



Interview Preparation

Well done, your well-constructed and targeted resume has got you an interview with the client. Now it's time to review your interview readiness. Preparation and practice will get you a long way.

Dress standards

Always err on the side of caution, so if you unless you're going for a "creative" role, this will mean dressing in a suit/similar. Presenting yourself in corporate attire is still the best way to look the part.

First impressions

First impressions matter, the first 30 seconds can really set the scene. When your interviewer approaches you to introduce him/herself, a good firm hand shake, eye contact and warm smile will set you up for a good interview. Previously I have coached people on appropriate handshakes, so be mindful you don't sit in the extremes of the "wet fish" or a "break my fingers" handshake. There's nothing worse than the wet fish.

Interview content

Interviews are typically behavioural based ie past behaviour is the best predictor of future behaviour. Candidates are often asked the same questions, then are rated and compared at the end of the first round of interviews. Preparation and practice are essential. Examples of behavioural questions are below:

1. How did you cope when a deadline was not met?
2. Tell me about a time you had to make a decision, but did not have all the information, how did you cope?
3. Give me an example of how you used your initiative to overcome a problem

Structuring your answer

The STAR model will provide a structure to your answers:

- Situation - describe a situation or problem that you have encountered
- Task - describe the task that the situation required or your ideas for resolving the problem
- Action - describe the action you took, obstacles that you had to overcome
- Results - highlight outcomes achieved

Two minute rule

Always keep “concise delivery” in the back of your mind. When I’m prepping my candidates for interviews, I’ll always talk about the need to keep answers under 2 minutes. Any longer and the interviewers may lose interest. If they want more detail, they will ask a probing question to get it.

The Hiring manager will want you to be a great communicator, able to talk to technical/non-technical people and deliver concise “non-waffly” communication.

Eye contact

If there are two interviewers taking turns to ask questions, direct 70% of your eye contact to the person who asked the question and the remaining 30% to the other interviewer, showing that you can draw people into conversations and are inclusive.

Questions

It’s important to ask questions towards the end of the interview. It shows that you have a keen interest and are keen to understand more of the dynamics. It’s a good idea to have 2-3 questions already prepared, but be able to adapt these and make them relevant. The interview/interviewers typically enjoy being asked good questions, as it allows them to really interact with the candidate.

Further information

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