

Interview Preparation

Congratulations on getting through to the interview stage! We all know how important it is to make the best first impression at an interview and at Redbrick Consulting we want to ensure you are as prepared as possible, so here are some of our top tips to help you smash your interview!

Do your Research

Take some time in the week running up to your interview to research the company. Look on their website/ social media/ news and press releases and consider the following questions:

- How long have the company been around for?
- What do they do? What products do they offer?
- What makes them special?
- Who are their target audience?
- Where are they located?
- Who are the management team? How are they structured?
- Who are their competitors? What do you know about the industry they are in?

You will likely be asked by the hiring manager “*Why do you want to work for us?*” and “*What do you know about our company?*”... these are typical ice-breaker questions at the start of any interview, so the more prepared you are with the answers to these questions the better.

Who is interviewing you?

Finding out some information about who the interviewer(s) is can make all the difference to being successful. One of the great things about working with a recruitment agency is that we can often tell you who will be interviewing you and give you a little bit of background information. Consider the following:

- How long has the interviewer worked with the company?
- What is their role? What impact have they made?
- What is their background?
- How will you be working with them?

By showing the interviewer you have done your homework you are demonstrating genuine interest in the company and the people you are going to be working with! Ask your recruiter questions about the hiring manager(s), use LinkedIn and see what you can find out on the company website.

Reflect on your achievements!

If we have put you forward for a position then you obviously impressed us with your skills and achievements, now we just need to ensure that you are able to impress the hiring manager! A big part of any interview is the part where you share your accomplishments, so articulating these in a clear and concise way is imperative.

A good tool for answering behavioural questions is the STAR model. This is a handy formula that allows you to answer questions in a concise and structured way without waffling!

S - Situation

T - Task

A - Action

R - Result

Situation

Set the scene! Give the interviews some context about the situation you were in.

Task

What did you actually have to do in this situation? What were your responsibilities? What was required?

Action

What action did you take to complete the task? What skills did you use? What obstacles did you have to overcome?

Result

What successes did you have? What did you learn? How will this help you in the role you are applying for?

Sometimes people worry about 'blowing their own trumpet', but don't be modest, remember the hiring manager wants to hear about your accomplishments! They may also want to hear about challenges you have faced in your previous roles and how you overcame them, so really challenge yourself to reflect on your experiences and don't be afraid to share!

Practice makes perfect!

The more practice you have at articulating your experience out loud, the better! We really can't emphasise this enough! So find a family member, friend, neighbour, your recruiter, anyone willing to lend a hand...and practice, practice, practice!

Here are a few popular interview questions for you to consider and practice with a friend:

- What do you know about the company?
- Why do you want the job?
- Why do you think you would be a good fit for the role?
- What is your biggest professional achievement?
- Which achievement are you most proud of?
- Tell me about a challenge you have faced at work and how you dealt with it.
- Tell me about a time you have faced conflict in the workplace and how you dealt with this.
- What is your ideal position?
- What are your long term career goals?
- Where do you see yourself in five years?
- Why did you leave your last position?
- What is your management style?
- Can you give me an example of a time you demonstrated strong leadership skills?
- How would your closest friends describe your personality?
- How do you organise yourself?
- How do you deal with high pressure situations?

Question Time!

In the large majority of interviews the hiring manager will always ask this question at the end of the interview:

Do you have any questions for us?

This is the perfect opportunity to ask something insightful to show your genuine interest in the role. Show off your research by asking an engaging question about the company and prove to the hiring manager that you are a serious candidate! Here are some possible questions you could ask:

- I was reading on your website about XXX... can you tell me more about this?
- How has this position evolved?
- How would you describe the company culture?

- What do you like most about working here?
- Can you tell me more about your work journey and how you got into this line of work?
- What opportunities will I have to collaborate with other members of the team?
- What do you think the challenges of the position are?
- What have previous employees done to succeed in this position?
- What does success look like in this role?
- What might a typical day in this position look like?
- How do you help your team grow professionally?

Be Organized

The age old saying of 'perfect planning prevents poor performance' could not be truer when it comes to the logistics of the interview. Things to consider here are:

- Where do you need to be?
- What time do you need to leave?
- Is there parking? How are you going to get there?
- Dress code - what do you need to wear?

Always turn up 5-10minutes early to the interview, no earlier or later! It can be very awkward for hiring managers if you turn up too early, as they may be conducting other interviews or simply have nowhere convenient for you to wait. Turning up around 10 minutes early is just the right amount of time... and of course, do not be late! If the worst happens ALWAYS call ahead and let someone know (and keep your recruiter informed!)

Also... common sense... but please switch your cell onto silent, or better still... **switch it off!** There is nothing more unprofessional than your phone ringing in the middle of a scheduled interview... so take a second to double check this beforehand!

Follow-up! Sending a thank you email to the hiring manager is a polite and professional way of reaffirming your interest in the role. It's amazing how just a couple of lines thanking them for their time can make such a big difference and leave a lasting impression. Speak to your recruiter about this and they can advise you on the best way of doing this.

Finally... remember we are here to support you and be a resource for you in your job search and interview preparation. If you have any questions then please contact any of our recruiters at Redbrick Consulting.

GOOD LUCK!