

# Interview Faq's

Although a first interview is a two-way process, which provides you with more information on a prospective employer and the position on offer, its main purpose is for you to convince the interviewer that your experience and personality are better than those of your competitors. Regrettably, few of us are perfect, so if there are skeletons in your closet, such as a shaky academic record, then bring them out yourself before the interviewer discovers them and forces you on to the defensive. If you have a genuinely good excuse for exam failure than use it, but such feeble attempts as 'other commitments' or 'a particularly difficult paper' are best avoided. Even failure can be presented in a positive light if you can convince the interviewer that you have developed and matured as a result of it.

When dealing with your work experience, try to show your skills have contributed to the commercial success of past employers. Organisations today are looking for 'added value' from recruits at all levels and in all disciplines. Technical ability may simply be a starting point. In many cases you will need to convince the interviewer that employing you will have a positive impact on their company's profitability.

Be realistic and retain a sense of proportion - no one week assignment is worth twenty minutes of interview time, no matter how much you enjoyed it. Accentuate the positive by all means, that is what any sales exercise is about, but exaggeration and 'economy with the truth' are highly dangerous. Take care in explaining reasons for leaving previous jobs. Phrases such as 'I was bored', 'I didn't get on with...' and the like should be avoided.

If you have taken the trouble to go to an interview, be professional enough to see it through to the end. You may decide very rapidly that the job on offer is as tedious as watching paint dry and you would rather work for Attila the Hun than the person who is interviewing you, but press on. In most cases your instincts will be correct, but there is always an outside chance that they are also recruiting for the most exciting job in the world and Attila is moving on to terrorise someone else.

Finally, remember that an interview isn't over until you are safely out of the building and out of sight and earshot. Arrogance, greed or flippancy in the final minutes of an interview can ruin all the good you accomplished in the previous hour. Never relax your guard during the recruitment process. Without professionalism and commitment it can, and does, fall apart at any time.