

# matchstick recruitment

## Interview hints & Tips

Congratulations you have an interview! Words guaranteed to make most people's knees knock in fear. Here is a Matchstick guide to help you through those nerve racking moments!

Good Luck!

## Preparation

- Before your interview make sure that you have read through the job specification thoroughly, think of examples of where you have demonstrated similar skills or have held similar responsibilities in your previous roles.
- Research the company thoroughly, read through their website paying particular attention to press releases and new items.
- If you are interviewing with the person that you will be working with, research them! Understanding their background gives you a better understanding of them as a person and makes you stand out from the crowd.
- Contact your Matchstick consultant who will brief you on what to expect from your interview and the format that your meeting will take.
- Make sure that you have the full address, directions and a map of where you are going and the full name of the person seeing you.
- Aim to arrive for your interview ten minutes early. If you are delayed please contact your consultant who will call on your behalf.

## First impressions

- At the interview, make sure that you look smart and presentable! Your consultant will tell you what the company dress code is.
- Practice your hand shake – it sounds silly but better a firm hand shake than a wet fish!
- Smile and be yourself.
- Be aware of your body language, try to keep your hands still, legs crossed and arms open!
- Speak positively about your experience and previous employers.
- Be positive generally!

## The Interview

Interviews generally fall into two categories, formal and informal. Both are detailed below with example questions for you to practice.

## **The informal interview**

This is the hardest interview to get right as there are no right or wrong answers. You will often be meeting with the person whom you will be working closest with. This interview is normally more conversation based with fewer direct questions.

You will often be asked to talk through your cv before discussing your personal goals, interests and ambitions.

To prepare for this interview you should practice talking through your cv in a concise manner (under 5 minutes) drawing out specific duties that match those on the job specification.

During the interview be aware of your body language. Your body language should gently mirror that of your interviewer ensuring that you are not too formal or too relaxed.

## **The formal interview**

This is a standard interview and will be the type of interview you will encounter more often. This is a more questions based interview which may include some competency based questions (see below).

Normally in this interview you will be asked to give a general over view of your cv – again you should prepare a 5 minute synopsis drawing on your relevant experience from the job specification.

The questions that you may be asked include;

### **Company Based Questions:**

- What do you know about our company?
- What key qualities do you feel are important in this role?
- If successful, what do you think the key issues will be in the first six months?
- In your opinion, what is the biggest challenge facing our organisation / sector at the moment?

### **Biographical interview**

- Tell me about yourself?
- What are your strengths?
- What are your weaknesses?
- What five adjectives would you use to describe yourself?
- Why are you leaving your current job?
- Why have you applied to us?
- What motivates you?
- Where do you see yourself in five years / ten years?
- What is your greatest achievement?
- Do you prefer to work as part of a team or independently?
- If I were to speak to your family / friends / boss, how would they describe you?
- How do you like to be managed?

- What do you enjoy about your current role?
- What do you dislike about your current role?
- What element of this role do you think you would dislike the most?
- What is your current remuneration?
- What are your salary expectations?
- What is your biggest disappointment?
- What other jobs have you applied for and at what stage in the recruitment process are you at?

## **Competency based questions**

These questions will almost always start with 'Give me an example of when you...';

- took a difficult / unpopular decision and how did you deal with this
- disagreed with your boss and what action did you take to address the dispute
- were part of a badly performing team and how did you address this
- demonstrated initiative
- identified and addressed a serious operational / financial problem
- delivered results within a highly pressurised situation

## **The end of your interview**

At the end of the interview you will be given an opportunity to ask questions of your own. It is important that you do take this opportunity as this can be seen as a way of showing your enthusiasm.

- Why is this position open?
- What would I be expected to accomplish in this position?
- What are the short term/long term objectives of this role?
- What sort of support is afforded to the position?
- What advancement opportunities are available?
- How is success measured in the company?
- What is the performance appraisal procedure in the company?
- What are the future plans of the department/company?
- When will I hear back on the position?

At the end of the interview thank the person who met with you for their time and also do let them know you are interested in the role (if you are!). Finally call your consultant once you have left your interview. They will want to know how you felt the meeting went and your feelings towards the position. Your consultant will then contact the company and exchange feedback. Your consultant will always come back to you with full feedback of how the company felt the interview went and may offer you suggestions on how to improve your interview technique.