

## Top Interview Tips

If you haven't attended an interview for a while, the chances are you could be feeling somewhat fearful about the impending prospect! The good news is, you're not alone. Most people (not only parents that have been absent from the workforce) are nervous about interviews. Reassure yourself; the fact is that other candidates are often in the same 'boat' and have similar fears as you.

Remember that whatever you are anxious or nervous about, may not even be a concerning factor for the interviewer— the fact that you have been short-listed shows that they think you could do the job!

### TIPS

- **Arrange childcare:** Before you start arranging interviews, it's a good idea to make childcare arrangements with friends/family that you can call on at short notice when you need to attend interviews.
- **Review the job requirements:** When you are invited to attend an interview, ask for a copy of the job description, if possible (tell them you like to be prepared; it demonstrates how planned and organised you are!) Review the job responsibilities point by point, matching your experience to the appropriate requirements and mention these during the interview.
- **Confirm the interview process:** Ask the employer or recruitment agent what type of interview approach will be conducted (eg: "how many people will be interviewing me and will it be formal"?) Many candidates don't bother to ask this question and can be surprised and disconcerted when they attend the interview because they are not fully prepared.
- **Read over your resume:** Review your resume to remind yourself of your past achievements, experiences and skills.
- **Identify areas** to highlight during the interview.
- **Identify your strengths:** Identify four or five of your most valuable strengths, consider your personal attributes. These could include: the ability to multi-task; time management; problem solving; lateral thinking; team leadership; adaptability; quick learner; attention to detail... In your mind, prepare an example of how you have demonstrated each of these strengths so you can respond when asked.
- **Prepare to provide examples** of past experience: Be prepared to answer detailed questions about your past jobs and responsibilities and your future job aspirations. Even if the interview is likely to be informal, we recommend that you still prepare yourself as much as possible to answer detailed questions - many employers say that the interview will be 'a casual discussion'; however, they still expect the candidate to conduct themselves in a professional manner and respond to standard interview questions.

## Top Interview Tips

- **Research the company:** If possible, review the company's website. The more you find out, the more prepared you'll be and it will show the interviewer that you are genuinely interested in the job and the company.
- **Prepare your own questions:** Ensure you too have questions prepared to ask the interviewer. Remember it's a two way process, you are just as entitled to ask questions of the employer, as they are of you.
- **Dress for success:** Interviews are the perfect excuse to revamp your wardrobe and go shopping! Smart business attire is the best option (it's better to over dressed than under dressed!)
- **Practice:** Practice with a friend answering likely questions about your past experiences and skills that demonstrate a logical progression from one job to the next; provide reasons for leaving past employers; share what you have learned from past jobs that will be valuable to a new employer.
- **Plan the journey** to the interview. Look up the interview location, time how long it may take you to get there, arrange how you will get there. Plan to arrive early to give yourself time for unexpected delays.
- **Discussing salary:** If the job's salary hasn't been indicated or discussed previously, it's reasonable to ask "can you give me an indication of the salary range for this position", but we recommend you leave this question until last (you don't want give the impression you are only interested in the pay).
- **Follow up:** Before leaving the interview, ask what the next steps will be or when does the employer expect to make a decision. Thank the employer for their time. Later send a thank you email which reaffirms your interest in the position – it's a professional way to follow up.
- **Seek feedback:** If you are not successful for the job, ask for feedback on your interviewing skills (especially if you haven't been for an interview in a while, the feedback can help you refresh your in interview skills and approach).

### NEED MORE ASSISTANCE?

If you would like more assistance preparing for interviews, contact mums@work to speak to a career consultant.