

Interview Screening Techniques

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The Golden Rules

1 – Be Prepared

- Turn up on time
- Research the company, its competitors and the market
- Understand the company mission and values
- Read the job description thoroughly
- Know your CV
- Prepare for the questions that are going to be asked

Planning & Preparation Prevents Poor Performance

The Golden Rules

2 – Appearance & Body Language

- Smile
- Eye contact
- Firm hand shake
- Sit straight and be attentive
- Dress appropriately

Your body language can say as much about you as the words you use during a job interview

The Golden Rules

3 – Communication

- Listen
- Speak clearly
- Answer the question
- Make sure your answers are relevant
- Don't waffle

Impress the interviewer with your communication skills and stand out as the right person for the job

Types of Interview

- Factual investigation of your CV, experience and future aspirations
- Competency Based Interviews (CBI)
- Practical test or demonstration
- One on one interviews
- Panel interviews
- Phone conference or video interviews

Typical Interview Questions

1 – The Company

Questions: What do you know about us?
 Why do you want to work for us?
 Where do you think you could ‘add value’?

Research the company, read their website carefully
and find out who their competitors are

Typical Interview Questions

2 – Your CV

- Questions:
- How long were you at X company?
 - What was your biggest achievement at X?
 - What level of responsibility did you have at X?
 - How would your last boss describe you?

A high number of people have their CV's reproduced by a third party, make sure you know your dates, duties, interests etc.

Typical Interview Questions

3 – Strengths & Weaknesses

- **Strengths** – make your strengths mirror those required for the position you are being interviewed for – back these up with relevant examples
- **Weaknesses** – we all have them!
 - a) Choose a skill that is totally unrelated to the role i.e. public speaking
 - b) Explain how you are already taking steps to improve
 - c) A weakness can also be considered a strength

Don't say "I don't have any weaknesses"

Typical Interview Questions

4 – Motivations & Aspirations

Questions: What motivates you?
What is your greatest achievement?
How do you motivate others?
Where do you want to be in 3 years?

Most employers want motivated people because they tend to accomplish more work.

Typical Interview Questions

5 – Do you have any questions for us?

Avoid:

Questions surrounding salary, benefits and annual leave

Go for:

Questions that demonstrate your commercial awareness, knowledge of their company and interest in the role i.e.

- What do you think the successful applicant will find most challenging coming into this role?

Competency Based Interviews

What is a competency?

A competency is a particular quality that a company has decided is desirable for an employee to have.

- Invariably they will have identified up to 10 'key' competencies that are used as benchmarks to assess candidates
- Typically answers are marked based on the quality of the answer and the specific evidence given i.e. 1-4

Fact: A recent CIPD Survey revealed over 60% of companies utilise the CBI technique in some format

Typical Competencies

- Teamwork
- Leadership
- Problem solving
- Communication
- Commercial awareness
- Motivation
- Decision making
- Results orientation
- Organisation
- Adaptability

Sample CBI Questions

Teamwork

Most positions require employees to work with other people, as part of a team. Being able to get on with other people and work with them effectively (teamwork) is a competency.

Questions:

- Tell me about a time when you worked successfully as part of a team?
- Describe a time when you were successful in getting people to work together effectively?
- Tell me about a time when you had to modify yourself to take into account someone else's views?

Sample CBI Questions

Communication

Good communicators make good team members because they can effectively transfer information, follow instructions and instruct other people

Questions:

- Give me an example of how you dealt with a difficult customer at work?
- Give me an example of how you dealt with a difficult situation that required extensive communication?
- Tell me about a time where you had to explain a process or issue to a colleague?

Answering CBI Questions

STAR

- 1. What was the **Scenario**? Describe, the situation
- 2. What was the **Task**? Again describe
- 3. What were your **Actions**? The interviewer is interested in what you have achieved, not about your team, project or manager's achievements. So, remember to talk about the part you played in the team's achievements, your contribution to the project's deliverables and how you have supported your manager and the business through the achievement of your objectives
- 4. What was the **Result**? As a result of your contribution explain the end result

Practical Test or Demonstration

- Computer Applications: Word, Excel, Visio, CAD, P6
- Numeracy and spelling
- Typing speed and accuracy
- Problem solving
- Psychometric tests
- Role plays
- Design or drawing

One on One Interviews

- Most common kind of interview
- Larger focus body language and other non-verbal communication
- More relaxed, conversational feel to the interview which often provides opportunities for the candidate to ask questions throughout the interview
- More likely to be part of a 2 or 3 stage interview process

Panel Interviews

- Anything from 2-5 people on the panel
- Seemingly more formal and the questions can come hard and fast from different people on the panel
- When answering questions try not to exclude anyone from the interview
- More likely to be a one stage interview process

Phone Conference or Video Call

- Can be one on one or panel
- Speak clearly
- If a question is not clear, ask the interviewer to repeat rather than guess what was asked
- Prepare as you would for any other interview
- Likely to be a short listing process and prelude to further face to face interview

Any questions ?