

Interview preparation:

- Take 50% responsibility for the interview. Remember they are busy people who interview several times during a day and probably tire of it occasionally as you would if you did it all the time. Meet them half way, make the interview easier on them and they will, in turn, make it easier on you. Both of you should leave the interview, feeling it was worthwhile and enjoyable.
- However know that if the Company has asked for you to come in for an interview then they are interested, they want to see you and wouldn't be wasting your time or their own if their wasn't a possibility of you getting the role (so you are already half way there).
- Smile! Be forthcoming with your greeting and make sure your handshake is firm (not hard enough to break bones but firm)! Help them to draw information by talking to them readily about *relevant* information . if you make the interview easy for them, they will warm to you more quickly and the rapport you create will be much stronger.
- Sometimes interviews are less formal. However try not to fall into the trap of relaxing too much . mirror the interviewers approach, chat and have a giggle, but be aware that as far as they are concerned it is still part of the official process and should be regarded as such. Swearing and chewing gum etc is a definite NO-NO! . You may laugh but occasionally it happens!
- Don't give yes/no answers . elaborate / converse.
- Try to let your personality shine, if you are on the quieter side don't try to be vivacious . be yourself you want to fit in for who you are, but open up enough for them to gauge your personality.

CV Preparation:

- Arrive on time, even a little early, certainly not late . no excuses are acceptable!
- Take your resume and references with you, along with any achievement awards that you feel may prove helpful to the role (first aid, junior school captain, certificate of outstanding recognition etc).
- Look up the website of the Company prior to going in for the interview, know as much about the company as you possibly can, look like you have made an effort and are interested in them.
- prepare for any questions that could be asked about your experience in different roles, or gaps in dates or reasons for moving onto new roles etc
- Think of keywords like flexibility, teamwork, using initiative, following projects through, hardworking, prioritising etc and think of examples in your previous experience that demonstrate these skills. If you talk about your previous work experience in terms of these keywords (you don't even need to say the words), you will ensure a well-structured answer that demonstrates your worth as a potential employee. Remember it's easy for anyone to say they are flexible and hard working, but much harder to prove it! By giving examples you are effectively doing just that.
- Be ready to tell them what you are looking for and why you need to make this change or want this job. Remember that your answer must be tailored to the role you are being interviewed for or obviously they will not be interested!

Personal presentation:

- Wear clothes that suit you and you are comfortable in; you should be smart and respectful and should wear your clothes with pride.
- No underwear should be visible, no bare midriffs, no outlandish nail polish (neutral colours or a simple gloss is always safest), one pair of earrings only (keep other piercings out), jewellery should be tasteful and minimal, hair should be neat and tidy and makeup should be kept again to a minimum (neutral tones again safest).
- For females a good rule of thumb is your handbag should match in colour to shoes, belt etc and men same goes for you shoes should match belt colour. On this topic shoes should be clean and polished! Women, dress is so varied these days however going more along the tailored line is usually much safer than following trends, pants are acceptable these days.
- Gentlemen full suits aren't required these days however dress pants should be worn along with a collared shirt (a tie is optional, however I believe it is always better to over dress rather than under dress for a first meeting).
- All clothes should be clean, ironed and no hems hanging down or threads that need cutting off.
- Make sure mobile phones are switched off or on silent.
- DON'T; fidget, or play with your hair or nails, sit straight, make eye contact and what ever you do don't yawn! If you have a cold or cough excuse yourself right at the beginning of the interview and ask if you may have a glass of water, this may help you stop coughing. Look interested and even ask if you may also be able to take some notes if you like it will certainly show you are interested (only take down vital points, not everything they say).

Questions to ask:

- Ask about their culture . you want to know that you will fit in, so do they!
- Ask about the role itself, make sure you want it!
- Ask about the type of person they are looking for. If they say they are looking for someone who is hardworking and doesn't mind mucking in, you can then reply by telling them about how you used to work as a team in a very busy environment in your last role.
- Salary is always a matter that is difficult to tackle . so don't! Don't put a spanner in the works on your first meeting, let them meet you, like you and realise you're right for the job before you ask them for money!!! If they ask you your salary expectations, the best thing to do is, indicate what you would hope to be offered however for the right job also what you would be willing to accept. Add a hint of ~~that~~ obviously like to earn reasonable money (like anyone!) but I'm not greedy.
- Ask them when they will be likely to be making a decision and when you should expect to hear from them, if you are chosen to go further what is the next step? Does it involve a second interview? A medical? A police check or even psychometric testing?

If you have some industry exp specific to the role you are applying for:

- Talk specifically about your experience and the type of workload you have managed previously. They will be reassured that you know what you are talking about. If you have experience in more than one field, by all means talk about them all, but make more of the one that is important for the role that is being interviewed for.

Sell your personality & attributes as well as your skills if you have any:

- Sell your personality and your attributes i.e. loyalty, friendliness etc but these should be expressed mainly through body language throughout the interview and really come second to your actual, ~~transferable~~ skills/ experience that you have picked up.
- This is another reason why work experience, volunteer work and previous work history is important.

Resume preparation: (I have attached a copy of how one should be set out for you)

- Your resume is a selling tool of yourself, so make it fantastic! Don't believe that less is more here, go for it! A resume should be at least 3 pages long even for this your first one (after a few years of working you will extend it to between 3-5 pages in length).
- The 1st page should include your name, address, if you have a drivers licence or not as well as if you have a car or not and how to contact you so list email addresses as well as all phone contacts.
- The 2nd page is where you will list a personal statement, educational background, training courses / seminars attended, work experience, volunteer work, skills and experience as well as any computer skills you have. *Don't put career objectives, interests, hobbies, age, religion etc this is too restrictive, you don't know what they are looking for so don't give them a reason not to interview you.*
- The 3rd page is for your employment history, and you should always list your most recent position first and work your way back. At the bottom of your employment history should also be references (this is why having previous work exp is also helpful as it is always better to have a work reference over a friend of the family who is never going to say anything bad about you, so why would they bother to even check, even get a referee from your work experience, or from someone you have done baby sitting for or even volunteer work). Use bullet points rather than writing in a sentence format it is easier to read and don't be afraid to list achievements if you have any.

If you like it!

- If you are keen on the job, tell them! Be it the firm or the role that interests you, you must communicate this interest or else they will be left to guess. If you tell them you like the role, they will immediately be more enthused about you and they will be in no doubt as to your interest.
- Remember that they may have another candidate for the same role booked in after you. If that candidate has equal skills and experience to you and is equally as nice but appears keener . who's going to get the job?
- If appropriate you can ask them if you can have a quick tour of where you would be working but you must judge this for yourself (you will know by their manner if they have the time or not).

GOOD LUCK! IF YOU HAVE TAKEN THE TIME TO READ THIS AND ACT ON IT THEN YOU'LL BE FINE!