

## **INTERVIEWING THE BASICS**

Attending an interview for a job you really want can be a nerve wrecking experience especially if you are unprepared. Luckily, we have created a list of typical interview questions and best responses, so you need worry no longer!

### **The Basics**

#### **1. Tell me about yourself**

- Keep your answer to one or two minutes; do not ramble.
- Do not go back to childhood experiences, just give a brief outline of where you are from and where you want to be going.
- Use your CV introduction as a starting base.
- Say only positive statements

#### **2. What do you know about our company?**

- Show that you have done your research. Know what their products are, how big the company is, roughly what their annual revenue is, what reputation it has within the industry and on the street. Know the company's history, image, goal, and philosophy.
- Project an informed interest which allows the interviewer to tell you some more detailed aspects about the company.

#### **3. Why do you want to work for us?**

- Do not talk about what you want; first talk about their needs and what you can do for them.
- You wish to be part of their company: identify its strengths.
- You relish the challenge of solving their company problem/s.
- You can make a definite contribution to specific company goals.

**4. What would you do for us? What can you do for us that someone else cannot?**

- Talk about successful experience where you have helped an employer solve a problem and relate this to the job being offered.
- Stay positive and do not be seen to criticize other candidates.

**5. Which aspects of our position do you find the most attractive? Least attractive?**

- List three or more attractive factors and only one, minor unattractive factor. Aspects to pick up on could include office location, company reputation, the chance to work with esteemed colleagues, training opportunities etc.

**6. Why should we hire you?**

- Because of the knowledge, experience, abilities, and skills you possess. Be positive and confident in your reply, not vague.

**7. What do you look for in a job?**

- An opportunity to use my skills, to perform and to be recognised.
- The opportunity to develop further skills; throughout life we should be constantly learning.
- Relate your answer to the job for which you are applying e.g. "I enjoy a challenge and I believe this position would offer me that."

**8. Please give me your definition of a ... (the position for which you are being interviewed).**

- Keep it brief; actions and results oriented.

**9. How long would it take you to make a meaningful contribution to our firm?**

- Very quickly after a little orientation and a brief period of adjustment.

**10. How long would you stay with us?**

- If we both feel I am contributing, achieving, growing etc.
- Management and Experience Questions

**11. What is your management style?**

- For example, 'Management by Coaching and Development (MBCD)' where Managers see themselves primarily as employee trainers. 'Open door' is also a good one.

**12. Are you a good manager? Give an example. Why do you feel you have top managerial potential?**

- Keep your answers achievement and task oriented.
- Emphasize management skills – planning, Organising, leadership, interpersonal, etc.
- Describe relevant personal traits.

**13. What did you look for when you hired people in the past?**

- Skills, initiative, adaptability, team players.

**14. Did you ever fire anyone? If so, what were the reasons and how did you handle it?**

- You have had experience with this, and it worked out well.
- Describe how you spoke to the person and explained precisely but tactfully where they were underachieving.

**15. What do you see as being the most difficult task in being a manager?**

- Getting things planned and done on time within the imposed constraints e.g. budget.
- Do not imply that these are insurmountable difficulties.

**16. What is your biggest weakness as a manager?**

- Be honest but do not dwell on it and end on a positive note.
- Industry trend questions

**17. Why are you leaving your present job?**

- No longer provides a suitable challenge, time to move on, I wish to move into.... (the area this company specialises in).
- Give a “group” answer if possible, e.g. our department was consolidated or eliminated.

**18. How do you feel about leaving all your benefits?**

- You feel the challenge and satisfaction this new role will bring outweighs the benefits lost.

**19. Describe what you feel to be the perfect working environment.**

- Where people are treated as fairly and equally as possible.
- Where people can develop and grow into their position

**20. How would you evaluate your present firm?**

- An excellent company which afforded me many fine experiences.