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Title:

Interview Guide

Word Count:

957

Summary:

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Keywords:

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Article Body:

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An interviewer has 3 aims:

1) To learn if you are the right person for the job

2) To assess your potential for promotion

3) To decide whether you will fit into the company environment

The key to a successful interview is in preparation

Be prepared: For the types of questions you will be asked

Be prepared: To ask questions yourself

Be prepared: To research the company

Be prepared: To look the part

Be prepared: To turn up on time

Questions you may be asked

Example question: How would you describe yourself?

Your answer: Should describe attributes that will enhance your suitability for the position. Have some ready in advance.

Example question: What are your long-term goals?

Your answer: Should be career orientated. Make sure you have goals to discuss.

Example question: Why did you leave your last job?

Your answer: Could be more responsibility better opportunity increased income. Do not be detrimental to your previous employer. He could be the interviewer's golfing partner.

Example question: Why do you want this job?

Your answer: Your answer should be: more responsibility or better opportunity or similar. Not: because it is closer to home or the gym.

Example question: What are your strengths?

Your answer: Should highlight accomplishments and experiences that relate to the position for which you are applying. Also give examples of situations where your strengths have been demonstrated.

Example question: What are your weaknesses?

Your answer: Should not be a list of deficiencies. Don't mention anything that could make the interviewer question your ability to do the job, for example "I am always late for everything." Instead, discuss a weakness that could also be a strength such as "I am a workaholic!"

More Examples of Interview Questions

Tell me a little bit about yourself.

Describe your current / most recent position.

What made you want to make this change?

What do you most enjoy doing in your current /most recent position?

Describe your future ambitions.

How would you describe yourself?

Questions for you to ask

Asking questions at interview has a number of positive effects:

It helps you find out more about the company and the position.

It can be used to divert the interviewer away from a subject you may wish to avoid.

It can help build a rapport with the interviewer.

It demonstrates an interest in the job and the company.

The questions must be about the position and the company.

Avoid questions about salary, benefits and facilities until after you have been offered the job. You should already have researched the company and it's products and services. Your questions should demonstrate knowledge of the company's history, successes and problems. If the interviewer is a representative of the personnel department the questions should relate to the company and be general. Specific questions relating to the position should be kept for the line manager who will have a more detailed knowledge.

Example questions relating to the position

What are the main responsibilities of the job?

What are the most difficult aspects of the job?

How did the vacancy arise?

What is the career path relating to this position?

How will my work be assessed?

Example questions relating to the company

What is the company hoping to achieve in the next 12 months?

What new products are the company planning to introduce in the future?

Are any major changes planned for the department/company?

Who are your biggest competitors?

Where to find company information

Information relating to companies, financial data, industries and business trends is available in business magazines which often publish on the World Wide Web and allow you to order

Annual Reports relating to specific companies.

Companies often have their own web site.

Newspapers - search on-line press reports including archived articles.

Local library

Presentation Tips

Obviously you should be clean and smart in appearance but you should also dress appropriately for the position, for example: a student placement that is more expensively dressed than the Managing Director may have a negative impact.

Clothes should be on the conservative side, which is more acceptable to people of all ages, cultures and backgrounds. After all, you are asking to be accepted into the company. Therefore always avoid extremes in hair, clothes, make-up and jewellery. Taking trouble over your appearance shows the employer that the job is important to you.

Travel tips

Arrive 15 minutes early.

Make sure you have the correct address and know how you will get there:

Parking? Public transport access?

Do a dummy run if you are not sure.

Make sure you have a mobile phone and a telephone number so that you can ring ahead if circumstances beyond your control are making you late.

Be polite to everyone you speak to, it could be the Managing Director's cousin!

Have a copy of your CV with you.

Summary

You should show interest in all aspects of the job and the company especially if shown around the premises. Do your homework on the company and the nature of its business. Take care in how you dress for the interview. First impressions still count!

Some of the main influences on the interviewer are:

Your experience in other employment or life situations Your personal presentation.

How your personality comes across in the interview

Your background and references

Your enthusiasm for both the job and the organisation.

Relevant qualifications for the position.

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