



How to impress an employer

This is essential to your goal of obtaining the job.

So preparation is the key, which means researching the company and the opportunity available.

If you know anyone who has worked for the company, contact them and ask questions about the company, the nature of the work, what sort of employer/boss are they, what is the company culture?

Try to find out if there are any recurrent issues or problems. What sort of skills and experience are needed?

Then tailor your cv and cover letter to detail how your skills and experience will meet these requirements.

Bring out the fact that you are a goal/task oriented individual. Tell a story describing a key project and how you delivered a result.

Role play interviews and if possible video record so that you can analyse afterwards.

Be critical of yourself and look for areas to improve

Prepare a list of questions that you expect to be asked at the interview along with your response.

Prepare a list of questions that you wish to ask your employer at the interview. Some of these questions maybe covered during the interview process.

Keep your enthusiasm up and stay positive.

Learn to vary your voice and delivery during the interview. Become excited on certain topics or issues you are passionate about.

Try a trial close, what I call the thermometer test! Listen carefully to the reply and try and discover any uncovered issues.

Keep questioning for a greater understanding of situation, issues or concerns.

Try to get employer to articulate what they consider to be their ideal candidate.

If opportunity is not a good fit, bring the interview to a polite close thanking the employer for their time and interest in meeting you.

Then ask if there are any other opportunities coming available that might be a better match.

The Interview

Another element of taking your search seriously is the level of effort you have put forth in personal competency development. What have you done to increase your awareness of the marketplace? What have you done to improve and expand your skills and experience on your own?

Opportunity is about working with recruiters, and or HR professionals so that they will identify you as talent that they wish to engage with allowing them the opportunity to contact you again when there is that RIGHT role. Everybody is talking about engagement, talent acquisition – however, YOU, the candidate, are still considering getting a job as a transaction, where you just flick out your CV.

Getting the Right job requires effort, dedication and some nous. Can you say, that you have thought about this? Seriously!

More and more employers are now searching for better ways to employ good people. We all know stories where we have hired the wrong person and the problems this cause – it's a lose –lose scenario. Wasted effort all round.

Employers now are looking at assessment techniques mentioned earlier behavioural and competency based interviewing, technical ability tests, psychometric tests, asking people to prepare a presentation to deliver to interview panel, reference checking the list goes on. It's not just an interview and a reference check any more.

Helium advocates preparation and planning both in your CV and for the interview. Feedback from clients is staggering about the number of people that do no research or preparation for interviews and wing it. This sort of behaviour is transparent and obvious and results in rejection. This is not the outcome we are seeking, yet why do so many people treat the interview process with disrespect.

Employers are seeking people who are motivated and interested in working for them in the role advertised. It's about ENGAGEMENT making the employer feel that you are interested and challenged by the role they are offering. It's simple, yet so many of us fail at this level.

Some Tips: Interview Role plays

Get two friends to assist you simulate an interview. Use one person as the Interviewer and the other as an observer. Video record the interview.

Afterwards conduct a debrief and analysis of the interview. Where were the weak moments? What caused you the moment of hesitation or fluster.

Repeat again using different situation.

If experiencing difficulty breathe, ask for time to think about the question rather than respond straight away.

10 Reasons Why Interviews Fail

10. Over-explaining why you lost your last job. It's okay to mention that your last position was eliminated, but then move on to what you can do for this employer.

Emphasise what you bring to the new employer, how you can help the hiring manager become more successful by making him look good.

9. Conveying that you're not over it. During interviews, some people act wounded, angry or sad. These are normal emotions after a redundancy but they don't belong in a job interview -- or you may give an impression of being unstable and communicate that you don't grasp the business reasons for redundancy.

Give your self a health check after a redundancy or restructure – make sure you are in a positive frame of mind and are clear on your career direction.

If asked by the interviewer a negative question about say, " What didn't you like about your previous manager or company" Try to answer this as a positive by suggesting things that might have been improved, try and leave out the personal comments.

8. Lacking humor, warmth, or personality. Many anxious job candidates can be one-dimensional during interviews, and are too focused on getting their talking points across. Don't forget to show qualities that can be a real plus in the decision-making process, including humor in good taste, warmth, and understanding. One thing interviewers want to know, of course, is how pleasant you would be to have around the place every day.

A smile goes an extremely long way.

7. Not showing enough interest or enthusiasm. After all, companies are looking for people who are excited about working with them and for them. This is critical especially during the first interview because if you fail to convince the interviewer you have the skills, experience and passion for the job, then you will not pass GO and collect \$200.00.

There are some simple ways to do this: research the company, find out about any interesting or new projects the company is involved or initiating. Mention this during the interview. Compliment interviewer on these initiatives, or refer to the article of news that you read about.

6. Inadequate research about a potential employer. It's essential to be up on the latest news, so be sure to research the company before the interview. Be prepared with well-informed, thoughtful questions about its products or services and its future plans. Many applicants aren't bothering and it shows.

Refer to comment about showing interest above.

Compile a list of questions you want to ask, have it written down prior to interview. When interviewer asks if you have any questions bring out the paper and go through questions. If any have been answered during the interview acknowledge this.

5. Concentrating too much on what you want. Focus more on what the interviewer is saying. Listening carefully is crucial in steering the conversation toward how you would fit in and what you have to offer. Asking questions will give you clues as how best to answer those difficult or leading questions from an interviewer.

Place yourself in the employer's shoes and try to think what they are looking for, then seek to present evidence that you meet the requirements.

The place for negotiating what your expectations are is at the offer stage and not before. Disclosing what you want early in an interview can be the kiss of death.

4. Trying to be all things to all people. Devote most of your effort to talking about what you know you do well, and don't try to stretch your actual qualifications too far. A good rule of thumb: Don't apply for any job unless you have at least 75% of the stated qualifications.

Be realistic and honest about your skills and experience target those roles that will give you the best chance of success.

3. "Winging" the interview. Many hiring managers say that candidates often aren't ready to answer difficult questions. So rehearse. Prepare and practice a 90-second verbal resume, and some answers to possible questions, particularly in the situational and behavioural areas - so that you come across as succinct.

Remember this is about providing evidence and examples that are factual and demonstrate your skills. Generic and high level answers are a fail!!! You need to drill down to the detail, so again place yourself as the interviewer and ask your self what sort of question will be asked next? Have the answer ready.

However, even better is to have taken the person on the journey from start to finish.

2. Failing to set yourself apart from other candidates. You have to make the strongest possible case for why you are the best person for the job. Specifically address what impact you can have for them. Use quantifiable achievements from past positions to back up your performance promise.

1. Failing to ask for the job. You have a much better chance of getting the job if you ask for it. Close the interview by summing up what you can bring to the job, and ask for the opportunity to deliver those results.

Refer to other Blogs on:

CV

How to Identify the Right Job

How to Impress an Employer

Picking a Referee

Negotiating an Offer