



Eutopia[®]

Eutopia. e-briefing[™]

Perfecting your
interview skills

A CANDIDATE'S GUIDE TO INTERVIEWING

The interview process is the method by which candidates and potential employers get to evaluate each other and make the key decision can a mutually beneficial relationship be established?

Surprisingly, however, all too often candidates pay little attention to preparing for this crucial event. The following is a guide to help make your interview a successful one.

We hope you find this guide useful, but should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact your Eutopia Consultant or email us at response@eutopiaonline.com.



CONTENTS

- A** INTERVIEW PREPARATION CHECKLIST
- B** INTERVIEWS TIPS
 - Preparation
 - The Interview
 - The Follow Up
- C** SAMPLE QUESTIONS TO ASK A CLIENT
- D** SAMPLE QUESTIONS YOU MIGHT BE ASKED

INTERVIEW PREPARATION CHECKLIST

- Have you confirmed the date, time & location?
- Have you checked your travel plans or route?
- Are you clear on the dress code?
- Do you know who to ask for when you arrive?
- Are you clear on the interview format?
- Have you researched the Company?
- Have you looked up the interviewers on LinkedIn &/or Google?
- Have you prepared at least 5 questions to ask the client? (see below)
- Have you prepared for likely questions you will be asked? (see page 7)
- Is there anything else you need from Eutopia?

List of questions to ask the Client

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

INTERVIEW TIPS

INTERVIEW READINESS

Given that you initially have about 3 seconds to make a favourable impression, you need to make sure that you always dress smartly for interviews. Whilst you do not always need to go to an interview wearing a suit (we will advise you on suitable attire), you should always dress professionally. When there is little to distinguish between two candidates, it is small things like this that can make the difference.

Always check the time, date and place of the interview - and figure out your route ahead of time. Try to factor in arriving at least 15-20 minutes early - to account for unexpected delays. You can always find a coffee shop near to the Client site to wait and relax.

PREPARATION

COMPANY & INTERVIEWER PREPARATION

One of the easiest ways of impressing a potential employer during the interview process is to have done your research and then demonstrated this during the meeting. Your Eutopia Consultant will be able to provide some background on the client company and the interviewers- but you should also conduct your own independent research. As a bare minimum, we would recommend viewing the client's web site and sales literature, looking up the interviewers on LinkedIn and Google. This professional and proactive approach will pay dividends during the interview process.



JOB PREPARATION

Make sure that some time is allocated to making sure you are absolutely as up to date as possible with regards to the skills demanded by the client. All too often a candidate will come out of an interview having realised their skills in a particular area are rather rustier than they originally thought. Your Eutopia Consultant should have provided enough information on what skills and experience the interviewer is likely to cover during the meeting - allowing you time to refresh your skills or memory in these areas.

THE INTERVIEW

Having got to the interview on time and prepared for the meeting, now is the task of actually getting the job.

Focus on making a good first impression – solid handshake, good eye contact and a confident greeting. Most interviews then follow a similar format:

- an introduction
- an overview of the company and the job role
- a set of questions relating to your background and suitability
- a chance for you to question the interviewer.



In terms of approach, we believe that it is very important to maintain a degree of balance in your personal projection. Either a lack of self-belief OR over-confidence are both regular stumbling blocks. Keep your communication style concise and friendly as well as honest and positive. The more energy you inject into the interview, the more you'll ignite the enthusiasm of the interviewer (particularly important on video conference or telephone interviews).

Do remember, though, that interviews are all about the right mix of listening (understanding) and speaking (selling yourself). Listen carefully to the questions being asked by the interviewer – and, if the interviewer asks a question you don't understand, then don't be embarrassed – simply get them to explain what information they're looking for. If they ask a question which you don't know the answer to (or for experience that you don't have), be honest and tell them.



TURN NEGATIVES AROUND

Interviewers prefer honesty than long rambling answers. Good interviewees will be able to turn potential negatives around by comparing experiences they don't have with experiences that they do possess (for example, "I don't have specific experience (of X), but it does sound like something else that I did once (Y) – and this is how I did it"). Often, employers are not looking for an individual that ticks all the boxes – but for an individual that has the innate competencies and attributes to do the job.



KNOW YOURSELF

This all comes back to your pre-interview preparation. Think about a small handful of successful or difficult projects you've worked on – what your role and contribution was, and what you learned about yourself. Good interviewers will use a technique called Competency Based Interviewing – and will be experts in probing, exploring and assessing what makes you tick, what makes you succeed in certain situations – as well as what makes you fail.

THE FOLLOW UP



FINALLY ITS YOUR TURN

Interviewers have no preference if you have a pre-prepared list or scribble down questions as you think of them during the meeting.

However, DO ASK questions (even if you have to make a few up for the sake of it). This will show your level of interest in the company and the role – and, again, could be the clincher in being asked back for second interview, or even getting the job.

Our advice is to never discuss salary or contract rates with the Client – unless they broach the subject. It is our role as your agent to negotiate on your behalf – a role we are well placed to fill, acting as a buffer to the sensitivities of pay negotiations.

As a final step, we recommend wrapping up the meeting by summarising what you've heard, reaffirming your level of interest in the role and by asking if they require any further information and what the next steps might be.

Please then confirm with us how you believe the meeting had gone – we'll be doing the same with the client – and await the decision.

We're confident that if you follow these simple guidelines, you'll find your interviewing skills improve. A list of sample interview questions are contained at the front of this guide. However, should you need any advice on any of the contents of this e-Briefing, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Good luck from all of us at Eutopia.

response@eutopiaonline.com

SAMPLE QUESTIONS TO ASK A CLIENT

How do you measure if someone is successful in this role?

If successful, what impact could I have on the organisation?

What traits do successful people at this company have in common?

What do you believe the biggest challenges will be with this role?

In terms of professional development, what assistance does the company provide?

If I am successful, what type of career opportunities / promotion prospects exist?

What has been your experience of working with the company?

Are there any areas of my experience that require any further clarification?

What are the next steps following this interview?

SAMPLE QUESTIONS THE CLIENT MAY ASK

Tell me about yourself?

What have been your major achievements in your current role?

What are your strengths? What are your weaknesses?

In what environment do you work best?

What contribution do you make to a team?

Which of your jobs have given you the greatest satisfaction?

What would your colleagues say about you?

How would your boss describe you / your work?

What motivates you?

What did you learn in that job?

Describe your ideal working environment

Describe what you did about a difficult situation

How do you respond to stress? Give an example.

Where do you see yourself in the next 5 years?

Why did you leave your previous company?

Why are you considering a move from your present company?

How do you get the best out of people?

What do you look for in a manager?

How do you manage your day?

What do you think you can bring to this position?

What other jobs have you applied for recently?

This job has a large component of..... how will you cope with that?

What will you look forward to most in this job?

What makes you think you can be successful with us?

What do you do in your spare time?

Notes