



CHAPMANTATE
THE POWER OF PEOPLE™

INTERVIEW PREPARATION

www.chapmantate.com | info@chapmantate.com
0121 285 5529

Cobalt Square | Birmingham | B16 8QC

PRE-INTERVIEW STAGE

RESEARCH THE COMPANY

Discover the skills and experience the employer values by reading between the lines of the job specification. An employer's career page should also give an idea of the type of employees they desire.

Find the key players within organization by looking on LinkedIn, reading the employer's "Team" page and employee bios. These individuals can be managers, directors, founders, etc. It's a good idea to check what they have to say about the business on LinkedIn and Twitter.

Give yourself an advantage by researching the interviewer beforehand to give you a better chance of finding common ground, connecting with them and sparking a meaningful conversation. Research on LinkedIn, Facebook and Twitter. Knowledge of the interviewer's background, position in the company and common interests will help you build a relationship.

Interpret the company's culture, mission and values so you can confidently say you're a good fit for the business during the interview and explain why. Most HR professionals believe cultural fit is the most important quality job seekers can have. Check the company website for a 'values' or 'mission' page and look at the impression they give on their social media networks.

Understand the type of work you'll be doing once hired by understanding core clients and competitors, products and services. Find information about competitors on Google and clients, products and services on the companies' website.

Find the inside scoop by speaking to any friends familiar with the business and using websites such as Glassdoor to find information such as employee functions and duties, details about the hiring process, and more.

Keep apprised of any recent news and events on their website, or on their social platforms.

PRE-INTERVIEW STAGE

ASSESS THE BUSINESS CASE FOR YOUR INTERVIEW.

What problem are the company looking to solve by filling this role?

Use your research to nail down where you will fit within the overall business strategy, and tailor your approach to the interview by focussing conversations around how your skills, experience and desires match what the company are looking for.

PREPARE YOURSELF

Review your hard and soft skills which set you apart from other candidates. Think about the job-related technical or functional skills you'll bring such as business development, technical competency and personal attributes that help you work effectively with other people.

List your top accomplishments by putting pen to paper and carefully choosing key success stories likely to resonate with potential employers – using your research to ensure they're relevant. If you have difficulties organizing your accomplishments, try thinking about them in terms of problem, action and result.

Put yourself in the interviewer's shoes and establish what problem are they trying to solve filling this position? How will making a successful, or unsuccessful hire affect them and their career?

Manage your stress by rehearsing your answers to questions you expect to face and by ensuring a positive start to your interview day. A calm, distraction free environment on the morning of your interview helps reduce anxiety.

Visualise success by picturing yourself happy in the job you want, at your new desk, with your new team. Positive visualization is effective and can boost confidence.

INTERVIEW STAGE

CRITICAL BEST PRACTICES

Listen. Your interviewer will constantly give you information, directly or indirectly. Your communication skills will be rated on your ability to listen.

Body language. People hire in their own image, so observe your interviewer and match their style and pace of communication. Maintain eye contact, lean forward slightly and watch the fidgeting.

Build rapport. Use the interviewer's name often. Build rapport around common interests, past achievements or the job itself – the main thing is you're engaging, not just answering.

Avoid dominating or freezing up. Talking too much is boring, with the risk of telling an interviewer more than they need to know. Talking too little is also boring. Coach yourself to ask the interviewer questions and rehearse answers to common interview questions to prevent rambling or stuttering.

Don't be cocky. Attitude plays a key role in your interview success. Being objective about both your strengths and your weaknesses is key to the fine balance between professional confidence and cockiness.

Actually answer questions. Having a question completely deflected with an irrelevant half-answer is frustrating. If an interviewer asks for examples of something, provide them. Avoid digressing, side-tracking or swerving questions.

Throw anybody under any bus. People say dreadful things about their previous job because they don't think about how it will be perceived. It gives the impression that they're both a complainer and indiscreet.

Let your personality shine through. Show a sense of who you are, what you think and what's important to you. Emphasise on points you agree with the interviewer and build rapport.

Keep focus on the end goal – getting hired. Ask clarifying and follow-up questions and remember to 'close' the interview.

INTERVIEW STAGE

IF YOU'RE DOING WELL

If things are going well, keep doing what you're doing! But it can be difficult to read an interview situation. How can you tell if an interview is going well?

Interview is flowing enthusiastically and evenly between you and the interviewer.

Rapport is being built between all parties.

Allotted time has been exceeded without

Communicating skills, experience and culture fit clearly and effectively, positioning yourself as the leading candidate.

IF YOU'RE NOT DOING WELL

Rushed interviewer. Maybe the hiring manager is late or unprepared. Give them time to get settled, and express empathy, 'I can tell that your work here is important and busy'. Lead the interviewer into the interview by saying something like 'would it help if I told you about myself in relation to this job' Handling this in a friendly, professional tone says a lot about you.

Adapt to the interviewer's style. Try adapting your speaking style and mannerisms to match the interviewers. Changing your body language can make a big difference in how you are perceived.

Take a breather. If you stammer, ramble, or otherwise blow it when you answer a question? Admit you did so and start again. Being able to take control and show a bit of vulnerability shows maturity and makes you more human. You cannot be faulted for stopping and saying, 'Wait, that didn't come out correctly. Let me try that again.'

Focus on your strengths. Without seeming pushy or like you're dictating the subject matter, redirect the interview to focus on your strengths. If the interview isn't showing you in your best light, insert some of your accomplishments into the conversation.

Own up to a mistake and move on. Acknowledge the situation and move on. Make a simple apology and perhaps a self-deprecating joke.

INTERVIEW STAGE

ASKING QUESTIONS

It's vital to have questions prepared to ask during the interview.

The best questions come from listening to what you're asked during the interview and asking for additional information.

- What do you like most about working here?
- How has your role changed since starting at the company?
- What values are vital to the company?
- What do you think are the most important qualities for someone to excel in this role?
- What are your expectations for this role during the first 30 days, 60 days, year?
- Where do you think the company is headed in the next 5 years?
- What are the biggest opportunities and challenges facing the company/department now?
- What is the typical career path for someone in this role?

CLOSE STRONG

Give a strong close at the end of the interview.

- I'm very interested in this position and I sincerely thank you for your time and insights today. If I am chosen to continue in your recruiting process, what would the next step in the process be?
- I am very impressed by you and your company, is there anything that would prevent me progressing to the second stage?
- When are you looking to make a decision?