



## **HOW TO MASTER A JOB INTERVIEW**

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

According to recent the youth unemployment remains very high. Almost a quarter of young people (under the age of 25) in the eurozone were unemployed in January, with that figure rising to 59% in Greece and 54.6% in Spain. For those mentioned reasons we have decided to create a following manual. The aim of this manual is to provide young inexperienced job seekers a guide on how to master a job interview. Job interview is little bit like a performance; it is not just about what you say but also about how you say it. Some people also ignore the importance of their body language and image. In 3 main parts of this document you will be guided on how to increase your chances in a job interview by giving some advices and tips. Information provided in this manual are mainly based on data from different sources, practical advice were given by different personal agencies and employers who were willing to take part in this project, and last but not least by our own personal experience.

## 2. HOW TO PREPARE FOR A JOB INTERVIEW

If you want to succeed in a job interview, it is necessary to be well prepared for it in advance. Many graduates of secondary schools, colleges and universities do not have much experience with an interview, therefore the study focuses on the basic recommendations how to prepare and on what to be prepared during a job interview.

### ■ FIND OUT AS MUCH INFORMATION ABOUT THE COMPANY AS POSSIBLE

If you're going to an interview for a specific company, the interview could include questions such as: Why did you choose our company? What can you offer to our company? etc. Therefore, it is good to find out as much information as possible about the company, usually available on the company's website. The aim is not to memorize the history of the company and all its partners, but at least have a basic idea of what the company does.

### ■ PREPARE FOR LIKELY INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

As mentioned above, it is important to look naturally and relaxed. Answers to questions should not be learned by heart.

**Here are some selected questions, which is good to be prepared for in advance:**

#### **WHAT DO YOU THINK YOU CAN OFFER OUR COMPANY?**

Here one should mention his/her knowledge in certain specialization and interest in the job. If you are a graduate with almost zero experience, you should show you are creative, you are able to learn new things or you are willing to continue in vocational education.

#### **WHY DID YOU LEAVE YOUR FORMER JOB?**

Whatever were the reasons for your leave, never denigrate your previous boss and company. It gives a negative image of the candidate. It is good to change the subject.

## **WHY DO YOU WANT TO WORK FOR OUR COMPANY?**

The answer depends on how much do you know about the company itself. You can tell that the objectives and priorities of the company concur with yours. It is appropriate to mention what you want to do, if you get the job. Also it is not advised to say that the reason why you chose the company is that it is a big or successful company. It also makes a negative impression of you.

## **WHAT ARE YOUR STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES?**

As for the weaknesses, it is not good to say that you have none. It may look arrogant and too confident to the employer or HR assistant. One should mention such weaknesses on which it is possible to work on or which do not completely relate to the desired profession.

## **WHAT ARE YOUR EXPECTATIONS REGARDING YOUR SALARY?**

This is always a tricky question, especially for young graduates who still have no idea about how much they could ask for. Good idea is to calculate your living costs in advance, find out the average salary in similar jobs, think about your knowledge and skills and then make a proposal of your salary.

## **WHY SHOULD WE CHOOSE YOU?**

It is important to mention knowledge of the position you are applying for. It is important to know the job description, to have an idea about the responsibilities and tasks that the position requires. As an advantage over other candidates you can mention your education, language skills, previous working experience or personal attributes. These all can distinguish you from other candidates.

### **■ PREPARE YOUR ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS**

At the end of an interview it is good to prepare additional questions. It makes an impression that you are really interested in the job.

### **■ PREPARE AN APPROPRIATE OUTFIT**

The key for a good interview is to look seriously. For men, suit is a good choice, while for women it could be either a blouse and skirt or women suit. However, the outfit depends very much on the position you are applying for. Women should also select a decent make-up.

## **3. HOW TO BEHAVE AT A JOB INTERVIEW**

You have finally made it to the interview stage! But remember that a job interview is a little bit like a performance and here are some tips for your character.

