

# *On the Science of Interviewing*

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**Abstract—** A lot has been said about how to face an interview. Very many tips and techniques have been told by experts as to how one can do well in an interview. In this paper we shall try to explore into the science of interviewing which will give a better insight into this tool.

**Keywords-domain knowledge; attitude; intelligence; presentability.**

## I. INTRODUCTION

Just as teaching is an art and a science as well, so is interviewing. A success in an interview depends often on the personal skill of the interviewee, i.e., on his art but basically a scientific approach do produce an excellent outcome provided the science is known to the interviewers.

Eliciting information from a shy, introvert but talented person is not an easy job. It requires knowledge of psychology, body language and emotional fallouts. Recruiting personnel for a certain post requires not only academic knowledge, expertise and experience but also a positive attitude, enthusiasm and group dynamics. Some studies have been made in this regard by Bogurdas[1], Douglas[4], Gordon[5] and Payne[7] but none of them appears to be comprehensive and complete, In this paper we shall trace out effective methods of assessing a candidate for a specific post.

## II. QUALITY ANALYSIS

Keeping in view the position to be offered to a candidate, we should first jot down what qualities are required for the post concerned. These may be

1. Academic Excellence/ Domain Knowledge.
2. Sociability.
3. Positive attitude.
4. Good Communication Skill.
5. Physical Fitness.
6. Family Background.
7. Aspirations.
8. Tactfulness & Intelligence.
9. Presentability.

## 10. Mannerism & Etiquette Consciousness.

Let us look little deeper into these qualities. For an academic post like Professor, Associate Professor etc. academic excellence is to be given highest priority, but for a marketing executive post his conversance with the product, his presentability and communication skill are much more important than his academic excellence.

Sociability is an important feature for almost all types of work in our Civic World. Very few posts like Meteorological Officer are there where sociability has little role to play.

The attitude problem is one of the gruesome problems of an individual's life. Unless one has a positive attitude it is very difficult for him to survive in any situation or organization as a whole.

There are many jobs where communication plays the most dominant role, particular those jobs which require group work. In pure research posts communication is not that important as in teaching professions.

If a job is labour intensive, physical fitness need to be examined before giving appointment. A person with color blindness should not be assigned to a teaching job.

Credibility, faithfulness, loyalty, attitude and many other traits can be estimated from the family background of a candidate. A son of a school teacher is expected to be humble and honest, though exceptions are there.

The aspiration of one defines the direction one looks forward. Without a dream no one can rise in his career.

In many jobs the intelligence and wit play a vital role. Particularly in jobs where dangers lie in wait intelligence and wit save not only one but many. The job of a Firefighting Supervisor or the job of a train driver require a certain level of intelligence, if not wit.

The presentability or handsomeness of a candidate often adds weight to a marketing personnel. Though the external beauty of one does matter in general but it provides an edge over others in many types of jobs like front office staff etc.

Mannerism and etiquette consciousness do matter in most secretarial jobs, in jobs of ambassadors and company representatives. The body language is a tremendous tool in understanding a candidate's various qualities like seriousness, attitude, sincerity and dedication.

All said and done, it is the committee who will take decision about the weightage it would like to give on the different qualities on the basis of the nature of the job.

### III CONSTITUTION OF THE SELECTION COMMITTEE

For the best result the committee should be constituted with experts from the subject domains, from psychologists, company seniors and technical experts. Too many subject experts or too many company seniors may spoil the broth. An individual from the company should be made the chairman of the committee.

For recruiting teachers in a school or college, subject experts should be there, a psychologist should be there to assess the attitude, sociability, group dynamics of the candidates, a school committee representative, like Secretary, should be there and one who is an expert in pedagogy should also be there.

For recruiting a civil engineer in a construction company, the selection committee has to have expert Civil Engineers, a Psychologist, the Company Director who may not be a Civil Engineer and one expert exactly from the field in which the candidate is to be put.

For recruitment to the posts of Assistant Professor, Associate Professors and Professors some subject experts are to be kept in the committee, Psychologist should also be there, Principal or Director or Dean or Pro - Vice Chancellor must be there along with one who is conversant with University rules and AICTE / UGC requirements.

### IV THE METHOD OF INTERVIEWING

At the beginning we remind the reader that we are exploring the science of job interviewing not the kinds of interviews we do for social research or marketing research. It is to be remembered that interviewing is no more a question-answer session. It should be a cordial discussion only on the broad subjects to start with which shall end up on specific subject of interest. Interviewing for senior positions shall be done in two/three sessions and ultimate select be done by the management members from at least three short-listed candidates. In job interview the first task is to decide about the weightage to be given on each of the above aspects, viz., domain knowledge, sociability, tenacity, sincerity, honesty etc. Then the question comes as to how the domain knowledge can be determined.

Since any interview normally endures for an hour at most, the Selection Committee has to be conscious about time allocation – about the responsibilities to be shared by the

Committee Members. The interviewing should start with a brief introduction of the candidate, then the following steps may be followed.

Step 1: If the candidate is a bit nervous, talk about matters of common interest allowing the candidate to talk more. The first impression of the candidate tells many things about his character like analyticity, communication skills and attitude. If the candidate is not at all nervous, move to Step 2.

Step 2: The committee should have a look into his career graph, his experience, his aptitude and deviations from the right track and make all these joints clear from the candidate. This study will throw light on the candidate's determination, purposiveness, fighting attitude etc. It should be remembered in this connection that all do not get equal opportunities and supports of fortune in their lives, but talents do manifest even from the worst conditions.

Step 3: It is now time to judge the depth of knowledge of the candidate. For this, as the time is limited, a handful of short questions may be asked from the subject followed by a few questions which require proper understanding of the basic theory. Memory depended questions should be avoided as far as practicable. In this phase, the candidate may be allowed to choose topics in which he claims to be confident or excellent. Not only the correctness of answers but also his approach, his logical reasoning will indicate in good measure his knowledge, his perceptions, his communication skills, his aggressiveness to problems, his confidence and above all his overall dealing of the situation. If possible, at the end this session, the Chairman or the subject expert should apprise the candidate about the major mistakes he had made during the process not in the tone of criticism or denouncement but to help him realize his own position and know himself better. A thanks giving may be taken as etiquette here.

Step 4: The Chairman may then invite questions from the candidate, if any, regarding the company, his position, his prospects and opportunities for further growth.

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