

T HE INTERVIEW

Not only is what we say important in a selection interview, but also how we say it.

In this document we work on both the contents of the interview as well as verbal and non-verbal communications matters that can help you to succeed in the selection process.

The interview is another step forward and usually the last and most important one within the selection process. It is a dialogue with questions and answers relative to professional, training and personal matters, during which both the interviewing and the interviewed party try to clear up their doubts.

During the interview you must take into account the things you say verbally without forgetting the details you transmit with your attitude and the way you behave.

What is the interview for?

- ✓ To extend the information that we already have on the candidate gathered by means of the CV that has been previously submitted.
- ✓ To make sure that the personal style of the candidate (attitude, motivations, personality, skills, experience, ...) coincides with the company's expectations.
- ✓ So that the interviewer can make sure that candidate is suitable for the vacancy.
- ✓ So that the candidate can value if this job suits and interests him or her.

STRUCTURE OF THE INTERVIEW

The interview is usually divided into several stages:

1. Introduction:

- ✓ Reception
- ✓ Greetings and introductions
- ✓ Introductory conversation
- ✓ Clarifications regarding the interview

2. Development. Questions about:

- ✓ Training and studies
- ✓ Professional experience
- ✓ Personal matters



- ✓ Desired labour conditions

3. End:

- ✓ Clarification of doubts
- ✓ Farewell

BEFORE THE INTERVIEW

Before attending an interview it is convenient to:

- ✓ **Gather information about the company** in question and its sector. It may be helpful to check the company's Website, as well as catalogues, leaflets or to ask family members or friends that work for the company, etc.
- ✓ **Go over your CV** and the letter of introduction sent when you requested the job, because these are the documents that the interviewer is going to use as a reference when asking you questions.
- ✓ **It is important to prepare how to explain** your educational and professional background (studies, degrees, professional tasks, companies, changes, successes, failures, future projects, motivations, interests and objectives) in a consistent and positive manner.
- ✓ **It is also necessary to prepare with attention the answers to personal questions** because they are difficult to improvise (motivations, interests, attitude ...). To do so, you will need to be very aware about the competence that suit the job for which you are applying.
- ✓ **The candidate is the person who must facilitate the work** of the interviewer and not wait for the latter to deduce the reasons why the candidate should be contracted or the things that he or she could contribute with at the workplace.

DURING THE INTERVIEW

- ✓ Attend the interview with **confidence and being sure** that company has chosen you as a possible candidate and it now wants to get to know you even more.
- ✓ **Pay special attention** during the first minutes of the interview, since it will provide you with worthy information for the rest of the interview.
- ✓ Adopt a positive and consistent attitude regarding the questions made during the interview.
 - Persons with hardly any experience must highlight their training, their motivation and interest in this professional sector or occupation, their willingness to learn ...
 - Persons with hardly and training but lots of experience must highlight their professional competences, their knowledge of the sector, their willingness to learn...
- ✓ It is convenient to ask questions about the company, the business or the post to be occupied.
- ✓ After each interview, analyse how you think it went.



VERBAL COMMUNICATION RULES

Basic behaviours:

- ✓ Prepare your answers and the way to express them, avoiding monosyllables, extremely colloquial or far-fetched vocabulary.
- ✓ Use the same language as the interviewer.
- ✓ Questions to the interviewer (prepare them just in case that are issues that you are interested in that do not come out).
- ✓ Positive restatement.
- ✓ Positive comments regarding your interests, aims and hobbies.
- ✓ Positive comments about your experiences: "your successes".
- ✓ Comments that reflect interest and enthusiasm: "your motivations"
- ✓ Use confident expressions.
- ✓ Do not provide detrimental information.

Expressions

That state your SUCCESSES

I was in charge of...
 I have had the opportunity to learn ...
 My performance has been satisfactory in...
 I have cooperated with...
 I have carried out ...
 I was head of ...
 I have prepared myself very well for ...
 I fully dedicated myself to ...
 I was very satisfied with

That show CONFIDENCE

I am sure that ...
 My experience is important ...
 I will do it well ...
 I will match up to ...
 I will know how to respond ...
 It adapts to my possibilities ...

That indicate MOTIVATIONS

I am very interested in ...
 I would like to be able to work in a place like this...
 For me, it is very important that the job ...
 I can not wait to apply my knowledge to ...
 This is the job I have always wanted ...
 I would be very happy if ...
 I am very motivated to ...

NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION RULES

If verbal communication refers to what we say, non-verbal communication refers to how we say it and how we behave. What we do not say but imply is even as important as what we say. Non-verbal communication provides the



interviewer with the same or more information than would the candidate really says. In the case of an inconsistency between the verbal and the non-verbal message, we usually tend to believe the non-verbal one, since it is more difficult to hide.

