

ALAN MITCHELL

Top tips to help you ace an interview

Congratulations! You've got the interview! Now is your chance to make to most of this opportunity. An interview is your chance to:

- ◆ **Make a good impression**
- ◆ **Show off your achievements**
- ◆ **Sell yourself**
- ◆ **Detail your back ground**
- ◆ **Show you are the best person for the job**

These are very important aspects but never forget an interview is an opportunity to achieve so much more:

- ◆ **Get a good idea of what the role involves**
- ◆ **Gain an understanding of the company – culture, future plans, history, staff turnover etc.**
- ◆ **Assess your career progression opportunities**
- ◆ **See how you get on with your potential new boss**
- ◆ **Network**
- ◆ **Gather market information – how are they finding the current market? Transactional activity? Active sectors? Slow sectors?**
- ◆ **Find out everything you need to know to decide if it is the right opportunity for YOU or not**



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Key things to ensure you do to make sure you ace your interview are:

- ◆ Prepare thoroughly for the meeting – research the business, your contact and the role – LinkedIn and the company’s web site are great places to start
- ◆ Compile a list of questions you want to ask at the interview – you can then refer to this list at the interview. There is nothing worse than having a blank moment and having no questions! Questions show genuine interest. Ask about the individual (their background, what they like/dislike etc.), the company and their current structure, culture as well as future plans, and the job itself – future prospects, why it is available etc.
- ◆ Compile a list of sales points you want to make. For example, bring out your relevant experience, particular achievements, recent deals worked on similar to theirs so that you can show you did your research
- ◆ You can always refer to these lists during your interview – it really shows your interest and preparation
- ◆ Plan your route to find them and get there 15 minutes early so that you are not rushing
- ◆ Take your business card so that you can leave it with them
- ◆ Take any other relevant information to leave with them. For example, a deal list, a list of clients or an example of a pitch you have prepared
- ◆ Wear a smart suit – be very professionally presented – polished shoes etc. First impressions count and even if their work placed is casual dress it will still impress if you make an effort for the interview
- ◆ Shake their hand firmly and look them in the eye.
- ◆ Be prepared for small talk – for example, lovely offices, how long have you been based here?
- ◆ Body language – lean forward, maintain eye contact and look engaged and interested. Leaning back and looking around will make you seem shifty and disinterested
- ◆ Relax and let the interview flow. Enjoy yourself and never forget an interview is a two way process – you need to like them as much as they need to like you!
- ◆ Always thank them for their time at the end of the interview and ask them if there is a timeframe and what is the next stage of the process?
- ◆ If it’s true tell them how interested you are in the opportunity and that you would really like to meet them again
- ◆ Ask them directly if they have any worries or reservations about you and your suitability for the role
- ◆ Ask them for a business card so that you have their contact details and can then you can e-mail them after the meeting to thank them for their time, reiterate your interest in the role and send anything else you would like to

Above all prepare and be yourself. The key is to secure a job that is right for you and you will enjoy and excel at.

If you are feeling nervous I would suggest running through a mock interview with a friend. If you are working with a recruitment consultant then ensure that they prepare you fully - they will have a lot of value to add.