### **■ WHEN YOU ENTER IN**

According to psychologists the very first minutes are crucial. Within them the interviewer is subconsciously making decisions about you and whether you would fit in the team or not. Bear this in mind while you are entering the interview room. You always have to say hello to the interviewer. Also try to give an impression that you are calm and relaxed. Remember that for the interviewer, you may well be his/her tenth applicant of the day the time you enter in. So smile when appropriate and an make eye contact because that can help you to be distinguished from the others. Before you sit down in front of the interviewer shake his/her

hand. Hand shake is not just a formality but it has a great importance. The way you shake hands tells a lot about you as a person. So guard against giving a weak handshake. It gives an impression that either you are not really interested in the position or that you are “weak” as a person. On the other hand avoid any bone cracking sounds. You should release the hand after a second or two. When someone shakes too hard or for too long, it suggests negative excess or overcompensation. Also keep in mind that your hands have to be clean. There is nothing worse than shaking a sticky dirty hand!

#### ■ **SPEAKING AT YOUR JOB INTERVIEW**

The way you are sitting also says a lot about you. Sit upright with your shoulders back, relax and try to maintain the eye contact. If there are more interviewers share out your eye contact. Before you start answering questions remember the body language is extremely important. It is not what you say, but how you say it. So while you are at the job interview do not look on the floor. Control your body language so your movements are slow and smooth. Use your hands when making a point. The very beginning of an interview usually starts with: “Tell me something about yourself”. Obviously there are many ways how to answer this question. But your answer should contain following points: where were you born, your education and what degree you have attained, your work experience and finally your objectives. By doing this you show the interviewer that you are optimistic and you have direction in your mind. In the second part the interviewer asks you different kinds of questions. For some of them you can prepare in advance. Bear in mind that you should look excited and interested. Also do not rush with your answer, take your time and if you do not understand, ask for a clarification.

### **4. THE MOST COMMON JOB INTERVIEW MISTAKES**

It is in our nature that we are making mistakes. But at these kinds of events you should reduce them as much as possible. Unfortunately, sometimes we do not even realise doing them so here are some tips what you definitely should be aware of.

#### ■ **INAPPROPRIATELY DRESSING (MAKING A GOOD IMPRESSION)**

Remember that making a good impression is vital. You should avoid wearing jeans, spike heels, bright flashy colours (same for make-up). Men should never wear colourful socks in black shoes. Also make sure that your clothes are clean and not rumpled. Women should not be too provocative and they should always wear nylons, if wearing a skirt.

#### ■ **LATE ARRIVALS**

Arriving late does not only show that you are not good at time management, it can be also seen as lack of respect to the company, the position and even the interviewer. So try to manage your time to be there ten to fifteen minutes earlier. As well as you don't want to end up at the interview sweaty just because you were rushing there.

#### ■ **BRINGING A DRINK WITH YOU AND CHEWING A GUM**

Entering the interview room with a drink looks very unprofessional in the first place. Chewing a gum gives an impression that you are not a very polite person.

## ■ USING YOUR MOBILE PHONE

Before you enter the interview room, silence or switch off your mobile phone. That means do not make or answer calls, texting is also not allowed. It is not only rude and discourteous, but it shows that you have other priorities than the interview.

## ■ TALKING TOO MUCH AND BEING LOUD

The interviewer does not need to know your whole life story. So try to be constructive, brief and accurate. Try to avoid talking about personal life or giving too many points. If you have a problem with talking too loud, try to control yourself.

## ■ INTERNET AND SOCIAL NETWORK PROFILE WITH INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT

Nowadays many HR specialists are using internet and social networks for searching information about the applicant. Because of that, it is important to have on your mind what information you are publishing on the internet, especially at your Facebook profile. Damaging photos, vulgarity or denigration could be a reason for not being invited to an interview.

## ■ BODY LANGUAGE AND HAND SHAKE

Those two things are crucial. If you tend to be clumsy and have tics when you are nervous, try to work on yourself. There are plenty of tactics how to prevail nervousness. For example, take several deep breaths.

## ■ IMPOLITE BEHAVIOUR

No one wants to work with someone who is gossiping his/her colleagues behind their backs. So be careful on what you are saying about your ex boss or ex colleagues. Also some people are behaving differently when they are nervous. There is no need for you to be submissive just because you feel inferior to your interviewer. On the other hand, do not be too self-confident. For example, do not correct the interviewer.

## 5. SUMMARY

Although every job interview is very stressful keep in your mind that interviewers have enough work to do. So once you are invited to the personal interview you are there because they are interested in your profile. There is no need to be nervous because of the interviewer. He/she is not perfect. They have probably come through many interviews until they finally found their job. Also remember the interview is not only about choosing you as a future employee – the final decision is on you.

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