

## Interview Tips for Candidates

The interview could last any length of time, but typically between 30 and 90 minutes. It might not be a reflection on your performance or presentation if your interview is shorter though. It depends on the process the company chooses to go through in terms of interview stages, or how succinctly you have covered all relevant aspects or whether a strong connection was made. A short interview does not necessarily mean they did not like you!

There are tips that can make you more comfortable and ensure your performance during the interview is the best it can be.

It all starts with the preparation:

- Prior to the meeting, research as much as possible by taking time to look at the company website, social media, news reports, competitors and customer sites. This is to get a general feeling of their industry and status within the market.
- Take a copy of your CV but if you refer to this throughout then the interviewer will think you're unprepared or lying! You should know your background and experience so use it for reference only if necessary.
- Also take a pen and notepad... and make sure it's not a chewed pen and scrap piece of paper!
- Make sure you know how to get to the interview site and plan the journey time. Be aware of public transport times or car parking on site. In particular, check for travel restrictions on the day. You don't want to be late!
- Switch off your phone! Nothing will irritate the interviewer more than your constant interruptions of texts and tweets from friends!
- Use basic interview etiquette of not swearing or lying, don't chew gum, use a firm handshake, be polite to all staff you encounter on site.

When you're in the room with the interviewer:

- Wait until the interviewer sits and make sure you sit where they show you to
- Be aware of your surroundings but don't focus too much on the wallpaper, pictures on the walls or the items on the desk.
- Make eye contact but don't stare unblinking!
- Listen and react to what is being said. If you don't understand something, just ask but without interrupting. You will be thinking of a hundred things at once but make sure you concentrate because you may lose track.
- Take your time in answering the questions. It's fine to take time to think rather than blurting out the first thing that comes to mind!
- You can ask questions during the discussions if they are pertinent but be aware of whether this is acceptable to the interviewer. Some will like you to wait until the end, especially if they will cover the answers in their standard introduction of the company or role.
- When you're discussing your employment history, avoid negatives and make sure you don't disclose confidential information.
- If salary discussions are raised by the interviewer then resist exaggerating your current or previous salary package. You can state what the package was/is and that you could be flexible if offered the right position.
- At the end of the interview, you may be asked if you have any questions. A good question is whether the interviewer has any concerns about you. This gives you a chance to answer

face to face. Avoid asking how you compare against the other candidates as this will only get your interviewer thinking about them! Also see our download for interview questions for candidates.

- Thank the interviewer for their time and state whether you are interested in the company and opportunity.

On the way out:

- Be cordial to staff on the way out, especially the receptionist who may be asked their opinion on you.
- Maintain decorum until safely away from the site. You don't want the interviewer watching as you screech out their car park!

Be patient after the interview. The interviewer will be making notes and consolidating their thoughts. Also if they are seeing other candidates they may not give feedback until the whole group has completed first round of interviews.