Tips for successful interview

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Background

In an interview, the interviewers focus on assessment of professional ability and personal quality of the person interviewed. In view of the objective with which a candidate is interviewed and the present stiff competition, an interviewee needs to prepare oneself to emerge successful. Casual approach to interview is fraught with danger of not meeting with success.

There are some basic items that need attention in order to prepare for an interview.

Subject Knowledge

A candidate should be conversant of the basics and emerging topics of one's specialisation. Should a candidate lack confidence in any topic or subject of one's area of specialisation, it is prudent to brush up one's understanding before appearing for the interview.

Understanding of Job Criteria and Work Content

Equally important is to have clarity about the qualifying criteria for the position applied for and to visualise the work content. To have a better understanding of the job requirement, it is advisable to carry out a little background research of the prospective employer organisation by accessing information available in public domain and making discreet enquiries with people knowledgeable of the organisation.

Answers in Advance

It is quite appropriate for a candidate to anticipate and list questions that may be asked in an interview; and prepare answers in advance. To avoid searching for answers and fumbling to cogently put forth the thoughts at the time of interview, it is worthwhile to be equipped with prepared response. This facilitates to address the interview confidently, which is important to attain success. In responding to the questions, a candidate should well articulate the thoughts, be concise and never show desperation for a job. False statement should not be made, as the falsehood is likely to be detected by the interviewer through cross-checking.

Examples of Usual Questions and Outline Answers

A few examples of questions usually asked in an interview and outline of responses to these questions are given below.

- Tell something about yourself
- What are your weaknesses?
- Why do you think you are suitable for this position?
- Why do you want job with us?

Question 1 - About oneself: A few key points of professional accomplishments should be highlighted and supported with specific examples. Personal topics should be as minimum as possible.

Question 2 - Weakness: Weakness in content knowledge should be talked rather than basic personal quality or skill. Lack of content knowledge is much easier to remedy than a personal trait. Also, efforts taken to improve should be mentioned.

Question 3 Suitability for the Position: Reply should be in the perspective of the needs of the organisation for this position and thrust should be given on issues relating to problem solving or meeting targets, as appropriate.

Question 4 Job with the organisation: Reply should be with reference to the background research of the organisation and aspects that are appealing to the candidate (e.g. a learning organisation, openness, etc.)

Behaviour and Body Language

Body language and behaviour are other important aspects in an interview, as these reflect the personality. Candidate should behave normally and not be stiff, polite but not servile, listen to the interviewer carefully, maintain eye contact, voice positive and upbeat.

Proper Dress

Allied with body language is proper dress as it has an enormous impact on the interviewer's perception. It is important to check what people working in the organisation wear and to dress slightly more formally for the interview. For example, professions like finance and consultancy have fairly conservative dress code.

Seek Clarifications

However, an interview should not be a one-sided affair. Just as the prospective employer evaluates the interviewee, the candidate should assess the organisation. The interviewee's questions should apply to the specific situation or to the organisation.

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