

# Interview Guide



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OF NEW SOUTH WALES



## TOP 5 INTERVIEW TIPS

1

### Prepare

- Read your CV and know it front to back
- Look up location of your interview and plan your trip
- Ensure you are at least 5 minutes early

2

### Research

- Understand the company you're interviewing for
- Look at their company website, blog, LI, Facebook, Glassdoor
- Ask your recruitment consultant about the company!

3

### Achievements

- Have examples of quantifiable achievements from your previous roles
- Eg, Implemented [x] policy, which led to a profit margin increase of [x] percent.

4

### Body Language

- Non verbal communication is just as important as verbal
- Stand upright, shoulders back, arms unfolded, and make regular eye contact

5

### Ask Questions

- If you're seriously considering the role, you should be asking questions that reflect that interest
- Think: company culture, challenges, training, development etc.

## TOP 8 INTERVIEWEE QUESTIONS

1

What's the history of this position?

2

What about this position is most important?  
How does it support management and serve direct reports?

3

What are the day to day responsibilities of this position?

4

What is the most challenging part of this position?

5

How would you measure my success, and what could I do to exceed expectations?

6

How is the feedback process structured?

7

What opportunities are there for learning and growth?

8

Is there anything I have said that makes you doubt I would be a good fit for this position?

# BEHAVIOURAL TECHNIQUES

## What is a behavioural interview?

A behavioural interview is a structured interview that is used to collect information about past behaviour. Past performance can be used as a predictor of future behaviour, and a behavioural interview attempts to uncover your past performance by asking open-ended questions. Each question helps the interviewer learn about your past performance in a key skill area that is critical to success in the position for which you are interviewing.

## Use the STAR technique:

The STAR technique is a useful way to frame the answers to each question in an organised manner, which will give the interview the most information about your past experience.

As you prepare to answer each question, consider organising your response by answering each of the following components of the STAR technique:

### Situation or Task

- Describe the situation you were in or the task you needed to complete
- Describe specific events or situations, not a generalised description
- Be sure to give enough detail for the interviewer to understand
- The situation can be from a previous job, volunteer experience, or any relevant event

### Action Taken

- Describe the action you took and be sure to keep the focus on you
- Even when discussing a group project or effort, describe what YOU did, not the efforts of the team
- Don't tell them what you might do, tell them what you've already done

### Results Achieved

- What happened?
- How did the event end?
- What did you accomplish?
- What did you learn?

# BEHAVIOURAL TECHNIQUES

## Examples of behavioural interview questions:

### Communication

- Give me a specific example of a time when a coworker criticised your work in front of others. How did you respond? How has that event shaped the way you communicate with others?
- How do you ensure that someone understands what you are saying?
- Tell me about a time when you had to present complex information
- Tell me about a time in which you had to use your written communication skills in order to get an important point across.

### Decision Making

- Give me an example of a time when you had to make a difficult decision
- Describe a specific problem you solved for your employer. How did you approach the problem? What role did others play? What was the outcome?
- Give me an example of when taking your time to make a decision paid off

### Initiative

- What did you do to prepare for this interview?
- Give me an example of a situation that could not have happened successfully without you being there

### Planning

- Describe a situation when you had many projects due at the same time. What steps did you take to get them all done?
- How do you determine priorities in scheduling your time? Provide an example

### Flexibility

- Describe a time where you were faced with problems or stresses that tested your coping skills
- Describe a time when you put your needs aside to help a coworker understand a task. How did you assist them? What was the result?

### Leadership

- Tell me about a time when you influenced the outcome of a project by taking a leadership role
- Give me an example of when you involved others in making a decision

### Time Management

- Tell me about a time when you failed to meet a deadline. What things did you fail to do? What were the repercussions? What did you learn?
- Tell me about a time when you were particularly effective on prioritising tasks and completed a project on schedule.

# BEHAVIOURAL TECHNIQUES

## Preparation Tips:

The best way to stay relaxed and calm in an interview is to be prepared.

Some tips:

- Research the business unit or department
- Become familiar with the products, services, structure, competitors, reputation, and any recent significant changes
- Review the job description to understand the skills required
- Do research on yourself as well. Know why you want the job, review your resume etc.
- Identify any transferable skills, key accomplishments, work style, and personal and professional strengths
- Remind yourself of specific experiences that exemplify these skills & strengths
- Be able to express the unique marketable skills you have to offer
- Prepare a list of 4-5 questions about the department or position
- Get a good night's rest
- Know the exact place of the meeting
- Allow plenty of time to get to the interview & plan to arrive early

## Interview Tips:

- Listen carefully and feel free to ask for clarification before answering a question
- Take a moment to formulate your answers before you speak
- Project energy & enthusiasm
- Be honest while focusing on communicating your professional achievements
- Be polite to everyone you meet at the interview

## Face to Face Interview Tips:

Look your professional best

- Make eye contact with the interviewer
- Be aware of the interviewer's body language and other non verbal cues
- Be aware of your own body language

# INTERVIEW PREPARATION

## **Importance of research and planning:**

This is one of the most important areas of the job interview. Even if you've been told it's just an informal meeting, turning up unprepared can completely jeopardise your chances of any job opportunities within the organisation.

