

## ***INTERVIEW GUIDE***

### ***HOW TO APPROACH A SALES INTERVIEW AND BE SUCCESSFUL***

#### ***INTRODUCTION***

Make sure you know exactly where the interview will take place and the name and position of the person you are due to meet. Work out your route in advance and allow a generous margin of error in case of unforeseen circumstances.

Have the telephone number of the company handy so that you can let them know if you are running late - this is generally forgiven where as unannounced lateness generally isn't.

Find out roughly how long the interview will take and arrange other appointments accordingly - don't leave your car on a meter and end up worrying more about being clamped than getting the job.

#### ***RESEARCH***

Where we can, we include company information to help you prepare for your interview and better understand the company and the work it produces. However, you may find that digging a little deeper also boosts your confidence at the interview. Being even a little knowledgeable demonstrates to the interviewer that you have gone to the trouble to see whether you'd fit into the team and make a successful 'career' out of a 'job'. Make sure you ask intelligent questions but not of the 'how much holiday do I get' variety!

#### ***TEST YOURSELF***

Time and again interviewers ask the same general questions in addition to those of a more technical nature. Common are "Why are you interested in this position?" "Tell me about your current boss". "What are the most satisfying/frustrating things about your current employment?" "What are your strengths/where do you think your weaknesses lie?" "Why do you think we should give you this job?" "Where do you see yourself in 5/10 years time?" Learn them, prepare your answers, and practice them on friends.

#### ***FIRST IMPRESSIONS***

You only get one chance to make a first impression.... So make it a good one! If you look untidy that's how you'll be remembered and first impressions really do count. Always wear a suit and tie or neat skirt/dress and polish your shoes. Even if you are attending a second interview and you know the organisation allows less formal work dress, maintain a professional/formal approach, as you don't know who you may happen to meet, the Managing Director perhaps!

It may sound obvious, but be civilised and remember your manners. Shake hands firmly with people you are introduced to and when you leave. If you are offered a coffee say your please and thank you's, but keep it natural.

Be assertive, but without the aggression which can sometimes accompany this characteristic if it is uncontrolled.

Find the right tone in which to present your positive aspects. You have to talk about your achievements to show you are the right person but do it without being boastful. Under no circumstances should you spend a significant portion of the interview running down your current employer - this is viewed as negative.

### **TURN WEAKNESSES INTO STRENGTHS**

It is not a good idea to pretend you haven't got any weaknesses because everyone has some. On the other hand, don't put yourself down, because you could be talking your way out of a job. Discuss your weaknesses as though you have recognised them and strive to overcome them.

***"I used to have bad time management, now I prioritise my workload first thing every morning".***

***"I like to take control and be involved in everything. I sometimes find it hard to delegate but when I have the results have been positive."***

Try to choose weaknesses which have a positive "flip side" e.g. I am obsessive about time keeping which other people can find annoying in some situations.

If you lack technical strength in a particular area don't attempt to bluff but admit; "no, that isn't my strongest area, but I'm a very fast learner and willing to work in my own time to develop those skills".

### **HAVE A POSITIVE ATTITUDE**

Above all, don't wait until after the event to decide that you wished you'd tried harder to get the position. Always go in with the intention of getting an offer, only then do you really have the chance to weigh up how this opportunity compares with others.

Many people, with the benefit of hindsight, have regretted they didn't take a particular interview sufficiently seriously - don't let yourself be in this "if only" category!

### **WHAT QUESTIONS SHOULD I ASK?**

REMEMBER TO ALWAYS ASK QUESTIONS!

A lack of questions could be mistaken for a lack of interest. Many of these questions you may already know the answers from your research. So have some back up questions ready...

Use questions like these to impress them and remove any doubts you might have.

- *What will be my responsibilities?*
  - *Where will I fit into the overall organisational structure?*
  - *Who will I report to?*
  - *Where does he/she fit in the structure?*
  - *Who will report to me? How experienced are they?*
  - *What do you expect me to do in the first 6 months?*
  - *What level of performance do you expect from me?*
  - *Who are your customers?*
  - *Where is the company going? Upwards? Expansion plans?*
  - *What are the chances of advancement/promotion in this position? When?*
  - *What will be my salary, benefits and bonuses?*
- [Do not bring this up too early in the interview - wait until they are sold on you]*



- *Will traveling be required in this position?*
- *Will relocation be required now or in the future?*
- *What training do you provide?*
- *When will you decide on the appointment?*
- *What is the next step?*
- *What would I be expected to accomplish in this position?*
- *What are the greatest challenges of this position?*
- *How do you think I fit the position?*
- *What is the job actually selling? To whom?*
- *What is the exact geographical area?*
- *How long is the sales cycle?*
- *What are the reasons for the vacancy?*
- *Why should someone come and work for you?*
- *What concerns do you have about my ability to do the job?*
- *How do you think I fit the position?*
- *How do I compare to other candidates?*
- *Can you see yourself working with me?*

Please Note: You may not need to ask all of these questions. Some of them might be irrelevant to your interview. It is up to you to decide what questions are relevant to interview

### **WHAT QUESTIONS MIGHT I BE ASKED TO ANSWER?**

Here are a selection of questions that employers might ask you. (If they ask you to tell them about yourself. Ask them to clarify this question - what they want to know, and where they want you to start.)

- *What are/were your primary responsibilities in your current/previous vacancy?*
- *What were you earning when you started?*
- *What is/was your earnings currently/when you left?*
- *Why did you leave/are you considering leaving? What are your proudest accomplishments in this position?*
- *What was the most difficult part of your job, and how did you deal with it?*
- *What qualities are necessary to be successful in this role?*
- *Describe a typical workday.*
- *How did you feel about your workload?*
- *What are your weaknesses?*
- *What are your career goals?*
- *What are your short-term / long-term objectives?*
- *What is your management philosophy?*
- *Do you consider yourself successful? Why?*
- *What was the most challenging aspect of your job?*
- *What kinds of rewards are satisfying to you?*
- *What have you done to improve your skills?*
- *What are you looking for now?*
- *What other kinds of positions have you applied for recently?*
- *What do you know about us?*
- *What aspect of this job interests you least? Most?*
- *Do you prefer to work by yourself or with others?*
- *How long would it take you to make an impact with us?*
- *How would you describe your personality?*
- *Were you satisfied with your performance in your previous position? Why?*
- *Why should I hire you above another candidate?*
- *Do you set goals?*



- *Describe a major goal you set and what steps you took to reach it?*
- *When you fail to reach target, how do you deal with it?*
- *What did you find hard to do in your previous role? Why?*
- *Do you feel you were sufficiently recognised for your work by your managers?*
- *What steps do you take to overcome a problem?*
- *What do you do when faced with a decision where no company policy exists? What problems do you face in getting a typical days work done?*
- *How would your managers describe you?*
- *What types of people do you dislike working with?*
- *How do you handle criticism?*
- *What would you change about your former/current employer?*
- *What was your best/worst manager like?*
- *What outside activities are most significant to your personal development?*
- *Describe a time when you have had a conflict with a colleague. How did you overcome it?*

### **FINAL THOUGHTS**

Do not forget to ask for the job – after all.... That's why you're at the interview!

Call you Consultant immediately after your interview to give them your feedback.

Good Luck!

**The Recruitment Team**  
**PG Automotive (UK) Ltd**