



INTERVIEW
IN PROGRESS

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Connecting the Next Generation

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR TECHNOLOGY PROFESSIONALS



INTERVIEW PREPERATION

Your experience and skills have been deemed suitable for the role and you have now been asked to attend an interview. The interview is your chance to impress your potential new employers and first impressions are absolutely crucial.

Interviewing can be a pretty daunting experience, but with some solid preparation you can make things a lot easier for yourself on the day. The following tips are some pointers that can help you to secure that all important position.

Research the company extensively

Study their website, blogs, social media sites and research relevant articles on their recent activity. Have they won awards? What significant hires have they made? Who are their competitors?

Values and culture

Research if they have a careers section or video content which may give you information about their values and culture. It will certainly tell you how they want to be seen by prospective employees.

Interview location

Check the address and save it. If you don't know the area and can't find it on Google maps, call your consultant or the receptionist for directions. Give yourself lots of time and aim to arrive 10 minutes early - particularly if you are relying on public transport.

If going through an agency...

Call your recruitment consultant at least one day prior to the interview, and get a briefing on the job including who you are seeing, and any last minute advice. They should also be able to help you with the type of interview, the personality of the interviewer or with any other information that you may need.

Know your CV inside out

Make sure you know what is in your CV - do not be caught out. Think about past career decisions, why you are looking to move and what you enjoyed and disliked about previous companies. Think clearly about what you are looking to do now and what sort of culture you thrive in.

Be positive

Always approach each interview with the view that you want the job. You can always turn down a 2nd interview or offer but you can't wind back the clock and wish you had been more positive. Attitude and passion are every bit as important as skills and experience.

Always remember to ask questions

It may seem obvious but make sure you know what information you want to get out of the interview and have a good list of questions to ask. It doesn't do any harm to write them down; it shows you have prepared and conducted your own diligence.



INTERVIEW FORMATS

Generally, interviews will take the form of one of the following formats:

CV

This interview style follows the more traditional Q&A format. It normally entails a chronological run through of your background and experience. Typical questions might include 'How would you describe yourself' or 'Why did you leave X organisation for Y' or 'What are your career objectives'.

How can you prepare?

It is important to know the content of your answers to the standard interview questions, particularly if there are obvious issues in your CV – such as a period of unemployment or a quick move from job to job. However, try not to over rehearse and appear formulaic or not genuine in your answers.

Behavioural / Competency

Behavioural or competency interviewing provides the most accurate prediction of future performance through analysis of past performance in similar types of situations. In simple terms, how you did it then shows how you might do it in the future. The employer will ask specific questions to determine if you possess the desired characteristics. Candidates who tell the interviewer about specific situations will be far more effective and successful.

How can you prepare?

Read the job description in detail and then think about 6-12 past situations in which you have exhibited strong job-related behaviours. Additionally, look at the careers section of the company and see whether they have any reference to behaviours or competencies that they look for when hiring.

Team

In an effort to get a well-rounded perspective on candidates, many companies ask more than one team member to take part in the interview and selection process. Using pre-agreed criteria, job descriptions and personal impressions, they assess the feedback following the individual sessions and discuss their reaction.

How can you prepare?

You will need to be able to interact with different people from different backgrounds. Where there is more than one interviewer at a time, be sure to direct your responses to both/all of them.

Technical

The goal of the technical interview is to get to understand your technical skill-set. By sharing the thought processes with your interviewer you demonstrate your communication skills and analytical ability. Interviewers are looking to assess not only your technical ability but also your ability to think critically, to solve problems.

How can you prepare?

Because there are an infinite number of technical interview questions that interviewers can ask, and many may consist of hypothetical scenarios with no single correct answer, there is not a perfect way to prepare. Just make sure that you are comfortable talking through the technical areas on your CV and you are not thrown by the obvious simple questions.



TYPICAL QUESTIONS

Your potential employer wants to get to know you and will typically ask questions about you and your previous roles. Your job is to give them enough information without swamping them – be concise and ensure you answer the question.

When answering you should not be negative or make any disparaging comments about your previous employers – it makes you look petty and will only portray you in a poor light. Increasingly clients want to ask you about mistakes you have made. The critical point here is to be prepared to disclose an understandable mistake but essentially articulate what you learned from it and how your behaviour and or/thinking has since changed.

Some example questions can be seen below:

- Tell me about yourself
- Tell me about your current role. What did you like or dislike about it?
- Why do you want to leave your current firm?
- What interests you about this role and/or company?
- What are your strengths and weaknesses?
- What has been your best piece of work to date?
- Tell me about a recent project that you have spearheaded
- What motivates you?

FINAL TIPS

- Ensure that you are dressed smartly, even if a casual dress code is permitted. Dress more conservatively at the start and if the company is more informal you can adapt once you are there
- Be polite to everyone from the moment you arrive at the building - including the receptionists
- Stand up when people enter the room, make eye contact and give a firm handshake. Get the balance right when shaking hands – not too weak but no bone crushers either
- Turn your phone off – you do not want it vibrating or ringing during the interview
- Look interested, engaged and energised and above all, smile!

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