## **The company:**

- Know the company structure in detail
- Understand the company values & vision
- Know the company's market position
- Know the range of company products/services
- Check their website and conduct a Google Search

## **The Industry:**

- Look for industry-specific news
- Who are their main competitors?
- What are their competitors doing & how do they rank compared to their competitors?
- What industry trends are happening in overseas markets?

## **The Position:**

- Thoroughly read the job description (JD)
- Know your resume and how it relates to the JD
- Note the key competencies of the JD.
- Think of examples where you can demonstrate previous experience that reflects these competencies

## **The Interviewer:**

- Research the person who will interview you and look at their LinkedIn profile
- Find out if there is anything you have in common e.g. you both worked at the same company in the past or went to the same university etc.

# INTERVIEW PREPARATION

## **Practical Preparation:**

It's common sense, but always know where you're going & where the company is located. Aim to arrive 10 minutes early for the interview. Grab a coffee nearby if you're any earlier. Ensure you have the contact details, including direct phone number of the person you're meeting. Don't forget smart presentation

## **Asking Questions:**

Towards the end of the interview, you will usually be asked if you have any questions. Prepare a few open ended questions, thinking about how you can add value to the organisation. Some questions you could ask include:

- What are the key goals and objectives for the role in the first 3-6 months?
- Why is the role available?
- Where would you see this role in 3-5 years?
- How would you describe the company & team culture?
- What makes a person a success at the company

## **Key Points to Remember:**

1. Prior to the interview, ensure you research the company
2. Thoroughly read the job description and know your resume well
3. Have questions prepared for the interviewer
4. Ensure you know where you're going and don't be late
5. Smart presentation
6. Be positive and enthusiastic

## **At the end of the Interview:**

1. Aim to ask open questions
2. Recap how you can add value to the company
3. Thank them for their time

## **Final Tips:**

Think about your interview as an exciting next step Be positive, have a firm handshake, make eye contact, smile and believe in yourself.

And finally, GOOD LUCK!



# Guide to writing a winning resume

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# WRITING A WINNING RESUME

A winning resume follows a very simple but effective outline. It should be clear and highlight you, your strengths, current work place, and work place achievements. Your resume may be the document that helps you to progress your career within your current organisation or it may be required to introduce you to a new organisation and/or career path. Ultimately, it becomes the document that sells you, so it's very important your resume is the winning resume!

## Your Winning Resume:

Your resume is your chance to impress. A Good resume should:

- Have 3-4 strengths on the front page
- Include tangible career achievements, supported by 'situation, actions, results' at the interview
- Include your current or most recent role appearing on the first page
- Be simple, clear, & keep it up to date
- Be no more than 4 pages

### Key Points to Remember:

1. Concentrate on the last 10yrs & keep earlier experience brief
2. Triple check spelling, grammar, employment dates
3. Focus on the positives. E.g. if you're not qualified, put your experience first & education last
4. Be honest! Tell it as it is
5. Keep it relevant. Make your strengths & experience stand out, particularly if relevant to the job you're applying for
6. Articulate your strengths. What are you good at? What are your career goals?
7. Ask friends/family to check your resume & give you honest feedback
8. During the application process, apply, then ring to follow up

Page 1:

- Most important info and key strengths
- Summary and snapshot that helps helps recruiter/employer make their decision
- Name, address, phone number, email
- Professional qualifications and education
- Key Strengths and career overview
- IT systems
- Interests and hobbies (first or last page)

Page 2 and beyond:

- Dates and company names of previous roles including your job title
- Brief company description if not obvious
- Job responsibilities
- Key achievements
- Referees on request

# WRITING A WINNING RESUME

## **How long should my resume be?**

Depending on the length of your career, it should be between 2-3 pages. This includes 3-4 key strengths on the front sheet, backed up by tangible achievements

## **Is there a particular look for current resumes?**

It's important to choose a font style that's easy to read. Calibri or Arial are good choices. Try to avoid Times New Roman. Ensure as much white space as possible so your resume is easy to read. Highlight company names and clearly label the years or timeframes you have worked. Make it easy to digest, don't ask people to read between the lines.

## **Responsibilities vs Achievements**

A good resume needs both, but should be heavily weighted with tangible achievements, as this showcases your specific skills and abilities. E.g. 'reduced reporting time from 5 to 2 days' or 'undertook specific initiative which saved company \$2m'

## **Cultural Fit**

Cultural fit is vital. Nothing replaces meeting your contacts & networks face to face. Your network should include a recruiter with whom you're comfortable with. Keep in touch with them throughout your career. As your career develops, technical skills become a given, and it's the cultural fit with the organisation and its values which become the key deciding factor in getting the job

## **Should I prepare a one page summary?**

This can be a very valuable tool for informal situations and networking. Your one page summary should detail your achievements, strengths, and what you're looking for in your next role.

