



**Cushillo**  
Personnel Ltd

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# PERSONNEL

*Interview Tips*



## Interview Tips

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Before your interview find out everything you can about the company (read their Website). Re-read your application, thinking through your own career and the questions they might ask you. You should try to anticipate the general questions which they will ask and also prepare some questions to ask them.

To do well at the interview you will need to convince the interviewer you are technically qualified to do the job. You will also need to show that you are sufficiently motivated to get the job done well and that you will fit in with the company's organisational structure and the team in which you will work.

You should dress smartly for the interview and should leave home earlier than you need to on the day of the interview - you may be delayed by traffic or for other reasons. Be courteous to all employees of the company. At the interview itself you must be positive about yourself and your abilities - but do not waffle.

Dress to make a great first impression, dress one level above the person you are meeting with. And don't neglect the small details, including an ironed or pressed shirt, polished shoes, and clothing free from pet hair etc..

Plan your route and how long it will take to get there in advance, considering traffic and time of day. Arrive no sooner than 15 minutes prior to your meeting. Never ever show up late.

## **Interview Questions You May Be Asked**

Before attending an interview, you should think about your responses to the following questions. Your answers may depend on the job or company in question, so you should go through your responses just before each interview.

### **Why do you want this job?**

Think carefully about this question. Stress the positive aspects which have attracted you to applying for this position. Do not mention the negative aspects of your current job or the job in question.

### **What qualities do you think will be required for this job?**

Their advertisement for the job may help you a little bit, but you should also think of the other qualities that may be required. These may include leadership ability, supervisory skills, communication skills, interpersonal skills, problem solving, analytical skills, etc.

### **What can you contribute?**

This is your chance to shine. Tell them about your achievements in your previous position(s) which are relevant to the new position you are applying for.

### **Why do you want to work for this company?**

Emphasize the positive reasons why you want to join their company but avoid aspects such as more money or shorter hours. These would not endear you to a prospective employer.

### **What do you know about this company?**

This is your chance to impress the interviewer with your knowledge of their company. Give them a run down of their products/services, sales figures, news, company figures, customers, etc.

### **What interests you about our product (or service)?**

Again, your research into the company should aid you in answering this question.

### **What can we (the new company) offer that your previous company cannot offer?**

Tread carefully here! Again, do not mention money. Stress opportunities for personal growth, new challenges, etc.

### **You have not done this sort of job before. How will you cope/succeed?**

Say that you are the sort of person who aims to succeed at everything you do and that you are very determined and will do whatever it takes to get the job done.

### **Why should we employ you?**

The answer to this question will be based on your previous experience and achievements which relate to the company. At the end you could add that you think there is a good fit between you and the job, and do ask the interviewer for their opinion.

#### **How long do you think it would be before you were making a significant contribution to the team/company?**

If you think that you could contribute from day one, then say so. Then turn the question round on them and say how soon would they expect it.

#### **How ambitious are you?**

This depends on the position you are applying for? You may need to be ambitious for the particular role, but do not look as if you are after the interviewer's position (Unless it is the Interviewers position you are applying for).

#### **What do you like about the job we are discussing?**

Likes: stress things such as a new challenge or the opportunity to bring fresh experience to the company.

#### **Why did you choose a career in ...?**

Be positive about your reasons. If you have changed careers make a logical argument as to why you did so.

#### **Why are you changing careers?**

This question will only be asked if you are making a radical change in your career. Always stress the positive aspects of the change rather than the negative aspects of your previous career - you do not want to come across as someone who is moving just because you hate your old career. Say why you think you will be good in the new career - this should come from your experience and achievements, stress the transferable skills you have, such as leadership ability, etc.

#### **How much does your last job resemble the one you are applying for? What are the differences?**

The interviewer is trying to see how well you would fit in to the position you are applying for. So you should stress the similarities rather than the differences. When it comes to discussing the differences it will help your case if you can show that either you have done something similar in the past or that you can quickly pick up the new skills.

