

Preparing Your Interview Preparation Master Plan

Preparing your interview answers is the crucial part your preparation and where you will undoubtedly spend the most time.

The secret is to go through any paperwork that has been supplied scanning with a fine tooth comb for clues as to what the employer is looking for. The next step is to go through your own experience and match yourself to the needs of the job.

Simple!

To do this you will need:

- highlighter pens
- the job advert
- the job description
- the person specification
- other job related information
- information about the interview itself especially if a presentation or assessment centre is planned
- information about the company eg company profile, brochure, website, mission statement, press cuttings
- your job application
- our Interview Preparation Master Plan template

Job Advert

Go over the job advert and highlight any information about the person they are looking for.

Job description

Go through this carefully. Divide it up into SKILLS, EXPERIENCE, KNOWLEDGE & QUALIFICATIONS, BACKGROUND, PERSONALITY. Try and separate the skills required, from the actual experience and the knowledge needed. If there is anything that covers the type of personality needed note that too.

Person Specification

Not all interviewers send out a person specification but where they are do they are invaluable information. They list out the qualities and experience of the ideal candidate. They have the double advantage in that you can more or less assume that the interview will be based around assessing whether or not you have these skills. Usually they list **skills, experience, qualifications, background and personality** so it makes your preparation that little bit easier as the work is done for you.

Other Information

You will need to swot up on the company itself but for now go through the information to search out anything about the type of person they employ. Often the company mission statement or core values will give you some clues. What sort of image does the company portray through its website, work or employees? Can you tell what type of person is most likely to fit in? What sort of words does

the company use to describe itself? Can you see any skills or personality traits that might be beneficial to have to fit in? Highlight or make notes of anything you spot.

Your Job Application

Again highlight any references you have made to skills, experience, qualifications, knowledge & background.

Using the template you are in a position to assemble your Interview Preparation Master Plan.

How to complete your Master Plan.

- 1) In the first column fill in the needs of the job as given in the information above
- 2) Tick off the requirements you already have and use the next two columns to give examples preferably from the workplace but also from outside the workplace eg college, leisure interests, voluntary work
- 3) Use the next column to note any additional skills etc that although not stated might be an asset to the job. Be sure to keep this relevant. Be selective.
- 4) Note any gaps in your skills, experience, qualifications, knowledge & background. You will need to plan how you can compensate for the gaps. For example you might be doing a qualification or you might have similar but not quite the same, experience. You might have examples of where you had to learn quickly.

Using your Master Plan

You now have all the information you need to plan your answers to the most common questions.

Remember the interviewer's priority is to find out about how your skills, experience, qualifications, knowledge & background match their needs. You need to focus on the employers key requirements and support your answers with relevant and interesting examples that clearly demonstrate your experience. You need to choose the ones that will help persuade and reassure the interviewer you have what it takes to do their job and fit in with their organisation.

Interview Preparation Master Plan

JOB REQUIREMENTS	As stated by job description, person spec, advert etc	Give an example from the workplace to illustrate each skill, experience, knowledge etc	Give an example from outside work to illustrate each skill, experience etc	Additional skills, experience etc that might be an asset to the job (with examples)	Any gaps ? Note how you might compensate for these gaps
SKILLS					
EXPERIENCE					
KNOWLEDGE & QUALIFICATIONS					
BACKGROUND					
PERSONALITY					