



Interview advice

Interviews are 2 way meetings. They come in many forms and each interviewer will have their own personal style. Here are some general pointers:

Before

Research the Organisation thoroughly – website, press releases, brochures. Talk to people. Look for current news. Show you are up to date.

Know where you are going and be there on time, allowing extra time for London's erratic Transport system! In the eventuality you are running late, please telephone the Client to apologise in advance.

Make sure you know the name of the interviewer, what position they hold and any special or likely form the interview will take.

Dress appropriately. We will brief you on dress code. Ensure you are well groomed with tidy hair, clean shoes and clothing. Don't over do the perfume or aftershave. Keep jewellery and nail polish classic.

Nerves are good as they show you care and the adrenalin, believe it or not actually raises your game. Control your last minute nerves by shaking off any negative or insecure thoughts and replacing it with positives e.g. "I might get the job or I might not. Either way this is a valuable experience I can learn from". Repeat this to yourself and then re-examine the emotion. It should be gone. Practise breathing deeply and slowly and get some fresh air. Avoid caffeine as it will intensify your anxiety and please try not to smoke before an interview. To dispel your interview nerves practise peripheral vision as soon as you enter the room. Focus on an object and then make a mental note of what else you can see in other parts of the room without moving your eyes from the spot. It sounds a bit odd but it really works! It is impossible to feel anxiety when you are using peripheral vision so it's an excellent technique to use.

Greet the interviewer with a firm handshake and a warm smile.

During

Sit down when invited with an upright, yet relaxed posture. Get into rapport by matching and mirroring the body language of the interviewer and maintain eye contact.

Don't stare! Equally, don't let your eyes gaze around the room. In a panel situation maintain eye contact with the whole panel.

Think before you speak. If a question "throws" you, don't panic! Make a common sense, imaginative, honest reply.

It's impossible to over emphasise the importance of sounding enthusiastic and interested in the Organisation. Nothing is more off putting than a candidate who lacks spark.

Don't be negative about a present or past employer. You may have had a bad experience, but appearing bitter about your experiences will convey the view that you may be awkward and not a good team player.



Create conversation rather than a question and answer situation. Don't answer a question with another question and don't answer a question with a 'Yes' or 'No' without expanding on the point.

Don't ask questions about salary, holidays or bonuses at the initial interview. However, be aware of your market value (we will help you) and be prepared to specify your required package if asked. We will negotiate a package on your behalf.

At the end of the interview, if you are interested in the position, do tell the interviewer.

Even if you anticipate (or conclude) that the position is unsuitable, maintain a positive attitude.

Typical Questions

Your interview at Hatty Blue will be Biographical. When you meet our Clients, Competency based questions are fast becoming the norm. This technique not only takes into consideration whether you have the specific skills, but whether your attitudes and behaviour fit in with a Company's ethos. Competency based questions work on the principle that past performance is the best predictor of future performance. The interviewer will therefore be seeking examples of past behaviour that provide them with concrete evidence that you have the necessary competencies to succeed in the job.

Questions will start with: "Describe a situation when you..." and "Give me an example of a time when..." The competencies the interviewer is looking for will vary according to the job and will include:

- Planning and Organisation
- Communication skills
- Problem solving
- Team work

Give a variety of relevant examples by briefly describing the situation and task you were faced with, the action you took and the results you achieved or conclusions you reached.

e.g.: Describe how your personal planning and organisation resulted in the successful achievement of the task.

- ✓ **(Put your answer in context)**
Whilst employed at ABC Company I was given the responsibility for organising the Company Christmas Do for 500 people.
- ✓ **(What action did you take?) -**
I agreed a budget from the Finance Director, organised a date suitable to all, conducted research into what people wanted to do, sourced venues, priced them up, planned the menus, entertainment, transport, and project managed the Event.
- ✓ **(What was the result? What action did you take?) -**
The Party was a huge success and came in under budget which pleased the FD. The Managing Director said it was the best Christmas Do the Company had ever had!



10 Deadly Questions (and ways to prepare for them)

“Tell us about yourself”

This is a classic opener. Plan a short presentation statement to cover this.

“Where do you see yourself in 5 years time?”

Talk about career plans and what you want to learn and achieve in relation to *this job or department*.

“Why do you want this job?”

Have a clear answer to this question, even if privately you're not sure.

What kind of person are you?

Handle questions re personality carefully. Don't give statements about what a positive person you are. Talk about a time when your positivity changed your working environment.

“Why did you leave...?”

Rehearse short, simple, positive “stories” to cover these points.

“How will you cope in a crisis?”

Have a couple of good examples of past triumphs up your sleeve.

“How will you ...?”

These questions include you as part of the Company's future. Talk as though you are part of the team – if you create the right picture your potential interviewer will not be able to imagine you *not* being there!

“What would you do if...?”

You can't prepare for this question. Think on your feet!

“What do you need to earn?”

Don't answer this question with a figure. Focus instead on the value you can add to the employer, not your basic needs. Deflect the question by finding out what the Company is willing to pay.

“What are your weaknesses?”

Remember employers latch onto negative messages so don't give them any! Talk about weaknesses which are also strengths e.g. pushing hard to get things done.

Questions you may want to ask if appropriate

- What is the Company culture?
- What are the opportunities for training and development?
- What attracted you to the Company?
- What are the next steps in the interview process?

After

Tell us how the interview went and ask us for feedback from the Client.

Prepare for rejection. On balance you will be rejected more times than accepted. Even if you don't get the job, you can learn a huge amount about your perceived market value and the experience will help you focus further on your perfect job.



Further help and advice

If you would like 1:1 coaching to help you overcome interview nerves check out Public Speaking Expert Tom Breeze at ProMind (www.ProMind.co.uk)

Practise your next interview using interactive videos with leading bosses at www.bemyinterviewer.co.uk