



SUCCESSFUL JOB INTERVIEWS

It has often been said, it is not the best person who gets the job, but he/she who presents the best. But, how do you ensure that you present the best?

According to Michelle Tullier in *The Unofficial Guide to Facing the Interview*, prospective employers are looking for answers to three basic questions:

- 1] Can you do the job (as well as 'add value' to the organisation)?
- 2] Would you fit into their organisation?
- 3] Do you want to work there?

You already know you want the job; otherwise you would not be going for the job interview. The question is: How do you get that message across to the prospective employer without sounding as if you are desperate for a job?



In the real estate world, there are only three things to remember: Location. Location. Location. In the job hunting world, there are also three factors to remember: Research. Research. Research. You need to research the job itself, the employing organisation and the interviewer. As Tullier points out, most of this information is readily available (eg., the job description, annual reports and company websites). Other information can be obtained by doing your homework in a library or through your network of contacts.

How you use this information will determine whether you are the one who presents the best at the job interview. As you amass all the information you can find about the job, interviewer and organisation, keep in mind the following questions: What problems currently face this organisation? What future opportunities can I identify for this organisation? What can I contribute to help this organisation overcome these problems and/or tap into these opportunities?

In identifying where there is an opportunity for you to assist the organisation overcome problems or tap into future opportunities, you have already begun to 'add value' to this organisation.

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The next step is to show the organisation (through the interview process) that you have what it takes to add this value to the organisation. For this, you will need to know your KTS's (Key Transferrable Skills). You will also need to know your personal qualities, knowledge base, and abilities, all of which contribute to what you can do for the organisation.

Now it is a question of matching what you have got with what you have identified the prospective employer wants. Then rehearse how you might 'sell yourself' at the interview. This can be done with a colleague, friend, family member or career counsellor. Practice under a variety of conditions and with a range of interview questions. In each case, your objective is to get the point of your message across. And your message should be centred on how you can add value to that organisation.

The success of the interview does not end with the handshake as the interviewer ushers you out the door. Remember to follow-up with a thank-you note after the interview. As Tullier suggests, this is a great opportunity to remind the interviewer of what you can do for the organisation.

If at the end of the day, you find out that you were not successful at the interview, find out why. Not every interviewer will spend the time to give you feedback. Indeed, some feel uncomfortable doing so. But, for those that do, you will get some useful feedback that you can utilise to assist you in future interviews.

And, above all else, remember to stand tall and smile.

FIVE QUICK TIPS FOR YOUR RESUME

The job of the resume is to get you to the interview. If you are not getting to the interview, consider the following five quick tips before sending out your next job application:

1. Know your key transferrable skills, (KTS's).
2. Identify the underlying keywords associated with your KTS's.
3. List the keywords in order of priority. The priority will depend on the jobs you are applying for and your combination of KTS's.
4. Substantiate each KTS in the body of your resume. Remember, the focus for resumes is on results and achievements, not duties.
5. Include all your contact details (eg., phone number, mobile phone, email address, as well as postal address).

RECOMMENDED READING

If you need to deal with the media, *PRESS HERE* by Annie Gurton is a great resource.

This book will give you insight into what journalists are looking for. The book also includes hypothetical case examples plus a freelance journalist's 'diary' to illustrate each chapter's message.

The only disadvantage with this book is that the list of p.r. agencies and media information sources are limited to Britain.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Not only are employers unable to take care of your career progression, but they are also unable to offer you secure employment. With the advent of the internet, we are beginning to see a move towards globalisation in the workplace. Rather than adding to the prospect of doom in the workplace, it can create further opportunities, if you know what to do and where to look.

Helen Vandeveld, in her book entitled *Beyond the CV: Securing a Lifetime of Work in the Global Marketplace* suggests we can become the portfolio worker, rather than one who just works in a succession of jobs. In this regard, she makes the following recommendations, equally relevant whether you are limiting your career to Australian or global opportunities:

1. Stay with your current employer IFF it is good for your career progression, otherwise move on.
2. Keep investing in your own on-going professional development. (Don't just burn the midnight oil for your current employer).
3. Look for opportunities within your current organisation where you can utilise your skills. (They may provide the springboard for your career progression both in and out of your current workplace).
4. Seize those opportunities and record your achievements.
5. Continuously. (Otherwise you become staid; a 'has been').
6. From this position, you would be able to negotiate with your current employer (or prospective future employer) to invest in your own ongoing professional development.
7. Develop your professional network. (People hire people they know and trust).