

E-BOOK ON INTERVIEW SKILLS



INTERVIEW PREPARATION

Most of the factors that determine whether an interview is a positive experience or an ordeal are decided well before the interview itself. The first step in preparation is to check that the role and the organization are a good match with your own skills and values. You can do this by looking at the organization's website, mission statement and promotional literature as well as the job ad. It is better to apply for a few suitable jobs and to prepare properly than to apply for dozens, prepare poorly and hope for a lucky break.

Following on from this, you need to be absolutely clear in your own mind that the job itself is right for you. If you put yourself forward for a job that doesn't suit your knowledge, skills, and aptitudes then you are setting yourself up for a stressful and unpleasant interview. The level of competition for roles is high so you want to pick those opportunities that you are best placed to win.

It is advisable to practice with an experienced person before the actual interview so that you know how to respond and get comfortable with the process. Always read about the frequently asked interview questions on the internet to give away more specified professional answers.

ASK 3 Cs

- **Capability:** Can you do the job?
- **Commitment:** Will you do the job?
- **Compatibility:** Can you fit in?

Being honest about your skills and competencies will help you select the opportunities that you are most suited to. Along with 3 C, add all the trainings that you have gained to showcase you are right fit for the job. Even if you believe that you are sufficiently capable, committed, and compatible, does your employment record support this view? This is an important point because the interviewer will be looking for evidence and if it does not appear in your CV record then you could be in for an ordeal when the questioning starts. The quality of your preparation prior to an interview is the single biggest factor in making the actual event a positive and successful experience.

A fresher can give examples from non-work experience to show the required skills or add training received to demonstrate the readiness for the job. You can write about your projects during the college or any award you have achieved to show the values and soft skills you possess in the resume.

PRELIMINARY INTERVIEWS

These are often done over the phone. They tend to be quite short with an emphasis on fact checking. Interpersonal and communication skills will also be evaluated, so it is important to give the interviewer your full attention and give clear answers to questions. You need to provide crisp and clear answers instead of beating around the bush.

UNDERSTANDING THE ROLE DESCRIPTION

The job ad, role description, and employee specification can all be used to list and rank the competencies required.

Competencies are the aggregate behaviours an individual needs to perform a role. You can use a competency framework to compare the required competencies with your own. The job ad will give you some basic information - for example, the location, salary, qualifications required and job title, along with a basic outline of the role.

The detailed role description expands on this and includes information about the duties to be performed, the areas of responsibility, and the reporting structure. This is one of the key sources you will use to identify and rank the competencies.

Many organizations include an explanation of how they want an employee to act and the value set they believe best suits their culture in the role description. Others write separate statements known as an employee specification. These can relate to specific roles or to the level of responsibility assigned to the role. It usually consists of a list of personal qualities, competencies, and skills that the HR department have deemed appropriate for the grade or level assigned to the role.

You should always try to get as much information as you can from the HR department even if this means calling them and asking if there is any additional information they can give you. An organization's competency framework will consist of functional (e.g. HR, marketing or accounting) and behavioural or soft skills (e.g. communication skills) components.



MATCHING COMPETENCIES TO ROLE RESPONSIBILITIES

Comparing your own competencies to those required involves establishing what evidence you have for claiming a particular competency. You may need to look outside of your academic or work activities to find evidence of those competencies you have been unable to develop in the academic institute or workplace. This exercise is time consuming but it will highlight areas where you are weak and likely to be challenged in the interview.

☞ Matching a role's competencies to your own is a three-step process:

- Define the Role Competencies
- Relate Your Competencies to the Role's
- Develop Your Competencies (if required)

Using the ad and job description it is easy to understand the competencies that are required for a job role.

MATCHING COMPETENCIES

A comparison of competencies can be made and how gaps within an individual's competencies can be identified. Using the descriptions of the behaviours associated with particular competencies makes it possible to determine the most effective way to fill any gaps using either work or non-work examples. Matching these competencies is an ongoing process therefore you need time to develop these skills if required for your job. To achieve this, you need to have prior knowledge about the role you aspire to be in future and work well in advance on yourself to become capable of matching the competencies efficiently. The person should be visionary to build his path the right way and on time.



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