

## Your Interview and Our Guidance

Interviews can be nerve-wracking but with the right preparation you can keep those jitters at bay making sure you feel confident, creating as good an impression as possible.

### Avoid the Interview Panic

- Plan how you will get to the interview in advance (check for any transport delays)
- Turn up 10 minutes early
- Make sure you are sure why you want this job. It's important to be able to reassure and convince the client that you know what you want and that you are right for the role.
- Take an extra copy of your CV with you

### Interview Preparation Top 10

- Do your homework : Research the company before the interview (Fame will have their website details).
- Do your preparation: Make sure you have reviewed your skills and accomplishments ahead of the interview and can summarise them succinctly.
- Dress appropriately: For the culture of the company you are applying to.
- Develop a positive attitude: Be polite and personable to everyone you encounter from the moment you walk in the door. The receptionist can have an input too! Demonstrate enthusiasm and project optimism. Be an interested listener and observer. Take a positive view of things - never talk to an interviewer about personal problems
- Avoid premature salary discussions: Don't talk money until your value has been built and understood, do not seem primarily concerned with salary
- Always protect the confidence of a past employer: If you can't be nice about a past employer, the future employer won't trust you.
- Be yourself and not what you think someone else expects: You will develop confidence if you have really spent the time reviewing what you have done well in the past.
- Be efficient: Bring extra copies of your CV. Prepare questions in advance. Check out the venue so you arrive in plenty of time.
- Listen as well as talk: Pay attention to your interviewer. Make sure you are answering the question he/ she is really asking and reading between the lines. Make sure your answer is understood.
- Be specific: Illustrate what you say with examples of your achievements and skills. The more specific you can be the easier it is for the interviewer to see how well you will fit into the company.

### Review the Job Description

Prepare, anticipate questions and plan to answer them.

It is important to convince the interviewer you are qualified, motivated, fit in with the company's culture and working practices.

### Answering interview questions

When structuring your answer, follow the **STARS** approach as this ensures that you clear in your thought process and will give interviewer the answers they are looking for.

- S** First describe the **Situation** you were in
- T** Describe the **Task** that was involved
- A** Next describe the **Action** you took (say 'I' not 'we' – interviewers want to know what YOU did, not the wider team)
- R** Then explain what the **Result** was
- S** Describe the **Skills** you used in your achievement

### Common questions are:

- **Tell me about yourself?** - Identify your main attributes. Go through your qualifications, career history and skills, emphasise those skills that are relevant to the position.
- **Why have you applied for this position?** - Ensure you understand the role and organisation and describe what interests you about the role.
- **Tell me about an achievement?** - Select something recent, work related and explain how it has benefited you.
- **Give me an example of a difficult situation and how you managed it?** - Choose a work situation caused by someone other than you and explain how you solved the problem. Always end positively.
- **What are your strengths?** - Provide three or four proficiencies, e.g. ability to relate to people.
- **What are your weaknesses?** - Provide a personal or professional weakness that could also be interpreted as a strength and what you've done to combat it.
- **What do you like about your current job?** - Be honest and enthusiastic when answering this question.
- **What don't you like about your current job?** - Be careful how you answer this perhaps choose a characteristic of your current company, for example, size.
- **Why do you want to leave your current company?** - More responsibility, experience and a change of environment. Do not state salary as a reason for leaving.

### Impress the interviewer with your knowledge of their company

They need to know that you understand who they are, their products/services, their customers, how they are doing etc.

### First Impressions count

- **30 seconds**
  - The amount of time it takes of us to judge economic and educational levels, social position, level of sophistication and success.
- **240 seconds**
  - The amount of time it takes us to make decisions about trustworthiness, compassion, reliability, intelligence, capability, humility, friendliness and confidence.
- **40%**
  - Interviewers make up their minds about a candidate in less than 20 minutes,
- **20%**
  - Interviewers make up their minds in less than 10 minutes.

### Tell Me About Yourself

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It can be quite daunting to just start talking about yourself straight off the bat, but the impact you have in the first few minutes of the interview is hard to shift so make sure you make a good one.

It is useful to be able to summarise your background, achievements and objectives in between **thirty seconds and three minutes** (referred to as the Elevator Pitch).

### Focus on three areas:

- Your background
- Your achievements
- Your current career goals

### Try to cover:

- Your most recent role
- Your key achievements and responsibilities
- Your USP
- Your skills / strengths
- What you want to do next

### An example (fill in the blanks)

I have.... years' experience in ..... My principle skill is ..... I have worked for xxxxx companies in xxxxx. At my last company I was responsible for a ..... (facts and figures for impact). I also set up a team of .....(if applicable, if not mention that as a part of a team YOU were responsible for ..... I'm looking for ..... position with ..... as part of the role, using my ..... skills as well as my ..... experience.

