

INTERVIEW TIPS AND TECHNIQUES

Before your interview:

- Conduct thorough research on the company using any public material (mainly a thorough analysis of the company's website)
- Go through your CV and think about what the interviewers might ask you about your past experience. Also practice talking around your CV so that you can verbally add more detail to the document should you be asked to do so in the interview.
- Practice your answers to common interview questions, some of which are listed below.
- Identify and prepare questions that you have about the role you are interviewing for and the company in general. (examples listed below)
- Confirm the logistics of your interview. Check the date, time, person you need to ask for upon arrival and the location of the offices that you are attending. Also make sure that you carefully plan your route making sure that you are not going to be late. (use the links page at www.hanoverit.co.uk to help you do this)
- Get a good nights sleep and do not drink alcohol the night before.

On the day:

- Be clean, fresh and well groomed
- Dress appropriately (your recruitment consultant should be able to advise you of suitable attire)
- If you are a smoker, then once you are dressed try not to smoke. Perhaps try using some nicotine gum.
- Take a folder with the following items:
 - A print out of your interview confirmation email
 - A map of the local area
 - Your recruitment consultants telephone number (in case you are going to be late)
 - A printout of questions that you want to ask in the interview
 - A notepad and a pen

Arriving:

- Try to arrive early and stop at a café nearby to compose yourself and read over your CV / notes one last time.
- When you enter the building announce your name and the name of the person that you are there to meet.
- Stand while waiting for your interviewer unless specifically asked to take a seat.

When you are greeted:

- Greet your interviewer with a smile, a firm but friendly handshake and good eye contact.
- Stand with good posture and remember that more than 55% of your interviewer's impression of you will be communicated through body language.
- Be prepared for possible polite 'chit chat' on the way to the interview room. Try to sound happy and keep the conversation positive.
- When asked to sit, make sure you take out any notes and your pen and pad before doing so. Also try to sit at a slight angle to the interviewer as this comes across as less confrontational.

Remind yourself that you are there to:

- Convince the interviewer that you can do the job.
- Show that you are motivated to do the job well.
- Show that you will fit in with the company and your team.

In the first 5 minutes:

- Make a good first impression. The first few minutes of an interview are very important. If you make a good first impression the rest of the interview will be positive and enjoyable.

Throughout the interview, obey the golden rules:

- Always answer any question in a positive way.
- Avoid criticising your previous job, employer or manager.
- Avoid awkward motivations such as a desire for more money or shorter working hours.
- Remember that communication isn't only in the words that you say. Try to 'mirror' the interviewer's tone and rate of speech. If they are sitting forward then sit forward, if they sit back then you should do the same. Be careful not to 'mimic' the interviewer when doing this. Employ these strategies subtly!
- Do not fidget, fiddle with your pen, touch your hair, tap your feet or let out a big sigh.

Also:

- Look attentive
- Do not slouch
- Listen keenly, nod and orally acknowledge what you are told
- Don't waffle
- Be prepared to support your answers with evidence, facts and figures
- Maintain some eye contact with everyone present
- Don't smoke
- Don't hide your personality, talk about yourself but don't dominate the interview

At the end of the interview:

The interviewer should ask if you have any further questions. Check your list of questions. If any are outstanding ask them now. Do not feel embarrassed to have to refer to a list of questions. It shows that you prepared before hand.

As you leave:

Tell the Interviewer that you are interested in the job and leave the interview with firm handshakes to everyone present.

Common interview questions to prepare for:

Before the interview think about your responses to the following questions.

Go through your responses before every interview as each application is unique. Practice until you feel confident with any of these questions.

The typical questions that are asked fall into the following categories.

You:

- Why do you want the job?
- What skills do you think you need to do the job?
- What can you offer?
- Are you prepared to relocate?
- Are you willing to travel?
- Why should we employ you?
- How long will it be before you are making a real contribution to the company?
- How ambitious are you?
- Why did you choose a career in IT?
- How long have you been looking for a new job?
- Do you prefer to work in a small, medium or large company?
- How would you describe yourself?
- How could you improve yourself?
- What are you looking for in a new job?
- What would your ideal job be?
- Are you considering any other positions at the moment?
- Did you feel you progressed satisfactorily in your last job?
- Are you a leader?
- How do you handle criticism?
- What sort of manager are you?
- Do you work well with others? Or are you a loner?
- Are you self-motivated?
- Are you accepted into a team quickly?
- Can you act on your own initiative?
- What motivates you?
- Do you know how to motivate other people?
- What do you dislike doing?
- What problems did you encounter in your last job?
- Do you feel you are ready to take on greater responsibilities?
- Can you work under pressure?
- How many hours are you prepared to work?
- What are your career goals?
- Have you been responsible for implementing quality standards.
- What interests do you have outside work?
- How long will you stay in the new job.
- Why do you want to work for this company?
- What do you know about this company?
- What interests you about particular products or services?
- What can the company offer that your previous company cannot?
- Your current/previous job
- What did you think of your manager/supervisor co-workers and subordinates?
- How did you get on with them?
- What did you do on a day to day basis?
- What was your greatest success? How did you achieve it?
- What has been your biggest failure?
- How often were you off sick?

- What did you earn in your last job?
- What level of salary are you looking for now?
- Your current/previous employer:
- What do you think of your last employer?
- Why did you join your previous employer?
- Why are you leaving?
- Explain the structure of your last company and where you fitted in.

Questions you may want to ask in return:

- What will be my responsibilities?
- Where will I fit into the overall company structure?
- Who will I report to?
- Where do they fit in the structure?
- Who will report to me?
- What do you expect me to do in the first 6 months?
- What level of performance do you expect from me?
- Who are your customers?
- Where is the company going? Upwards? Expansion plans?
- What are the chances of advancement/promotion in this position?
- Will travelling be required in this position?
- Will relocation be required now or in the future?
- What training do you provide?
- When will you decide on the appointment?
- What is the next step?

Factors that can cost you the job:

- Being unprepared for the interview
- Being late
- Poor manners
- Complaining about previous employers
- Failing to communicate
- Being aggressive or superior
- Making excuses
- Looking scruffy
- Lacking enthusiasm
- Being evasive or vague
- Appearing greedy for money or promotion
- Using this document as the 'only' source of information for interview advice...

For more information on interview advice please visit the 'LINKS' page at:
www.hanoverit.co.uk