

Pre-Interview Guide

Once you have secured an interview this will be your first opportunity to meet with a representative from the prospective business. First interviews may vary in format and style, for instance you may meet for an informal chat or a coffee, you may be interviewed by a panel or you may meet with a member of the HR team. Your Radley Green consultant will inform you of the interview type prior to your first interview. Whatever the format it is important to remember it is still an interview and integral to you securing the position.

Preparation is key so it is important that you have an in-depth knowledge of the detail you have presented on your CV and are comfortable talking confidently about your experience, skill sets and achievements. You will also need a detailed understanding of the job specification and requirements of the role. Think about any questions that you may have or gaps in your knowledge and speak to your Radley Green consultant to clarify these points prior to interview.

At this stage it is important you research the company and develop an in-depth understanding of the business; this is more than knowing how many offices they have and where they are located.

Please find below a few points to consider when preparing for your interview:

- Begin with a search of the company's corporate website to identify any trends, developments or key items of news.
- Look to see whether they have a LinkedIn or Facebook page or follow them on Twitter. This is a great way of finding out the most up to date news or industry information that they have identified as important or relevant to them.
- Google the company name and see if other businesses are talking about them or their goods, products or services.
- You will also find links to information about their trading history and accounts where appropriate.
- Trade press and websites will also be a useful source of information about them, their competitors or specific industry news and information.

Ensure you plan your journey and arrive on time. We would not recommend being more than 10 minutes early and definitely do not be late! Use www.streetmap.co.uk to find the exact location of your interview.

Interview Guide

Please find below a few points to consider when attending an interview:

- First impressions count so ensure you make an effort with your presentation. Speak with your Radley Green consultant prior to interview and identify the best dress code for the day.
- Introduce yourself in a confident and professional but friendly manner and aim to develop rapport with the interviewer.
- Your handshake, eye contact and body language will all be considered by the interviewer so be sure to have a good firm hand shake, maintain eye contact with your interviewer and keep your body language positive.
- During the first interview never discuss salary unless the interviewer raises the conversation; getting the job at this stage is the main priority - salary negotiations will follow.
- Ensure you have prepared 5-10 intelligent questions prior to the interview as you will be asked if you have any questions at the end of the interview. Most of your questions will be covered by the interviewer during the interview but some areas will not be covered. The questions you prepare should relate to the role and requirements for the position, the team and work environment and the future of the company. An interview is a two way process and always find out as much as you can about the role, team and company so you can make an informed decision regarding the position.

Some examples of questions for the interviewer are:

- How is the finance department structured and where does this role fit in?
- What are the potential career paths that might be available to me?
- What are the opportunities for further training?
- Where is your company going? Expansion plans?
- Can you tell me more about the role as job specifications do not always give the full picture?
- What type of person are you looking for in the role?
- What type of skill set are you looking for in this role?
- "I read an article on your company/I read an article on your website.....can you tell me more?"
- I understand that you have just introduced a new product/service. How has it been received in the market?

Speak to your Radley Green consultant for further relevant interview questions.

Common interview questions

During the course of the interview the potential employer is looking to gain an understanding of you, your skill set, your suitability for the role and your ability to fit into the environment. It is important you gain an understanding of whether the role and opportunity will provide you with the most appropriate step in your career. When answering questions you will need to find the middle ground between being concise and selling yourself. It is important that you are well prepared and think about your answers well in advance of the interview. Keep the information you present concise and relevant and always use examples from your previous or current role to highlight your skills and display the range of experience you can offer.

It is very important your answers are always positive and if you have any negative thoughts during the interview remember them and speak to your Radley Green consultant once you have finished. Often these are due to a misunderstanding or lack of clarity which can be discussed after the interview.

Potential employer questions include:

- Tell me about yourself.
- Talk me through your CV to date.
- Why are you considering leaving your current role?
- What are you looking for in your next role?
- How would your colleagues describe you?
- What makes you different from the other candidates going for this position?
- Why do you want to work for this company?
- What do you know about this company?
- What kinds of tasks and responsibilities motivate you the most?
- Why do you think you would be good at this job?
- Which part of this role is least attractive to you?
- How do you see this job developing your skills and experience?
- Tell me about what you learned from your previous jobs.
- What strengths and attributes could you bring to this position?
- What are your career goals?
- What do you believe are the key issues and problems in our industry today?
- What do you think it takes to be successful in this field?
- In what kind of work environment do you do your best work?
- What kind of people do you like to work with?
- What did you dislike most about your last job?
- What is your greatest strength?
- What is your greatest weakness?
- Where do you see yourself in five/ten years?

Competency based questions:

Competency based interviews are increasingly common and employers will invariably include competency based questions in their interview. This type of questioning is scenario based and the employer will be looking to gain an understanding of your skill set. The employer will look to identify key skills including communication, influencing, management, teamwork and conflict resolution. When answering these questions you should always be positive and show how your skills overcame any issue or challenge.

Potential competency based questions will include:

- Can you give me an example of when you had to work under a great deal of pressure?
- Tell me about the biggest challenge you have faced in your career? How did you overcome this?
- Can you describe a time when you have had to make an important decision that may not have been popular with your colleagues? How did you handle this?
- Can you give me an example of when you have struggled in a position? How did you handle this?
- Have you managed a project? Can you take me through how you approached it and what challenges you faced?

Closing the interview:

- At the end of the interview always ensure you have asked all the questions you wanted to ask and found out all the information you need to make an informed decision.
- When the interview has come to an end ensure you thank the interviewer.
- If the position is one you are interested in then, if appropriate, ask what the next stage will be.
- If you are offered the role in the interview and it is one you are interested in then accept the role and speak to your Radley Green consultant immediately afterwards as we will speak to the employer to confirm salary/daily/hourly rate, benefits, start date etc.
- If you are offered the role in the interview and you are not interested in the position then let the interviewer know you will need more time to think about it and then speak to your Radley Green consultant immediately. You must be tactful in saying you need more time to deliberate as in retrospect you may change your mind and be positive about the role.
- It is important to remain positive during the interview even if you feel things are not going as well as you had hoped. This could be down to nerves and the interviewer could actually think you are performing very well.

Post Interview

After the interview it is essential that you call your Radley Green consultant immediately. It is important we receive your feedback and honest thoughts about the position, interviewer and company as soon as possible when everything is still fresh and clear in your mind. If you have another interview that day or have to go back to work your initial thoughts often become unclear. Receiving your feedback is also very important as your consultant will not be able to get feedback from the client without speaking to you first.

Whether the feedback from an interview is positive or negative it is a good opportunity to take on board the points made and develop your interview skills.

The Radley Green team would like to wish you luck in your interview and if you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact your consultant on 0203 617 7100