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## The Interview

### Before the interview – Tips and Guidance

#### *Preparation – the practical details*

##### **a) Getting there**

- Confirm the date and time beforehand. This is also a good opportunity to introduce yourself to the person you've been in contact with in a more personal manner
- Make sure you know the best way to get there (car, train, bus) and how long it will take
- Look up where the nearest place to park, underground station or bus stop is
- If you need to, make sure you organise somewhere to stay overnight in advance
- Plan enough time for the journey in case of traffic jams, public transport delays, strikes etc.
- If you can, try out the way to the office beforehand so as to avoid any nasty surprises on the day of the interview itself

##### **b) Appearance**

- Make sure your outfit is clean and neat
- Dress smart but also according to the position you are applying for, and the company. Why not take a look at our tips for choosing the right outfit?
- Look smart and well groomed – think about your hair cut, fingernails and shoes

##### **c) Documents needed for the interview**

- Up-to-date copies of your application/documents
- Some paper and a pen (that works)
- Notes you've made from your research about the company and questions to ask them
- The address of the company and the contact details of the person you've been in contact with

#### *Preparation – the content of the interview*

##### **a) Research**

- Read up about the industry/sector and the company (number of employees, turnover/profit, what they sell/make, who is the CEO, recent press clippings, the company philosophy etc.) This shows the personnel manager that that you have bothered to research the company as well as demonstrating your interest and motivation
- Familiarise yourself with what the job entails and would be required of you in that role
- Try and find out what the wage level is like for that sector and ask friends with a similar background and level of experience what they earn
- Think about what start date is best for you, including moving to another city if you need to

## **b) Information about yourself**

- Prepare a short presentation about yourself. This should only last a few minutes, it should be about you personally, your qualifications etc. and you should be able to talk freely

*Tip: The company will have already read your CV. Try to summarise the most important points, in particular the practical experiences and professional qualifications that are relevant for the job you are applying to*

## **c) Answers to questions that might come up**

- The employer will check whether or not the personality, level of motivation and skills of the applicant fit the job requirements. It is therefore a good idea to prepare answers to the following questions that might come up:
- What attracts you to this job/position/sector/company?
- What were the reasons for applying to this company/wanting to work in this sector?
- Why should we choose you? What makes you qualified for this job?
- How can you explain these gaps in your CV?
- How do you handle criticism? Think of some concrete examples of situations that were particularly challenging. How did you overcome them?
- What would your greatest enemy/best friend say about you?
- Where do you see yourself in 5 years' time?
- What are your expectations for the job/company?
- What are your salary expectations?

## **d) Prepare your own questions you can ask**

*An applicant that is intelligent, motivated and knowledgeable will ask questions that have been thought out e.g.*

- Which people/departments would I be working with?
- What special requirements are you looking for in the people who are applying?
- What is the introductory phase like?
- What are the opportunities for career development like in your company?
- Are there any upcoming projects? What are they?

## **e) Roleplay**

- Take part in a role play: Ideally you should practice the interview, having friends or family members ask you questions that you think might come up in the actual interview. They can then give you feedback about the answers that you give and your behaviour and mannerisms in general