How to avoid common interview mistakes

1 Do your research and PREPARE ANSWERS

Make sure you know what the organisation wants to achieve, what their values are and that you understand what the job involves. If you are applying to a role that requires you to work in a team, research the team and the leader you would be working under. If you are applying for a role where you would be working alongside others in a similar role and ask them. Think critically about what they say and how it helps them meet their objectives and how you meet the role requirements. Be sure to talk about it in the interview. It is impressive to have a candidate say, "I know you are committed to x, I hope that in this role I could help you because of the experience I have from doing y".

2 WATCH THE NEWS

Read the papers

There is a careful balance to be reached between being well-informed and clear in telling someone about your skills and experiences, and over-selling yourself, which may make the interviewer nervous! For example, saying you did a task when you have just graduated may be pitched too high. Of course, if you have led projects or teams, that would be the ideal way to communicate such experience.

3 ANSWER FULLY but don’t bore

The STAR technique is a clear framework to follow when answering interview questions that ask for you to share an example, clearly describing the Situation, Target, Action you took and the Result. It is great and can really help make sure you get as many points as possible in a competency-based interview. Be sure to talk about your research work and your key achievements.

4 Talk about YOU

There is always a place for us, but in an interview setting in at ALL! Don’t Make sure you say “I….”. It is important to be able to quicken what you offer the role, what appeals to you about the role, and what you can offer. An off-the-cuff answer for questions so obvious as these is very disappointing. You can better demonstrate your skills and initiative to complete investigative work yourself.

5 Be CONCISE

Be able to quickly explain why you are the best candidate, what you offer the role, why you want this position, what appeals to you about the role, and what you can offer. Be sure to talk about your research work and your key achievements.

6 SELL YOURSELF sensibly

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7 Don’t blog and TAKE YOUR TIME

If you don’t know the answer to a question, say you don’t know and talk about how you would go about finding the answer. Equally if you need clarity, ask, “is this what you mean?” Pause to think. It’s fine to take your time. If you cut the answer short, the interviewer may feel they have misunderstood the question. This is an opportunity for you to further demonstrate your passions, your specific interest in the company and team. There is no set list of questions an interviewer will expect you to ask but do ask something! You could ask about their main objectives and how you meet the role requirements. Be sure to talk about it in the interview. It is impressive to have a candidate say, “I know you are committed to x, I hope that in this role I could help you because of the experience I have from doing y”.

8 LOOK in the mirror

Be sure to look enthusiastic. Body language is key. Look them in the eyes and listen like you want to be there. Be ready for anything. This is an opportunity for you to further demonstrate your passions, your specific interest in the company and team. There is no set list of questions an interviewer will expect you to ask but do ask something! You could ask about their main objectives and how you meet the role requirements. Be sure to talk about it in the interview. It is impressive to have a candidate say, “I know you are committed to x, I hope that in this role I could help you because of the experience I have from doing y”.

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