**Practical Tips for Job Interviews**

Well done on getting your application to the ‘top of the pile’ and securing an interview. This is your opportunity to shine and impress the interviewers and show your point of difference that will make you the ‘perfect’ candidate.

1. **Arrive on Time** – it isn’t a great start if you keep the interviewers waiting. You will almost certainly kill your chances of getting the job, unless there is some extraordinary excuse and you have managed to phone ahead and advise them.

Plan to be there at least 15 minutes before your scheduled interview. That way you can compose yourself if you are feeling a bit nervous. It also gives you a chance to observe the dynamics of the workplace, to a certain extent. You might be able to use this information in a question in the interview.

1. **Dress for Success –** always consider the type of organisation you are interviewing for and dress appropriately. For example, if the company you are interviewing with has a causal approach to dress then it’s probably not necessary to dress formally. However, it is much safer to be overdressed than underdressed for the occasion, so when in doubt, over dress.
2. **Make a good First Impression**

It goes without saying that you should be polite and friendly to everyone you meet on your way into the interview. You might be surprised at the number of hiring Managers who have sought feedback from reception staff on how they were treated by the job applicants.

So, you’ve arrived early and you are dressed well so continue with the first impressions by making eye contact, greeting your interviewer and shaking hands firmly (if that is appropriate at the time!) Be confident!

1. **Body Language is Important**

Smiling, the right amount of eye contact, solid posture (no slouching in the chair), active listening, and nodding are great ways to look confident, even if you aren’t feeling that way. Try not to play with a pen or any other object, fidget or constantly brush back your hair or touch your face. Definitely don’t chew gum and try not to mumble.

1. **Be a little circumspect with your answers**

The panel are not your friends so don’t provide long irrelevant detail as part of your answers. For example if you have a gap in your resume due to travelling – just say that. The panel don’t want to hear about how you and your best friends have been overseas backpacking in 15 countries and having an awesome time.

1. **Prepare for relevant interview questions**

You can’t know exactly what will be asked, but before your interview, take some time to learn about the company you are interviewing with and prepare examples related to the position description and some of the more common interview questions asked. (See examples here) Also, if you already work in the organisation and the job is for something like an internal promotion and the panel knows you and your work already, don’t assume you don’t have to provide examples. Treat the job interview exactly the same as if you were competing for an external position. Don’t be complacent and do your preparation!!

1. **Ask the panel questions**

When I interview applicants, the ones who always impress the most are those that ask the panel meaningful questions. It shows you have taken an interest and some time to research the organisation and thought about what it be to work with us.

Don’t ask about the pay or the hours or the amount of leave but find something relevant to the job you’re going for – it could be about future direction of the organisation, a specific part of the strategic plan or even something you have read about them.