## **Steps to find and win the right role**

Identify the types of roles & organisations that interest you.  
Be frank with yourself about your strengths and weaknesses. Play to your strengths and undertake training to address important gaps.  
Prepare a career plan and remember to stay positive & enthusiastic!

# Tips on writing a cover letter

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## COVER LETTER TIPS

Cover letters may seem like pointless formalities to some, but they can actually be an important part of your job search and application. A well-written cover letter can help you stand out from the crowd of other candidates, especially when applying to larger companies that receive hundreds of applications each day. Read on to find out how to write the perfect cover letter in a few simple steps.

### **The Perfect Opening**

It's tempting to start a cover letter with your qualifications or skills, but those aren't going to catch an employer's attention—the perfect opening will. Instead of listing your relevant experience, mention something interesting about yourself that you have in common with a company or its mission; also, be sure to include what you can do for them specifically.

### **State Purpose**

Briefly explain why you're seeking employment in a specific company. Clearly state your intentions in a way that may be persuasive.

Be enthusiastic! You should be eager and excited to get started!

### **Focus on Skills**

Make sure your cover letter specifically targets only relevant skills. To stand out from other applications, focus on these key strengths that set you apart.

Don't overcomplicate it! Even if you include years of experience that pertain to the position, your cover letter shouldn't be longer than one page. More is not better, simplicity is key!

Also, try to avoid resume-speak. Instead, use action verbs that are descriptive about what you've accomplished.

### **Closing**

The closing of your cover letter is as important as its opening. After all, you need to convince your reader that you're a good fit for them. So, seal it with a bang!

Perhaps include some information about how they can reach you. The best way to do so is by providing a professional e-mail address where they can reach you. This will keep things short and sweet while simultaneously allowing them easy access to contact you in case they have any additional questions.

Finally, make sure your spelling, grammar, and formatting are perfect before hitting send! Having even one mistake on your cover letter could cost you an interview, and that's not what we want at all!

# Personal Branding Guide



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# IMPORTANCE OF A PERSONAL BRAND ON LINKEDIN

If you're trying to grow your career, a great way to help accomplish that is by creating a personal brand on LinkedIn. (Whether you work in recruitment or not.)

The platform helps you open yourself up to more opportunities through networking with the right people while helping you showcase your skills in your area of expertise. In this blog, we'll cover why you need to create a personal brand on LinkedIn and how you can do it effectively too.

“Personal branding is how you distinctively market your uniqueness.”

—Bernard Kelvin Clive

## **Where to begin?**

The first step is to think about your personal brand values. These are the things that matter most to you and are the traits you want people to recognize you for. Once you've determined what matters most, come up with a few adjectives or phrases that describe who you are and what sets you apart from others. You'll build your profile from here, of course including all relevant experience and details where necessary.

Your personal brand is likely to evolve over time, as you learn more about yourself and what you can offer in various settings. But by taking an intentional approach from day one, you'll start from a solid base and maximize your chances for success.

## **How building your personal brand can help your career**

A personal brand opens up your world to so many more career opportunities that you would never have been exposed to with just your resume. Your personal brand helps you build your network with the right people in your industry. It can help you get hired for a job and of course achieve the professional success you want.

Building your personal brand takes time, but it's worth it because it can make all the difference in how you're perceived by others in your industry.

Ideally when people think about your industry, you want them to think about you too!

# IMPORTANCE OF A PERSONAL BRAND ON LINKEDIN

## **What makes a strong Personal Brand?**

A strong personal brand is like a resume in the sense that it is about what you can do for an employer, your skills and your experience. It's also important to be authentic and show your personality. Above all, people need to know who you are and what you stand for. If someone takes the time to read your profile then they will know if they have any common interests with you or if they share similar values.

When they read your LinkedIn posts they can also find out a lot more about you. Especially if you're authentic in your approach, as you should be. People will feel comfortable getting to know you initially through your content, if they like it they will connect and who knows where it will go from there!

## **The importance of consistency**

Consistency is key when it comes to building your personal brand. If you want recruiters, colleagues and potential employers to take you seriously, make sure that all of your social media accounts are up-to-date with accurate information. Also, please ensure your headshot is up to date! You want everyone to recognise you when they see you.

Your LinkedIn profile should include all relevant work history and your summary should accurately describe your current work situation and potential goals honestly.

## **Summary and Next Steps**

A personal brand is the first impression people will see when they search for you. It opens up your world to so many more career opportunities that you would never have been exposed to with just your CV.

Your personal brand is essentially your ticket to networking with the right people, getting hired for a job, or just even being noticed in today's society.

However, please remember: Check your spelling and grammar!