how you did. Re-affirm your interest in the role.

Ask what the next stage is and when you can expect to hear. Ask how many other candidates are being interviewed for the role.

Follow up with a thank you letter.