

The Interview



Next Thursday



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Interview Introduction

After coming through the selection process, you will eventually arrive at an interview.

This can be a major obstacle for many job applicants.

Although they may have the qualifications, experience and a proven track record, they may lose out to a candidate who 'interviews better.'

Interview Introduction

So what does 'interviewing better' actually mean?

It comes down to the candidate being well prepared and confident.

A candidate who can answer questions in a way which is acceptable (but not necessarily always correct) to the interviewer.

Someone who knows about their potential employer's business and the post they hope to fill.

Interview Introduction

These are really the basic components of any candidate who 'interviews well'.

There are undoubtedly other aspects employers may look for in relation to specific posts;

having their own ideas, articulate, thinking on their feet, aspects which will be related to the job and to the company's preference in employees.

Interview Introduction

The employer will also be looking to fill a post, which has a particular job specification.

In other words personal aspects besides the experience, and qualifications that can be put down on paper.

The interviewer will set out to ascertain that the candidate has these personal qualities, skills and abilities the company requires.

**Fail to Prepare,
Prepare to Fail!**



Preparing for Interview

Good preparation instils confidence.

So the basic approach to an interview is to be well prepared.

This means two things - preparing yourself practically for the interview, and gathering knowledge and information you can draw on during the interview.

What would you take into consideration when preparing for an interview?



Preparing for Interview

Have you called and asked about the environment and resources that will be on hand?

Have you researched the company and know all about them?

Is your folio layout and content appropriate?

Have you prepared some specific questions to ask?

Preparing for Interview

Check out how you will get to the location, and when you need to set off to be there in good time - do a dummy run if necessary.

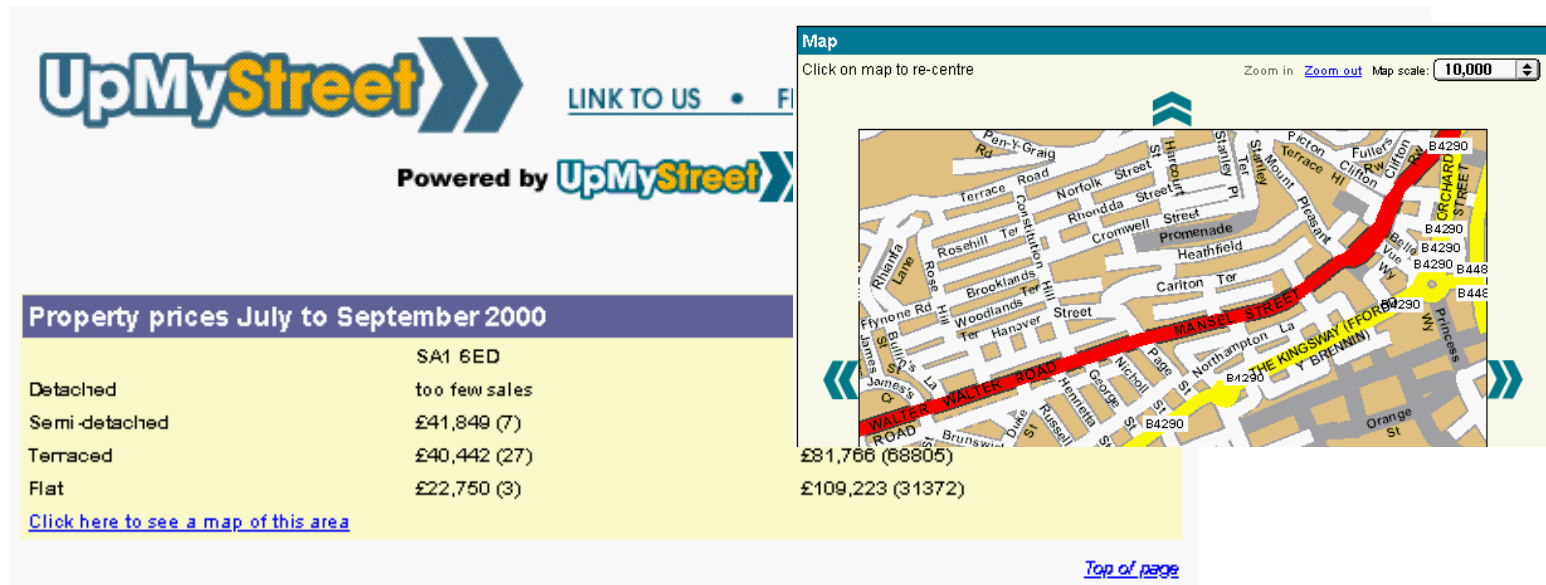
Plan to get there early and make sure you have a contact number in case there are delays.

Is there a coffee shop nearby where you can freshen up and prepare yourself?

Go over your questions and answers.

Preparing for Interview

Have you researched the area ?



Will you be happy there - and can you afford it etc?

Preparing for Interview

So you know what the area is like..what next?

Transport organised - maps etc. at the ready?

Appropriate clothes are ready to wear?

Plan what you will say - avoiding notes - test yourself.

Keep that interview letter with you.

Plan to be there - up to half an hour early.

On arrival ensure the receptionist knows you are there and check that the interviewer's name is correct.

Preparing to Meet the Employer

The interview is a chance for you and the employer to get to know one another.

It is NOT the time to get to know about the post or the employers business. This should be done in advance.

Make sure you know what the job entails - get a job description, ask someone in a similar post.

**If you are well organised and
have planned for the day in
advance your confidence
will increase.**



Interview – Don't Forget You

Remember the employer is interested in you as a person, your experiences and your opinions.

Take the time to sit down and think about you, who you are and what you've achieved.

It can be embarrassing to realise you know more about the employer than yourself.

