
PRE-INTERVIEW RESEARCH & PREPARATION



Job hunting in any industry is challenging, although, it really doesn't have to be that way. Like most successful projects in life, the devil is in the detail and when it comes to nailing your interview, it's no different.

When we probe our clients about what lets an interviewee down, one of the common failures that tops their list, is that the candidate failed to prepare beforehand.

With this in mind, we've put together a step-by-step guide on how you can protect yourself from falling foul of this interviewing faux pas.

1. Take responsibility

Whether you're interviewing through an agent or going direct, there is only one person responsible for the interview preparation, and that's you.

Many good recruiters will provide you with information on the company and the interviewer, but don't stop there. It's much better to be over prepared than under prepared.

Your recruiter, is just one source of information, as they may be able to give you helpful insight into the culture, size and type of environment that you will be working in. They may also be able to tell you about the types of people they employ along with the background of those individuals.

2. Deep research

Finding out about a company, is more than a quick read of their 'About Us' page, five minutes before the interview.

You are more likely to remember snippets of information if it interests you, rather than a whole website, so look for interesting news articles about them. A news page, or a quick Google is likely to return amazing results. You could even set up a Google Alert, so you're updated with the latest news direct to your inbox.

Find out about the companies mission statement or values. What does that say about them? How does this fit with your own values?

Look for interesting projects they have worked on recently. Do you have experience working on similar projects?

Look at what they are saying about the company, the team, their products on social media or YouTube.

Look at what their clients say about them on a testimonial, review or case study page.

Do they or their competitors talk about each other? If so, what do they say?

Look for information about the interviewer. Do you have shared interests or backgrounds that you can talk about?

Look for other people that work there. What are they saying about the company? What topics are they discussing online?

3. No time like the present

Start your research as soon as you have been invited to an interview. Never leave it to the last minute, as you may just run of out time. Your preparation should begin as far in advance as possible, to enable you to collate enough information and have a well rounded view of the company, the job and the interviewer/s.

Use your notes to work out what questions you need to ask in an interview, to find out the facts about the company or job that may be missing from your research.

4. Don't be disheartened by reviews

There are some great websites out there such as 'Glassdoor' and "What are they really like?" that provide employees and ex-employees with the opportunity to review the working environment.

However, our advice is to read these with caution. Reviews are often written by employees who are no longer with a company. Their reasons for leaving bad reviews, may not always be clear cut.

The best advice would be to find out for yourself. You don't want to pass over the opportunity of a lifetime, all because a disgruntled employee left a bad review. Instead you could use these reviews to formulate questions that you can ask in your interview.

5. Know your CV inside and out

This is probably one of the most overlooked preparation tools. However, take time to compare your own CV with the job on offer and the interviewers own background. Drawing on similarities with your interviewer will help to build rapport. Whilst showing you have understood how you might fit into the role, will help win you kudos.

6. Don't be concerned about fashion

Knowing what to wear to an interview is tricky one, but often your recruiter can help with this. However, you can also look at social media sites to get a peak into the working environment and dress code. Just remember if unsure, always dress one level above what you are seeing on these sites.

7. Knowing what to take with you

In lots of situations, less is more. However, in an interview you don't really want to leave things to chance. Having an organised folder with copies of your latest CV, copies of certifications or merits, good reviews/testimonials and your ID etc., is always useful. Interviewers can be substituted or additional people called in to meet you at the last minute, so it's always helpful to be able to offer them a copy of your CV. However, get your folder organised, as you don't want to be rummaging through pages to find what you need.

8. Let's talk about money

It's important to remember what is on offer and what you have indicated your salary expectations are, particularly if you have been applying for multiple jobs, through various channels.

Whether you have applied direct or through a recruitment agency, it is likely you have been told what remuneration is on offer.

On the flip side of this, the company will be aware of what your salary expectations are. Being the cynical bunch of people they are, the potential employer will be looking very closely at whether your answers in a interview match your original salary expectations.

Always check with your recruiter before attending the interview, if you are unsure.

9. Dust off the anecdotes

It's always advisable to have a few anecdotes up your sleeve, that showcases your skills and puts you in a good light, that relates directly to the type of company or the type of role you are applying for.

However, don't be tempted to exaggerate or make up wild claims, as 'little white lies' will be found out during the background check and referencing stage.

Need more help?

Contact our team now on hello@resourceondemand.com or 01322 272 532 and one of our team will be happy to help.