

# Helpful Interview Techniques

## Before the interview

- ✓ **Know the exact place and time of the interview**
- ✓ **Plan your route and start off early** – Do a practice run if you are not sure
- ✓ **Learn important facts about the company** – Do some research beforehand such as principal lines of business and locations by looking up their website
- ✓ **First impressions count** – Good presentation is essential, dress smartly and in keeping with the type of company you are approaching, this also applies to make up and jewellery
- ✓ **Take any certificates or references with you** – Not all employers ask for them but be prepared
- ✓ **Focus** – Clear your mind of all else a few hours prior to the interview.

## During the interview

- ✓ **Greet the employer with a warm smile and firm handshake** – Walk in confidently and make eye contact, sit when invited, don't slouch and fold your arms, it makes you look nervous
- ✓ **Remember to practice small talk** – Be brief and positive, eg *'Thanks for coming along today.'* Your response: *'It's good to be here.'*
- ✓ **Always conduct yourself as if you are determined to get the job you are discussing**
- ✓ **Don't ramble and don't be too brief** – If you feel you have rambled on too much, just say 'Let me summarise that for you – a, b and c'
- ✓ **Stop** – Check body language of panel members
- ✓ **Ask** 'Would you like me to elaborate? Would you like me to give you more information about that aspect?'
- ✓ **Use positive language**, ie *manage, coordinate, lead* – not *'dealt with'* as this implies you are dealing with issues all the time and conveys some negativity
- ✓ **Qualify** answers where you can but don't go into too much detail
- ✓ **Don't answer with a simple "yes" or "no"** – Explain whenever possible, describing those things about yourself which relate to the situation
- ✓ **Find an opportunity to mention key points about yourself** – Be positive about your achievements and what you feel you would contribute to the company - remember to sell yourself
- ✓ **Stay focused** – Don't 'umm', just close your mouth and breath - silence is better than saying 'umm'
- ✓ **Don't rely on your application or resume to do the selling for you** – Interviewers will want you to speak for yourself
- ✓ **Show enthusiasm** – If you are not interested, your responsiveness will still demonstrate your professionalism
- ✓ **Don't make unnecessary derogatory remarks about your present or former employers** – Limit your comments to those necessary to adequately communicate your rationale for leaving
- ✓ **Don't let your discouragement show** – Once in a while an interviewer who is genuinely interested in you may seem to discourage you as a way of testing your reaction



### At the end of the interview

- ✓ **Fill out any application forms neatly and completely**
- ✓ **If you are interested in the position, let the interviewer know** – Be a good salesperson and say something like: "I'm very impressed with what I've seen here today; your company, its products and the people I've met. I am confident I could do an excellent job in the position you've described to me." The interviewer will be impressed with your enthusiasm.
- ✓ **Thank the interviewer for his or her time and consideration**
- ✓ **Don't be too discouraged if no immediate commitment is made** – The interviewer will probably want to communicate with other people in the company or possibly interview more candidates before making a decision

### Be prepared to ANSWER such questions as...

- ✓ Tell me about yourself?
- ✓ Tell me about your background, accomplishments?
- ✓ What are your strengths? Weaknesses?
- ✓ How would you describe your most recent job performance?
- ✓ What interests you about our company?
- ✓ What outside activities are most significant to your personal development?

### And, be prepared to ASK questions, such as...

- ✓ What would I be expected to accomplish in this position?
- ✓ What are the greatest challenges in this position?
- ✓ Remember a lack of questions may be mistaken as a lack of interest!!!

### Negative factors evaluated by an interviewer

- ✗ Personal appearance which is less than professional
- ✗ Overbearing, overaggressive or egotistical behaviour
- ✗ No positive purpose
- ✗ Lack of interest and enthusiasm – passive and indifferent
- ✗ Lack of confidence and poise - nervousness
- ✗ Evasiveness - making excuses for unfavourable factors in work history
- ✗ Lack of tact, maturity and courtesy
- ✗ Condemnation of past employers, managers, projects or technologies
- ✗ Inability to maintain a conversation
- ✗ Lack of commitment to fill the position at hand
- ✗ Failure to ask questions about the position
- ✗ Persistent attitude of "What can you do for me?"
- ✗ Lack of preparation for interview – failure to get information about the company, resulting in inability to ask intelligent questions

### For further information, contact

Heidi Fowler  
M. 0403 785 532  
www.heidifowler.com.au