We are now going to give some ideas about the possible meanings that can be attributed to your behaviours:

- ✓ **Way of dressing:** you must wear clothes that are appropriate for the job that you are applying for. A person applying for a job as a high fashion shop assistant should not wear the same clothes as a person applying for a job at a market store. Not only do the clothes have to be appropriate, but also clean and not tattered or torn.
- ✓ **Hygiene:** hygiene relative to hair and hands is very important, as well as body odour matters. A careless hygiene is easier to identify than an excessively cared hygiene.
- ✓ **Shaking hands:** the way we shake hands influences the attitude of the interviewer; we have to avoid shaking hands gently, since it reflects a lack of energy and decision. A moist hand causes an unpleasant feeling on the other person.
- ✓ **Facial expression:** the expression of our face indicates our mood, our feelings, and therefore it is necessary that our expression tallies with our message.
- ✓ **Smile:** at certain moments of the interview since it involves opening the communication channels. Sometimes a smile can give an image of a pleasant person.
- ✓ **Eye contact:** looking at the other person's eyes is the best way to transmit honesty.
- ✓ **Body position:** you must sit correctly, you should not lean back (it may reflect lack of interest) or forwards (it could show nervousness or worry).
- ✓ **Hand language:** during the conversation it is correct to emphasize our explanations with hand gestures, but we should make sure that we do not go over the top.
- ✓ **Bad habits or tics:** we should avoid movements that we are used to doing when we are nervous, scratching our nose, touching our hair, tapping the table with our fingers... These movements indicate nervousness and lack of confidence and control.
- ✓ **Chewing gum:** we should never attend an interview chewing gum.
- ✓ **Punctuality:** we should always arrive at selection interviews with enough time in advance to calm ourselves before we start.
- ✓ **Mobile phone:** before we start the interview we should switch off our mobile phone in order to avoid inappropriate interruptions.

ADVICE TO BE WELL CONSIDERED

Recommendations regarding what is considered as positive in a personal interview:

- ✓ Show interest about the job.
- ✓ Show a positive and enthusiastic attitude.
- ✓ Be a good communicator.



- ✓ Have self-confidence.
- ✓ Give a mature image.
- ✓ Get involved with the job, believe in what you are doing.
- ✓ Be pleasant, try to be nice.
- ✓ Cope with the tension.
- ✓ Show capacity to organise and plan.
- ✓ Prove to have initiative.
- ✓ Have capacity to adapt.
- ✓ Be able to work in a team.

During the selection interview, the interviewer may ask all sorts of questions. We are now going to list some of them classified by subjects:

Examples of questions

About your educational background:

- ✓ Why did you choose your studies?
It is very important to give a well reasoned answer in chronological order. You must avoid answers such as: "because I did not know what to do" or "because my marks were not good enough to study anything else".
- ✓ How have your studies affected the development of your professional career?
- ✓ What subjects or matters were you most interested in? And which were you least interested in?
You can highlight subjects relative to the requested job.
- ✓ Which subjects did you find harder? Why?
- ✓ If you were to start over again, would you choose the same studies?
It is important to reason and adapt the answer to the importance of your degree regarding the job in question.
- ✓ Are you willing to complete your training in whatever fields are required?
If your answer is affirmative you will cause a good impression since you will prove your interest in learning and acquiring the training necessary for the job.
- ✓ What languages do you speak and at what level?
The answer will be verified. Honesty is very important.
- ✓ What made you choose your studies?
Once again, honesty is very important, but remember that it is positive to name people with more experience.
- ✓ To what extent are your marks due to your effort and to what extent are they due to your intelligence?
Perseverance and effort are highly valued in the labour field.
- ✓ What was your most gratifying experience during your life as a student?
You should show enthusiasm when answering.
- ✓ Do you intend to carry on studying?
Remember, one can never know too much.

About your professional experience:

- ✓ How do you think your previous professional experiences have prepared you?
- ✓ What functions did you carry out at your previous job?



- ✓ What type of relationship did you have with your previous supervisor? In which aspects did you agree and which did you disagree?
- ✓ Can you recall any problematic situations that occurred in your previous jobs? How did you solve them?
- ✓ What were your achievements and successes at your last company?
- ✓ Why did you leave your last job?

Personal matters:

- ✓ What are your best virtues?
- ✓ What are your worst faults?
Do not say that you do not have any. It is recommendable to say aspects that are positive for your work: "I am very perfectionist", "I am very punctual and I become very impatient when somebody is late".
- ✓ What is your relation with your parents / brothers / partner / friends?
- ✓ How do you usually react before an authority?
- ✓ How would you define yourself? Or tell us about yourself.
- ✓ What do you do in your spare time?
- ✓ Tell us about your non-professional activities and hobbies.
- ✓ What does this sport provide you with? Or which is the last film you have seen? Or which is the last book that you have read?

Regarding the reasons why you are applying for this job:

- ✓ Why did you get in touch with our company?
Use this question to praise the company: "It is a great company which is very prestigious in this sector".
- ✓ Why are you interested in this job?
- ✓ What do you think you can contribute if you do not have professional experience?
- ✓ What makes you think you have enough capacity to occupy this post?

Regarding the job:

- ✓ Why do you think we should contract you and not another person?
You should give examples of problems that you have solved successfully, of team-work, of situations in which you have proven your strength ... in accordance with the job.
- ✓ What do you expect from this job?
Find in the company. "To have the opportunity to improve, to have the opportunity to develop a professional career..."
- ✓ What do you think about your former supervisors?
You should never badly about your former supervisors or workmates.
- ✓ What do you most value about a job?

Regarding your future:

- ✓ What are your short, medium and long term aims?
- ✓ What job would you like to have in five years time?
- ✓ Would you be willing to live abroad if we were to require you to do so?

Regarding your personal conditions:

- ✓ Could you incorporate immediately?
- ✓ Do you mind having to travel often?

- ✓ Do you have a car?

Regarding your remuneration:

- ✓ What is the minimum amount you require to cover you current needs?
- ✓ How much would you like to earn?
- ✓ Is the economic factor really the most important one in your decision?

Questions that you can ask once the interview is over:

- ✓ What are the specific functions of the vacancy?
- ✓ What am I expected to achieve in this job?
- ✓ What is the current situation of this job?
- ✓ What are the most important challenges or difficulties which I may come across in this job?