#### **What do you think of the last company you worked for?**

You should stress the positive aspects of your last company saying that they were a good company to work for. Tell them about the training you received or the work related experience you gained.

#### **Why are you leaving now?**

Always be positive about your reasons for joining and leaving a company. Be very careful that you do not say anything negative about your present employer. If you do, the new company will wonder what you will say about them when you leave. You might want to stress that you are looking for a new challenge and that you feel that the company who is interviewing you fits the bill!

#### **Explain the organizational structure in your last company and how you fitted into it?**

This sort of question may be used to find out whether your old job is at a comparable level to your new job. If the new job being discussed would be a step up the ladder you will need to show that you are ready for a more demanding position. You may be able to show that you have already had many of the responsibilities and the necessary skills which would be required for the next step.

#### **Questions to Ask the Interviewer**

The interview is a two-way process. The company interviewing you will want to find out whether you are suitable to the position and you will want to find out if the company and position are right for you. You should therefore ensure that you have enough information to make up your mind whether you want the job. For example:

- What will be my responsibilities?
- Where will I fit into the overall organizational structure?
- Who will I report to?
- Where does he/she fit in the structure?
- Who will report to me?
- How experienced are they?
- What do you expect me to do in the first 6 months?
- What level of performance do you expect from me?
- Who are your customers?
- Where is the company going? Upwards? Expansion plans?
- What are the chances of advancement/promotion in this position? When?
- Will travelling be required in this position?
- Will relocation be required now or in the future?
- What training do you provide?
- When will you decide on the appointment?
- What is the next step?
- What salary, benefits and bonuses are on offer? Do not bring this up too early in the interview - wait until they are sold on you.

#### **Job Interview Body Language**

When you are being interviewed it is very important that you give out the right signals. You should always look attentive - so do not slouch in your chair. Never lie to anyone in an interview, your body language and tone of voice or the words you use will probably give you away - classic body language giveaways include scratching your head or nose, twitching and not looking directly at the other person when you are speaking to them.

#### **Group Interview Tests**

Group tests are used by an employer to see how you react in a group. They will want to see if you help or hinder the group reach its objectives. An observer will be watching to see how you take criticism, whether you take on leadership roles and involve less communicative group members. If you chair the meeting the observer will be checking on how you plan and keep control of the meeting. If you are leading a group activity the observer will be interested in seeing how good you are at delegating tasks and how much of the work you keep for yourself.

#### **Panel interviews**

Most people hate these sort of interviews and find them a bit of an endurance test. To do well you will need to identify the important figures on the panel and which role each is fulfilling. The chairperson is easy to identify as they will generally make the introductions. You will also need to identify the person whom you will be working for directly - make sure you give them plenty of eye contact.

When you are talking to the panel, remember that you are talking to all of them and not just the person who posed a particular question - your answer has to be the correct one for each panel member! If there is one particular panel member who everyone else seems to agree with, you should make sure you impress him or her.

#### **Factors that can cost you the Job**

- Being unprepared for the interview - you should always prepare thoroughly before any interview (this will also make you feel more confident at the interview).
- Poor/limp handshake - always a bit of a no-no.
- Poor body language
- Saying unfavorable things about previous employers - the employer will be wondering what you will say about them when you leave their employment.
- Not being able to communicate clearly and effectively.
- Being aggressive or acting in a superior way - nobody like this so please don't do this.
- Making excuses for failings.

### Job Interview Afterthoughts

If you're not getting the job offers you desire then you need to look carefully at your interview performance. You should try and get as much feedback as possible from the people who have interviewed you. Ask them where they think you fell down and how they think you could do better. Once you have got feedback you can modify your interview technique and hopefully do better at the next interview.

### Further Information

If you need any help or advice in preparing a professional CV, please contact one of our friendly recruitment consultants on telephone number 01384 226063 or email us at [sales@cushillo.co.uk](mailto:sales@cushillo.co.uk) and we will be back in touch with you shortly.

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