

Cactus: Interview Notes

If we are putting you forward for an interview you are almost half way there. The prospective employer will have seen your CV by now and decided you might be the person they want and they need to find out more through an interview.

Before the day do some research into the company. Find out as much as you can e.g. what do they do, who is interviewing you, how large is the organisation. Do they have links / alliances with any other companies, have they been in the news recently (for good or bad reasons).

Tips

- Check out the website, this should be packed with background information
- Call the switchboard/reception and ask for a brochure or company details
- Ring the call centre and ask some questions!

Evaluate what the job is asking for compared with your skills and what you can offer the business. Make a list of examples and memorise them. Competency questions – “give me an example of a time when...” are very popular, so compile a list of classic examples and war stories of when you overcame odds at work etc. Another standard question is “Why should we employ you”, “Why do you think this role would suit you” or “What do you bring to the party?” Are you prepared for these? Prepare a list of questions you would like to ask, nothing too obvious, the employer will expect you to do some research.

Questions on the culture, their vision and aims, how would you fit into this, what impact could you have will work well. Look prepared, take any information you have found out about the company (They’ll be able to see you’ve done your homework), somewhere to make notes and your list of questions. On the day of the Interview dress smart and business like, make final preparations.

- Plan your route and allow plenty of time for the journey
- Smile!!
- Be personable as well as professional
- Use a firm handshake
- Be Open - Be aware of your body language e.g. crossed arms create a barrier
- Don’t speak badly of previous employers - every role you have undertaken has been a learning curve and a stepping stone to your current position
- Although you may be attending 5 interviews in 1 day they don’t need to know they’re number 3 on your list
- Always find out what the exact package they have on offer is and what the next stages of the process are, but, be careful not to be too pushy.

After the Interview note down your thoughts of how the interview went, what the company was like and the names of those you met. (You’ll be surprised how much you forget, especially if you are attending several interviews). When you have composed yourself, if you are using an agency, call them and provide as much feedback as possible, this will enable them to find out more from the interviewers and probe for feedback. If you think it would be the right thing to do, feel free to drop a note to the company thanking them for their time, but make sure not to make it too long winded and not an excuse for another “sales pitch”. A simple “thank you for your time” letter is enough.