

Interview Tips & Tricks

The short time you spend at a job interview could have a dramatic effect on your career prospects. It is therefore important that you perform well because, no matter how good your career record is to date, the employment interview remains an important step towards achievement of your ambitions. These hints will provide you with valuable information on how to conduct yourself during interviews with prospective employers.

Preparation for the Interview

Preparation is the essential first step towards a successful interview. Interviewers are continually amazed at the number of applicants who drift into their offices without any apparent preparation and only the vaguest idea of what they are going to say. Thus, it is important to:

- ✓ Know the exact place and time of the interview, the interviewer's full name, its correct pronunciation and title.
- ✓ Find out specific facts about the company, eg: office locations; products and services; past growth and potential future growth. The best place to start your research would be their company website.
- ✓ Refresh your memory on the facts and figures of your present and former employers. You will be expected to know a lot about a company for which you have previously worked.
- ✓ Prepare the questions you will ask during the interview. Remember that an interview is a 2-way street. The employer will try to determine if you have the qualifications necessary to do the job. You must determine whether the company will give you the opportunity for the growth and development you seek.
- ✓ Probing questions you could or might ask:
 - a detailed description of the position & the reason the position is available
 - culture of the company
 - anticipated induction and training program
 - what sort of people have done well
 - availability of advanced training programs for those who demonstrate outstanding ability
 - earnings of those successful people in their third to fifth years
 - company growth plans
 - best-selling products or services
 - the next step
- ✓ Dress conservatively and preferably in darker colours. Pay attention to all facets of your dress and grooming.

Be prepared to answer questions such as;

- ✓ Why did you choose this particular role? What do you really want to do in your next career move?
- ✓ Why would you like to work for our organisation?
- ✓ What do you want to be doing in your career five years from now? Why?
- ✓ Can you get recommendations from previous employers? What would they say about you?
- ✓ What have you learnt from some of the jobs you have held? Which did you enjoy most? Why?
- ✓ What have you done that shows initiative in your career?
- ✓ What is your major weakness? What are you doing about it?
- ✓ What does teamwork mean to you?



For more information, please contact the Lacoa Team

T (07) 4939 5757 | E recruit@lacoa.com.au | www.lacoa.com.au

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The Interview

Through the interaction which takes place during the interview, the interviewers will be searching out your strong and weak points, evaluating you on your qualifications, skills and intellectual qualities and they will probably probe deeply to determine your attitudes, aptitudes, stability, motivation and maturity.

Some do's and don'ts concerning the interview

- ✓ **DO** plan to arrive on time or a few minutes early. Late arrival for a job interview is never excusable.
- ✓ **DO** greet the interviewer by his/her surname if you are sure of the pronunciation. If you are not ask them to repeat their name.
- ✓ **DO** wait until you are offered a chair before sitting. Sit upright in your chair. Look alert and interested at all times. Be a good listener as well as a good talker. Smile.
- ✓ **DO** look a prospective employer in the eye while you talk to them.
- ✓ **DO** follow the interviewer's leads but try to get the interviewer to describe the position and the duties to you early in the interview so that you can relate your background and skills to the position.
- ✓ **DO** make sure that your good points get across to the interviewer in a factual, sincere manner. Keep in mind that you alone can sell yourself to an interviewer. Make them realise the need for you in their organisation. & smile.
- ✓ **DO** be prepared to answer typical questions listed above.
- × **DON'T** lie. Answer truthfully, frankly and as much to the point as possible.
- × **DON'T** ever make derogatory remarks about your present or former employers or companies.
- × **DON'T** 'over answer' questions. The interviewer may steer the conversation into politics or economics. Since this can be sensitive, it is best to answer the questions honestly, trying not to say more than is necessary.
- × **DON'T** enquire about salary, holidays or bonuses etc at the initial interview unless you are positive the employer is interested in hiring you and raises the issue first. However, you should know your market value and be prepared to specify your required salary or range.
- × **DON'T** answer questions with a simple 'yes' or 'no'. Explain wherever possible. Tell those things about yourself which relate to the position.

Closing the Interview

If you are interested in the position, express this to the interviewers. If they offer the position to you and you want it, accept on the spot. If you need some time to think it over, be courteous and tactful in asking for that time and set a definite date when you can provide an answer.

Don't be too discouraged if no definite offer is made or specific salary discussed. The interviewer will probably want to communicate with their office first or interview more applicants before making a decision. If you get the impression that the interview is not going well and that you have already been rejected, do not let your discouragement show. Once in a while, an interviewer who is genuinely interested in your possibilities may seem to discourage you in order to test your reaction.

Thank the interviewer for their time and consideration of you.

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