

JUDGEMENT DAY



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When your resume catches the attention of an employer the recruitment process has just begun. It is during the interview that you get your best chance to sell yourself, display your strengths and talk about your successes to a prospective employer. So it is imperative you are fully prepared for this crucial step in your quest for a new position.

Negative factors influencing an employer to reject a candidate being interviewed can include poor

personal appearance, an overbearing and “know-it-all” approach, lack of interest and enthusiasm, condemnation of past employers, the inability to express thoughts clearly, a lack of knowledge about the prospective employer, and an overemphasis on money and working conditions (i.e. what’s in it for me?!)

Here are some tips to guide you through the interview process and hopefully increase your chances of success:

preparation

- Know the time, date and exact location of the interview.
- Know the interviewer’s full name and how to pronounce it.
- Research the company via its website and any other means possible.
- Refresh your memory on your own background, e.g. employment and study dates, etc. There is nothing worse than experiencing blank stares or hesitation when asking a candidate to re-tell a part of their own life history!

dress appropriately

- First impressions DO count! Always err on the conservative side when choosing what to wear for an interview and don’t overdo make-up, remove any facial piercings, ensure neat grooming, etc.
- I understand there are employers where casual dress codes are quite acceptable but even in these instances employers will often be judging your capacity to present to a client of theirs, when a more businesslike appearance is often expected.

getting to the interview

- Arrive at least five minutes before the scheduled interview time, allowing extra time for transport delays, etc.
- If you arrive too early, wait until close to your appointment time. Employers have scheduled you into their busy day and arriving

In an earlier article I focused on the employment interview from the employer’s perspective. In this edition I wanted to look at the interview process from the jobseeker’s standpoint.

too early can be just as inconvenient as arriving too late.

- Do not reschedule or cancel an interview unless absolutely necessary and only for a valid reason. If you are unable to attend an interview be sure to also give as much notice as possible.

at the interview

- When you meet the interviewer, shake their hand firmly, look them in the eye, and greet them with a warm smile.
- Ensure that your mobile phone is turned off and if you forget to turn it off DO NOT ANSWER ANY CALLS!
- Be positive in the interview and focus on your strengths and achievements.
- Be clear and concise in your answers and avoid waffling.
- Maintain eye contact and engage with the interviewer when you speak to them.
- If you have had a bad experience in a previous workplace, outline the problem objectively but never “bad mouth” former employers or team members.

questions to expect

- Expect to answer questions relating to your employment and education history, reasons for leaving your current employer, your interest in this particular role/business and what you want in the future.
- You may also encounter targeted selection questions where you are asked to comment on your experience in the context of certain work scenarios.

questions you could ask

- You will also be determining whether the company and role will offer you the future career opportunities that you desire. Questions you could ask include: “Is there a detailed description for the position?”, “Why is the position available?”, “What sort of people have done well in this role previously?”, “Describe the company culture?” , etc.
- In closing, let the interviewer know if you are interested and thank them for their time and for considering you.

things to remember

- It is natural to be nervous in an interview, but these feelings usually subside quickly. Just remember that the interviewer WANTS you to be the ideal candidate and will give you every opportunity to prove this to them! **m**

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