### Practice, practice and practice some more

Always rehearse out loud even if it feels uncomfortable, it does get easier. Sound enthusiastic and passionate as your tone of voice and body language have a greater impact than the words you say!

### What do Interviewers want to know?

Putting yourself in their shoes makes it easier to understand what you should be putting across.

### CAN you do the job?

- Can you do the job now or be trained to do the job?
- Can you be trusted?
- Do you have the skills, experience, training to match the job?
- Are you fit enough?
- Do you have the learning potential?

### WILL you do the job?

- How motivated are you?
- Will you work non 9–5 hours?
- Would you travel abroad – maybe for prolonged periods?

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- Would you work to different processes than you're used to?
- Will you stay in the job for a reasonable time?
- Will you find the job a challenge?
- How interested are you in the company?
- What's your work ethic?
  
- What are your our energy levels like?
- How enthusiastic are you?
- Are you interested in this type of work?
- Do you want a life outside work?
- Are you prepared to relocate?
- Will you get bored in 6 months?
- Will you learn?

### Your strengths

- What did you learn from your last job?
- What do you know about our products and services?
- Have you done this type of work before? (if so, how long and at what level)

### What's your FIT like?

- Do you fit with the company culture?
- What are your relations with existing team members like?
- Do you have hobbies outside work?
- Does the interviewer like you?

### Chemistry...

- How, and how well do you communicate?
- What's your style like - formal, relaxed etc?
- What's your dress/appearance like?
- Will you work as part of a team?
- How do you get on with people?
- How do you react to change?
- What are your values and needs?
- Shared vision

### Practice Questions

#### CAN questions

- Your skills / strengths
- What you want to do next
- What can you offer us?
- What did you achieve in your last job?
- Can you give me an example of an achievement - when/where/how did you do this?
- What was your role in relation to this?
- What skills did you use?

- What was the result?
- What are your strengths?

### WILL questions

- What do you look for when seeking a new job?
- Why do you want to join this company?
- What hours are you willing to work?
- Can you work under pressure/tight deadlines?

### FIT questions

- What is important to you in your next job?
- Would you prefer to be a big fish in a small pond or a small fish in a big pond?
- Why should we employ you?
- How do you feel about looking for another job?
- What have you been doing since your last job?
- What are your hobbies & interests?
- How do you get on with other people?

### Asking Questions

#### “Any questions?”

Even if you feel you already have all the information you need from your interviewer, the “any questions?” question is a great opportunity to add to the positive impression you’ve already given.

Consider the culture of the organisation you are hoping to join and the nature of the person doing the selecting. Adopt the right tone and convey a positive attitude – you want to ensure this opportunity works for you, not against you.

Limit your questions to three or four (as you will probably only about five minutes at the end of the interview); have a look at some of the examples below to choose from

- 1. What are the most enjoyable and the least enjoyable aspects of the role?** This can show that you like to know what sort of challenges you are going to face and that you like to be properly prepared for it, all in the expectation of being able to rise to it.
- 2. What types of training opportunities can you offer?** This is one of the classic questions as it can highlight that you are keen to advance your skills and add further value to a company.
- 3. Is there a chance for promotion in the future?** This is another classic question, and in a similar vein. It can emphasise a determination to make progress and to do so over the long term.
- 4. Can you please tell me how the role relates to the overall structure of the organisation?** With this question you are drawing attention to a preference for teamwork. It looks as though you want to know where you would fit in and how your contribution would affect the rest of the company.
- 5. How would you describe the work culture here?** Here you are signalling that you want to be able to operate at your optimum and understand that for this you require a positive environment. In turn, this can indicate you are a good self-

manager who is aware of how to get the best out of yourself.

**6. In what way is performance measured and reviewed?** This question can flag up that you appreciate the importance of delivering real results. You can be seen to be someone who understands the value of commitment, reliability and returns.

**7. What are the most important issues that you think your organisation will face?** Or, You have recently introduced a new product/service/division/project; how will this benefit the organisation? These variations both show that you are interested not just in the job but in the employer behind it. It will be apparent you have done some research, done some thinking, and are now eager to hear their analysis.

**8. Do you have any doubts about whether I am suited to this position?** This is a rather more brazen way of emphasising some of your strengths. It suggests you are open to constructive criticism and willing to learn from the experience of others. In addition, it gives you a real chance to address any weaknesses the interviewee may think you have. Finally, it allows you to finish on a high, re-stating why you think you are the right person.

**9. You mentioned there will be a lot of presenting/researching/liaising; what do your most successful people find most satisfying about this part of the role?** This question can serve two purposes. It can demonstrate your listening skills. Also, it can associate you with being successful in the role and finding it satisfying.

**Best of luck - and remember, the more you prepare and practice, the easier it'll be.**

There are loads more helpful guides, hints and tips for your job search in the Job Seekers area of our website, just visit [www.famerecruitment.com](http://www.famerecruitment.com)

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