

Outlook Unlimited Interview Guidelines

Interviews can be a nerve racking time even for the most confident of people; it's only natural to be apprehensive about what they will involve.

Preparation is the key to feeling confident and doing well in an interview situation.

There are two main styles of interview, an informal chat about you and your CV, or a set of competency-based questions.

Here at Outlook Unlimited we do all we can to help candidates prepare for both interview situations, We have put together some guidelines to offer information and advice to ensure candidates are fully prepared when they go out to interview, ensuring the best chance of future success.

There are some things you should always do before going to an interview...



Find out everything you can about the company

Look at their website; find out about all areas of the business, especially the area you are applying to work in.

Make sure you have a copy of the Job Spec with you

Ensure you have read the job spec fully, this will allow you to relate past experiences to specific points of the job applied for.

Prepare Questions to ask the interviewer

Think of questions you can ask the interviewer at the end of the interview. Where will I be working? How many people would be in the team? Try to show genuine interest about the company rather than asking about salary, benefits etc. If you prepare 5 Questions, you should still have something to ask at the end of the interview even if some of your questions have been answered throughout the interview itself.

What to wear

Making a good first impression is key to a successful interview. You should always wear a suit (preferably dark) Your hair must be clean, neat and tidy. Gentlemen always wear a tie – its better to be overdressed than under. Make sure your nails are clean and tidy and don't wear too much jewellery.

Body Language

When you are being interviewed it is very important that you give out the right signals.

You must always look attentive so never slouch in your chair

Make eye contact with the interviewer when necessary, don't stare but you do need to make contact.

Never lie to anyone in an interview situation - your body language and tone of voice or words that you use will probably give you away. Classic body language giveaways include scratching your nose and not looking directly at the other person when you are speaking to them.

The most important aspect of body language is your handshake, having a limp handshake is never a good signal to the interviewer.



Things that can cost you the job

Saying unfavourable things about previous employers- the client will be wondering what you will say about them

Making excuses for failings

Being unprepared for the interview

Unable to communicate clearly and effectively

Poor/ limp handshake

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So what are the different interview types?

Style 1 – The Informal Chat

This style of interview can be less daunting than a competency based interview, however there is still plenty of preparation that can be done to help you shine.

Always take a copy of your CV with you and ensure the Interviewer has a copy too.

The interview will very often start with the question- Tell me about yourself.....?

They don't want to know your favourite colour or pet's name! Tell them about what kind of person you are and your working style. Think before you get the interview how you are going to answer this question.



Before you get to the interview, look at your CV with the job spec in front of you and write down some questions that you would ask if **you** were interviewing for the job (in other words, the other side of the table). Make sure you can answer these from your CV.

Style 2 – The Competency based Interview

Competency based interviews are very different from an informal chat.

The style of questioning used in a competency based interview is looking for you to give examples of how you have worked, and the competencies you have gained from your previous employment.

They are looking for you to draw on your past experiences and may ask you for examples of.....

When you have worked well as a part of a team

When you have shown initiative

When you have overcome a difficult situation

When you have worked well under pressure

They are not going to run through your CV as they would in the previous example.

Please see our guide to competency based interviews for more examples on how to best prepare for this interview situation

You should always be made aware of which interview style the client will be conducting. If you are not told ask.

Salary

This is always a difficult situation to handle regardless of the interview style. The interviewer should already know the salary that you are on, but if they don't know already, then tell them along with any benefits that you have added on.

They will also ask you what salary you require. Be cautious about what you answer with, as you can appear too greedy or come across as very cheap. Ideally let them tell you the boundaries that they are looking to pay.



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Coming to the end of an interview

When the interview is coming to an end, you have to make sure that you have covered everything that is needed to make sure that you can make a decision on the position should it be offered at this stage?

Now is the time to ask any lingering questions that you may have.

An important question to ask if they need to know anything more about you, do they have any queries about your career history. Make sure if they do that you clear them up straight away as this could be a crucial element in their decision making process.

Remember the interview is a two way process. The company will want to find out whether you are suitable for the position and you will want to find out if the company and the position are right for you. By the end of the interview you need to make sure that you have enough information to make up your mind whether you want the job.



After the interview

It is good practice to send interview "thank you" letters soon after you have had any interviews. This will make you stand out from everyone else that has been interviewed- very few people will bother to write to say thank you. This is optional but in this letter you should thank the interviewer for the time that they spent with you, also add a bit more information about yourself if possible and reiterate your interest in the position that you were interviewed for.

Here at Outlook Unlimited we aim to provide candidates with all the information they will need to remain calm and confident when attending interviews. If you require any further assistance or information regarding interview preparation, please ask your consultant who will be happy to help.

Good Luck!



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solving the people puzzle

