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Study Factsheet Series - No 14

Interview Skills

Job interviews are stressful. You have to come across as friendly, reliable and trustworthy, a good match for the job.

In order to present yourself in the best light, you need to **prepare** well, to **articulate** and **present** well and to **stay calm** throughout the interview.

Be prepared

- > Know the exact place and time of the interview, the interviewer's full name and the correct pronunciation of their title.
- > Find out what the organisation and job are about with plenty of detail. You will understand the organisation better and this will show that you are really interested about working there.
- > Spend time reviewing your resume and experience and its relevance to the position. Be prepared to relay why this role appeals to you and why you should be considered for this job.
- > Identify the specific examples in your background that are directly relevant to the job description which demonstrate your ability to do the job. You might be asked about a certain aspect of a position you held in the past. This will indicate to the employer what behaviour and attitude they might expect from you, so make sure you have some good examples to present to them.
- > Employers often ask about your strengths and weaknesses, so be ready to present yourself well and honestly, while also considering what is relevant to the company.
- > When asked if you have any questions, make sure that you are prepared for it, as this is a way of expressing your interest in this workplace. Asking questions also gives you the opportunity to find out if this is the right place for you. The best questions come from listening to what you are asked during the interview so you may want to ask for additional information. Also, have some questions prepared, just in case, i.e.: about the company, work/shift schedules, staff development opportunities, how they will inform you about the outcome of the interview.

Presentation

- > Make sure you arrive on time wearing appropriate clothing.
- > To demonstrate confidence; stand straight, make eye contact, try to smile and connect with a firm handshake.
- > The interview is a chance to convince the interviewer of your skills and abilities, so make sure you communicate your qualities, rather than being too modest and hiding them. Act confidently, and do not come across desperate to get the job.
- > Try answering questions succinctly - going into sufficient depth without rambling.
- > Don't be too familiar, overly friendly, unless you are sure that that is required from you.

Stay calm

- > Being well prepared should ensure that you don't have to think too hard on your answers, allowing you to feel less anxious.
- > On the day, just before the interview make sure that you practice some form of relaxation or mindfulness, to give you a good, peaceful start (*You might find some tips about how to do this in CIT Tips for Wellbeing Series No.1 and 3*).
- > Practice makes perfect so enlist a friend or family member to do a mock interview with you.

If you don't get the job, learn from it by politely asking for feedback either in an email or on the phone.

If you do: well done!

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