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Interview Tips

We know that interviews can be nerve-racking, but as long as you follow the guidelines below you will give yourself every chance of success.

The Preparation

➤ Be Prepared

First things first, re-read over your CV several times so that you can answer any questions that may come up about it - in particular any gaps, reasons for leaving and billing /sales figures.

You know there are certain questions that you will be asked in almost every interview you go on – “why do you want to do sales / recruitment?” and “what attributes do you think you have that will make you good at the job?” for example.

Think about how you would answer these questions and prepare for them. Even practice going through some of them with friends or family. You want to avoid sounding rehearsed but the more thought you’ve put into it, the better your answer will sound. Go to our Interview Questions section to read up on what you will be asked!

➤ Research

This is absolutely key. A common reason for candidates being rejected is lack or insufficient preparation.

Your Spencer Harrington Consultant is on hand to talk you through the Company in detail and what to expect in the meeting but you need to make sure that you have read the company’s website and know the answers to the following points:

- What the Company does
- What Markets they cover
- How big they are
- Where their offices are
- When the company was set up and how it has expanded
- Who are their competitors and what makes them different
- What role are you interviewing for
- Who is your interviewer, and what is their current role and background

It’s a good idea to print off their website and/or write notes to take with you on the tube.

One question you will always be asked is “what do you know about us?” so make sure you have done the necessary research to impress them!

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➤ Look the part

As sales and recruitment are client-facing roles, your interviewer will be assessing whether you are dressed in a way that would impress their clients. An enormous part of their first impression will be based on your appearance. This is fairly straight-forward stuff, but make sure that you follow these simple guidelines:

Boys:

- Top button done up.
- Tie on and pushed right up to the collar. Avoid “comedy” ties.
- Smart shirt. Plain blue, white or pink are best. Avoid ones with pockets on the front. Always make sure it’s clean and ironed.
- Suit Trousers and Jacket (always keep your Jacket on)
- Polished smart shoes (ideally black)
- Freshly shaven
- Corporate haircut. It doesn’t have to be a buzzcut but avoid anything that could be described as “shaggy”!

Girls:

- Smart suit or suit dress. Neutral colours work best - black, grey or blue. Avoid short skirts or revealing tops
- Smart blouse or shirt. Plain blue, white or pink.
- Polished smart shoes (ideally black)
- Conservative make-up
- Neat and tidy hair

➤ Punctual

Always be on time. Arriving late creates an instant bad impression, as does arriving out of breath and flustered if you have to run there!

Make sure you go into every interview 5-10 minutes early. This means aiming to be in the area even earlier - you can always sit in a nearby coffee shop and wait.

If you are running late, then ring ahead to let them know rather than keeping them waiting.

Also, if you’re a naughty smoker avoid having a cigarette before going in as the smell in a small meeting room will be very strong!

The Interview

➤ Body language

70% of communication is based on body language, so it doesn’t matter if you’re saying exactly the right thing if your body language doesn’t back it up!

Firstly, more on that all important first impression!

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When your interviewer walks into the room, stand up, look them in the eye, smile and shake their hand firmly

- Lean forward in the chair
- Maintain eye contact
- Smile
- Nod and look alert when listening
- No fidgeting!

➤ Answering questions

There are some questions you'll be completely prepared for but there will be others that catch you of guard, but always remember to remain unflustered and focused.

- Keep your answers concise and short, if you feel like you're waffling then you probably are - so stop!
- Make sure you get across your skills and achievements, particularly those that aren't apparent on your CV.
- If you feel like you're struggling with a difficult question, pause and take a deep breath before you continue. You need to demonstrate that you remain cool under pressure and won't just start blabbering.
- Read between the lines – think about what the interviewer is trying to get from you. Each question will be designed to find out more about you so use it as a chance to sell yourself and your skills

➤ The End - Closing your interviewer

If you had just spent an hour selling a software package to a client you wouldn't just leave after the pitch with a handshake and a smile with no confirmation of a sale, so don't do the same in your interview.

Ask the interviewer how they think you've done, what they're reservations are and what else they would want to have seen from you. This is a great chance to settle their concerns and reassure them you have all the right attributes to succeed.

The Follow up

Call your Spencer Harrington Consultant the minute you're out of your interview, it will really demonstrate to the employer just how keen you are.

If you've been given business cards drop an email to the people you've met, thanking them for their time and reiterating your interest in the position. It will really show you recognise the opportunity.

Above all, remember to be yourself, just a professional, engaging and alert you!