

THE JOB INTERVIEW



TYPES OF INTERVIEWS:

Individual interviews

These are one-on-one.

Panel interviews

The panel may consist of a variety of people from the organisation.

Sequential interviews

A series of on-on-one interviews with two or more people from the organization.

Plant visits

The plant or office visit is designed to see whether you fit into the organization.

Assessment centres

The assessments may include various team/ group and individual activities and presentations.

Psychometric testing of aptitude, personality, language and numeracy

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NELSON MANDELA
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JOB INTERVIEW

PREPARATION BEFOREHAND

Most interviewers will ask you what you know about their organisation and why you would like to join them. If you have done enough research prior to the interview, these should be easy questions to answer.

How and where do I obtain information about companies?

Most companies will send you some company information if you phone and ask for brochures, annual reports or other information.

- Newspapers
- The Internet
- Company talks on campus
- Friends and acquaintances
- Informational Interviews
- Company Exhibitions
- Vacation work
- Volunteer work

BEHAVIOUR DURING THE INTERVIEW

At the start of an interview introduce yourself, shake the interviewer's hand and wait to be offered a seat.

Pay attention to your body language. Nonverbal communication is 90% of the total message conveyed. What we convey with our bodies often speaks louder than our words. You can use body language to your advantage in the interview situation.

Here are some tips:

- Sit upright and lean slightly forward in your chair
- Do not slouch or fidget
- Smile.
- Make eye-contact frequently with the interviewer
- Pay attention to your tone of voice - loud enough, but not too loud. A strong voice conveys confidence.
- Take your time to answer questions
- Speak clearly and thoughtfully.
- Nod your head from time to time to indicate that you understand and are paying attention

What sort of information should I be finding out?

Where the company is located- head office and branches.
Whether the company is local, national or international
The size of the company/ organization
What their main products or services are
Whether they have recently launched any new products or services
The history of the company
The key role-players in the organization e.g. CEO
Who their main competitors are
What sort of work is done at that company
What the prevalent corporate culture of the organization is e.g. work atmosphere, internal relations.

Company information places you in a position to be able to specify the extent to which your unique qualities, skills and qualifications and experience are in line with what is required by the company. You are also better equipped to ask intelligent and informed questions.

Find out who is going to interview you

It could be one individual, or a panel interview conducted by several people. This could take place face-to face or via video conferencing or a telephone interview. Take your CV and your portfolio to the interview if needed.

Find out where the interview is to take place, what time and how you will get there

Get clear directions. Determine how long it will take you to get there and allow extra time. It is very important that you are not late for the interview.

Be prepared for the types of questions the interviewer might ask. Carefully consider the best way to structure your answers. If you have prepared properly, you will be in a better position to answer questions, especially those that require quick thinking in a stressful situation.

Prepare to dress appropriately

Men

A suit is optional, but if you decide on this, preferably wear a dark shade, Smart, tailored trousers (not jeans) and jacket are also acceptable, Wear a long-sleeved shirt and a tie.
Smart shoes with dark socks.

Women

Skirt (knee length and not short or clingy) or tailored pants
A jacket or smart blouse/shirt (no plunging necklines)
Long, flowing garments should be reserved for romantic occasions.
Wear medium-heeled, smart shoes or smart sandals

INTERVIEW DO'S AND DON'TS

Do:

Agree to the interview on the date suggested by the company. If you can't make the suggested time, ask them to suggest an alternative.
Research the company's past, present and future prospects thoroughly.
Prepare a list of intelligent questions about the position and the company.
Practice some answers to common interview questions
Arrive on time.
Dress simply, neatly and elegantly.
Smile and be pleasant.
Establish eye-contact and maintain it throughout the interview.
Pay attention to what the interviewer says.
Answer questions honestly and fully.
Be positive about your future.
Show confidence in your abilities.
Co-operate when asked to undergo tests.
Send a short letter or e-mail to express your thanks for having the opportunity to attend the interview and re-iterate your interest in the job.

Don't:

Party the night before the interview and arrive bleary-eyed.
Take anyone else along for moral support.
Have a drink on the way there to steady your nerves.
Smoke.
Engage in irritating mannerisms.
Interrupt the interviewer.
Gush or giggle.
Be passive.
Gossip about your current employer or criticize your former boss.
Linger when the interview is over.
Push the interviewer for a decision.
Become aggressive if you are not offered the job.
Pester the interviewer with telephone calls afterwards.

