

## Interview guide

### The basics

- Ensure you know where you are going and how long it will take to get there. Arrive in the area fifteen minutes early and arrive at reception 5 – 10 minutes early. Arriving last minute adds to your stress and will reduce your performance.
- Always assume a slight delay in any journey time .
- First impressions really do count, so try to think in advance of some small talk you can make whilst walking to the meeting room with the interviewer, and in the first five minutes of the meeting – even if you talk about the weather, or your journey.
- Be confident, make eye contact, and use a firm handshake.
- Ensure you have read the website and in particular look at the history of the firm and the services they offer. Find out who the key competitors are. Searching for recent articles on the company on relevant industry news websites is also a good idea. You should expect questions on what you know about the company and why you want to work for them.
- Get a good night's sleep the night before – being fully rested will reduce your stress levels and ensure your mind is agile and ready for any unexpected questions.
- If possible, find out who you are meeting, what they do, and whether it is a one-on-one or panel interview, or simply an informal introductory chat.

### Listen and adapt

- Allow the interviewer to finish their sentences and really listen to what they are asking.
- Tailor your answers to the questions and bring in any relevant quantifiable achievements. These should centre on saving time, generating/saving money, or providing peace of mind. Talk in percentages as these are more objective.
- Employers look for a number of things throughout an interview:
  1. What can you do for them? Focus on how you can benefit a company, not how a company can benefit you. What can you do for them? What can you bring to the table, in terms of skills, experience and abilities (or even assets), which others can't?
  2. How much do you want it? Employers want to get a sense for how much you want the role, and how much the company and the opportunity excites you.
  3. Are you going to be a good cultural fit? How do you work best, what are your team working skills like and what work environment do you thrive in? Allow your personality to shine through, as a good rapport with your potential employers and colleagues is key.
  4. What makes you tick? The interviewer will want to get a sense of what motivates you and drives you. What is more important to you; the money, the job and the challenges it entails, the environment, or something else?
  5. How qualified are you? Not just in terms of experience and qualifications, but also your industry knowledge and your personal strengths and weaknesses.



## General

- Always provide good business related reasons for leaving a firm. Obviously don't be negative about your employer, but it is fine to explain why it isn't the right environment for you.
- How does the company fit in with your long-term career plans? Employers often have a long-term strategy in mind when hiring, and it is good to be aware of this when answering this question. Do make sure that the company does fit with your plans, however – there is no point going for interviews for roles that are clearly wrong for you.
- Explain clearly where you fit into your current company and your role.
- Explain what objectives you are measured on and how have you have exceeded these expectations.
- Explain what your greatest professional challenges have been and how you have coped with them. Give examples of problems you have faced and how you have solved them.
- Expect questions on your strengths and weaknesses. Prepare three key strengths and one weakness (this should be something you are aware of and explain how you have tried to improve upon it)
- Adopt a positive tone throughout, and be confident in your answers.

## Values

- You need to find a company with the same values as you. Therefore, define what these values are and ask questions centred on these.
- Ask questions about the company's strategy for the next five years, as these will affect your role.

## After the interview

- If the interviewer gives you their card, and you are interested in the role, always send them an email thanking them for their time and expressing your interest. Not only is it polite, but it presents a professional image.

