



INTERVIEW TIPS

QUICK REFERENCE GUIDE

- Prepare
- Dress well
- Mobile phones off
- Firm handshake
- If you use glasses, wear them in the interview
- Think before you answer

INTRODUCTION

So we have helped to secure you an interview.....

Now it's up to you to convince the employer that you are the best person for the job. It's time to sell your skills, your experience and most importantly sell yourself!

Although your technical abilities are most important, interviewers don't only consider your qualifications and on job experience. Employers also use interviews to assess:

- Your communication skills
- Your ability to articulate your views
- Your ability to perform under pressure
- Your ability to think on your feet
- Your personality

Therefore the way you answer the questions is as important as the content of the answer.

PREPARATION

Even if you are a successful contracting professional, and have attended countless interviews it pays not to be too complacent.

Always spend some time preparing for the interview – the extent of the preparation is up to you, but make sure that you are ready.

Some helpful preparation tips:

- **Where to go?**
Do you know exactly where you need to go? Address? Floor? Contact name?
If you do not have all the information make sure that you ask.
- **Find your way.**
Do you know how to get to the interview?

If you are not sure take the trip the day before if you can. Make sure you know how you are going to get there and how long it will take you. There is nothing worse than panicking the morning of the interview because you're not sure how to find the office or you thought there was a bus at 9.00am and in fact it left at 8.50am – do your research and make sure that you can get there in good time. If driving, make sure that you know where you can park.

This will also help to calm nerves as you will have 1 less thing to worry about on the day of the interview.

- **Who are they?**
Find out some background information about the organisation. Make sure that you know something about their products, services, systems/applications, technical environment. What you don't know – ask in the interview.
- **Questions please?**
"No, I think we've covered everything" is not something that an interviewer want to hear when they ask if you have any questions. Make sure that you have some questions prepared, and make sure that they are relevant – it always helps if you are actually interested in the answer. Try not to ask the same old questions. Think about things that you really want to know about your potential employer.
- **Refresh.**
Make sure that you re-read the job description, your application and your resume before the interview as you will be questioned on these.
- **Practice.**
If you are not confident or do not have much experience of interview try to practice with a friend or family member. Make sure that you treat this as a practice and not a rehearsal – don't try to memorise answers, instead use this exercise to get you thinking.
- **Wearing out.**
Make sure that you know what you are going to wear. If possible a day or 2 before the interview make sure that everything is clean, pressed and shoes polished. At that stage you still have time to do something about it.

INTERVIEW DAY

Depending on the time of the interview will depend on you exact routine, but here are some basic point to remember:

- **Have breakfast.**
As they say – breakfast is the most important meal of the day. Feeling hungry during an interview is not a good feeling. Having a healthy breakfast will help your concentration and will eliminate any embarrassing grumbling noises from an empty stomach.

- **Dress to impress.**

No matter what the job, always dress to impress. Wear your best suit for the occasion – make sure that your clothes are clean and pressed. Neutral, clean colours are best. It is said that coloured shirts on men show confidence, but be mindful that heat and stress cause perspiration and if invited to remove your jacket, a coloured shirt may disclose your anxiety more than a white shirt. A white shirt is by far the safest option.

There are mixed opinions about jackets – on or off. I personally would keep the jacket on, unless specifically invited to remove and hang it up. Correct use of jacket buttons on sitting and rising is a nice touch that is noticed.

- **Be kind on the nose.**

Try not to eat right before the interview. If you find that you do not have a choice make sure you do not eat or drink anything right before the interview that may linger on your breath – i.e. onion, coffee etc. Also do not smoke before going into the interview. Before going into the interview have a mint to freshen the breath. Chewing gum is an alternative, but make sure that you find a bin outside the building and discard the gum before you go in. Interviews are a No Gum Zone!

- **Be early.**

It's better to be early than late. Aim to get to the interview at least 10 minutes early. If transport dictates that you either get there 30 minutes early or 2 minutes early, always take the 30 minute option. Obviously you do not want to arrive 30 minutes early, so take a walk around, clear your head, relax, read through your resume again, re-read the job description.

- **Arrival.**

10-15 minutes before the interview go directly to the floor/office specified and notify the receptionist of your arrival.

Most offices will have a waiting area. The table will more than likely have some publications on it. Usually there will be a number of publications relating to the organisation – i.e. a departmental magazine, a technical publication or annual report. These will normally be accompanied by a few general interest magazines such as 'Home and Garden', 'TV Weekly', 'Women's Day' etc..... Always pick up one of the publications that relate to the employer. You may learn something important in the minutes before the interview, or you may just get a better feel for the organisation. An interviewer will notice which magazine you were reading, and it will go in your favour.

Do not be afraid to refer to the publication during the interview if the opportunity arises. For example you could start a question in the interview with "I was just reading the departmental news letter in reception and it mentioned <xyz>, I wonder if you could give me some more information about this?" This instantly shows the interviewer that you have a genuine interest.

- **A firm hand.**
When greeted by the interviewer, make sure that you give a firm handshake. Be mindful that there will be at least 2 people in most interviews, sometimes 3. As you are introduced, shake hands with each person in turn and try to repeat their name as you do so.
- **In the interview.**
During the interview keep the following in mind:
 - Be confident, but not cocky or arrogant.
 - Speak slowly and clearly – make sure that the interviewers fully understand your responses.
 - Think about your answers. Do not be afraid to think, pause or ask the interviewer to repeat or clarify a question.
 - Use open body language. Open your body to the interviewer, and be sure to give eye contact.
 - Answer the person who asked the question. It is tempting to find 1 person to talk to – the one you perceive as the nicest (easiest to convince), but make sure that you connect with the person who asked the question. Interviews find it frustrating when an interviewee only talks to 1 interviewer.
 - Do not be afraid to laugh with the interviewers. This does not mean that you should start telling jokes, but there is nothing wrong with being light-hearted if the opportunity is there. An interview does not need to be formal for the entire duration. If you are relaxed and this will rub off on the interviewers
 - Ask questions – do not wait until the end to ask questions, if the opportunity arises during the interview ask the question. A flowing conversational interview is easier for interviewers and interviewees.

At the end of the interview, thank the panel. Try to use their names if you can remember them. Do not be afraid to ask what happens next and when you may hear from them.

EXAMPLE QUESTIONS

This is just a small sample of possible questions:

Specific to Testing Roles

- What is testing?
- Why do you feel is testing important?
- Why have you chosen testing as 'career path'?
- Can you talk me through the different test phases?

- What experience have you had in using automated test tools?
 - How did you find the tool?
- What are the differences between the phases? E.G. System -v- UAT
- How would you define 'negative testing'?
- How would you define 'exploratory testing'?
 - What are your views on exploratory testing
- What is your definition/understanding of the following:
 - Test Strategy
 - Test Plan
 - Test Case
 - Test Script
- What is your understanding of white, black and grey box testing?
- When tasked with testing a new application what are the first things you would do? Where do you start?
- Can you explain the V-Model?
- What test metrics have you produced?
 - What were they used for?

General questions

- What are your main strengths?
- What are your weaknesses?
- Tell me of a time when you did something well that you were proud of.
- Give me an example of time when you had to solve a complex problem.
- Describe a time when you had to make an unpopular decision.
- What strategies do you use to keep abreast of changes in your technical field?
- Tell me about a time when you suggested a new and innovative way of working? What came of your suggestion?
- What part of your job do you find most stressful?
- Tell me about a difficult report you had to write. Why was it particularly difficult?
- Why do you want this job?
- What do you think you can bring to the department?
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