Think of some past situations that have required some special thought or skill and be prepared to discuss these.



Interview – Don't Forget You

Sit down with your CV and make notes, about your work record, what you've achieved.

Remember that one of the most common interview questions is 'Tell me about yourself'.

Interviewers want to know about personal qualities not just achievements - though examples can be included to support your statements.



Interview – Answering Questions

Interviews vary tremendously, from very informal to formal; however, some questions can be anticipated, as can the subject matter.

If you are well prepared, then you should not struggle with these questions.

Interview – Question Examples

Why are you interested in this job?

Why are you particularly suited to it?

How much would this cost?

Have you worked in a team and how did you contribute?

If there was this problem.. how would you tackle it?

Why did you use this computer programme?

Interview – Question Examples

Describe your career aspirations

What are your personal strengths?

..and weaknesses?

What will you bring to the company?

Tell me about a dispute that you had to resolve.

Tell me about a major change in your life.

Interview – Question Examples

How would you improve this work in your portfolio?

How long would this take?

How competent are you on the Mac/programmes?

What live projects have you done?

Where else have you applied?

Are you prepared to do a test on the Mac right now?



Interview – Question Examples

These questions are designed to put you on the spot, so always, always keep cool.

Simply give it your best shot.

Be honest and truthful in all of your answers.

Watch out for change of pace, keep on your guard for the next similar question.

All of these examples came from ex - students!

Interview – Keep in Mind

The interviewer needs someone like you.

Leave pauses, time to think about answers – don't feel you have to fill every silence with chatter!

Don't know? Express a willingness to learn.

Interview – Keep in Mind

You are constantly presenting yourself.

So always try to retain composure and confidence.

Pleasant smiles help, even if they are not returned.

Interview – Keep in Mind

Watch out for defensive body language, it can creep up on you.

Keep natural eye contact with the person asking the question.

Don't forget the other interviewers if there is more than one.

Interview – Presentation and Body Language

Wear what is appropriate for the post and the company.

It may vary from smart, formal wear in some instances to very formal dress in others.

Try and get an insight into what the company would expect from employees or through observation.

Interview – Presentation and Body Language

Once you are ushered into the interview room there will usually be a short exchange of pleasantries and ice breaking.

Don't be fooled by this time - it really is designed to put you at ease in most circumstances, but these initial moments are the most formative.

First impressions really do count!

Interview – Presentation and Body Language

Remember you are constantly presenting yourself so here are some simple rules:

Sit comfortably with both feet on the floor, lean slightly towards the interviewer.

Don't play with your hair or your hands and keep hands out of your pockets!

Try not to create defensive barriers between you and them, like a brief case on your knees, folded arms or crossed legs.

Interview – Presentation and Body Language

As mentioned earlier, maintain natural eye contact with the interviewer – but don't stare!

If there's more than one interviewer, look at who's talking, but include the others when answering.

Don't over use your hands if you are a natural gesticulator.

Don't squirm and fidget.

Above all try to be you, try to be natural.

Interview – Presentation and Body Language

Obeying these rules, will allow the interviewers to concentrate on you, and not what you're doing in the interview.

Body language conveys all sorts of messages, and the right body language will convey the message of a well-balanced and confident individual...

...even if that's not how you feel!

Interview – Your Questions

When your turn comes for questions be prepared....

What are the main responsibilities?

What problems are commonly encountered?

What kind of time frames are normal?

How does the team operate? (Who will you work with?)

What plans do they have for future development?

Your Questions - Examples



Interview – Your Questions

If selected for this position, what are some challenges or problem areas you'd hope or expect that I could jump in and immediately contribute to or collaborate on?



Interview – Your Questions

Can you describe what types of projects you foresee me working on in the first six months and with whom?



Interview – Your Questions

What do you love most about working here, and what did you find most surprising about the culture when you first started?

Interview – Your Questions

Does it matter what questions you ask?

By asking great questions during the job interview, you will accomplish a couple of things.

First, you will help interviewers gain some insight into how you think.

Interview – Your Questions

Second, you want to make sure that you use the interview as a time to demonstrate your desire to better understand the organization;

To learn about its challenges and leave interviewers with confidence that you'll fit in and make immediate contributions to the team.

Interview – Leave until last

Any questions about terms and conditions / pay etc.

Ask these only if you have to, they can always be checked later if the job is offered.

A pleasant thanks for their time.

With a reminder of how interesting its been.

Even if by now you hate them!!!

Interview – After the Interview

Make some notes on the journey home or asap.

What in your mind went well, or didn't?

What surprises were there?

You will re-live your answers, jot some down.

This will become a valuable source of reference.

Interview – After the Interview

If you are unsuccessful make contact with the interviewer and ask for feedback.

Where did you perform well?

What can you improve?

Look at it not as a failure, but a learning experience.



Interview – Employer's Comments

As an Account Manager I have to liaise directly with the client. The experience Swansea students have is fantastic

Claire Guyton - Saatchi & Saatchi

Selling yourself, whether for a freelance job or a full time one, is all important... after all, every new briefing is an interview isn't it?

Peter Vosper - HMSO



Interview – Employer's Comments

We use a lot of illustrators and designers... we usually interview twice to test them

Sharon Blowers - Finishing Line Art

We are responsible to our clients... we never accept onto our books until we are 100% sure.

Bob Berendsen – Illustrators Rep

Interview – Employer's Comments

People who haven't prepared for the costing questions come across as amateurs – they are so totally unprofessional that they are ruled out immediately.

Bernard McCabe - Dreamscape Design

If a candidate does not have any questions it worries us - they clearly haven't engaged with the interviewer and business.

Nick Gilbert - Agency recruiter



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Remember, it's your head on the chopping block!