



## **Useful Information for Candidates**

### **Your CV**

When preparing your CV, think about your key skills, competencies, qualifications and experience. Use it to demonstrate your unique selling points and strengths – why they need to employ you. Your CV will be the first impression a prospective employer has of you so it's important to sell yourself well.

It might sound simple, but remember to include basic information such as contact telephone numbers; an email address; or a home address. And check it for spelling mistakes and grammatical errors. Attention to detail is vital, an employer will not choose to interview you if they think that you cannot get this right!

Keep it to the point and to a maximum of three pages. It's important to include the right amount of relevant information – education, experience, qualifications – but too long and the vital message will be lost.

Present and highlight your employment history of the past five years in reverse chronological order.

You should include achievements as well as tasks. If possible, quantify this in sales, production or financial terms.

### **The Interview**

Always be on time, if not early. If you are delayed for any reason, call the interviewer, apologise, explain why you are late and give your estimated time of arrival.

Preparation prior to an interview is essential – it demonstrates you are committed and interested in working for them and enables you to ask relevant questions at the interview. Spend some time looking at the company's website and any literature/marketing material you can lay your hands on.

Your presentation is vitally important. Always look smart; a suit is probably best. Remember to maintain eye contact with the interview and smile.

Whilst in the interview, always relate your own experience and skills directly back to the job in question. This will demonstrate your suitability for the position and the employer will have the chance to see how suitable you are for the job.

Keep your answers to the point by highlighting your experience to the job in question but DO NOT talk too much or go off the point. Show your enthusiasm and demonstrate you have good listening skills by listening carefully to the interviewer and demonstrating positively where you could use your expertise.



At the end of the interview, shake the employer by the hand and thank them very much for taking the time to meet with you. Even if you are not suitable for that particular position, the employer will remember how well mannered you are and may well consider you for something more appropriate in the future.

### **The Presentation**

If you're using a flipchart for illustrating, remember to write clearly and make the words or images big enough for all the attendees to see. Don't put too much on each sheet. Keep it clear and concise.

When using props, try to involve them as much as possible (for example, Suzanne used the broken Wellington boots to great effect). Let your audience have the props while you are running through your presentation. It can often make you feel more comfortable and may engage your audience more.

Never enter the personal space of your audience unless invited to do so, and never walk around the back of them. This may make them feel uneasy. Remember to maintain eye contact with everyone; if you do not, you will lose their attention and it may take a long time to get their concentration back.

Have a very clear structure and stick to it. Your audience may try to throw you by sending a barrage of questions in your direction, but if you have a running order rehearsed you should be able to stay on track.

Introduce yourself. So many people go straight into a presentation without doing this.

Pace yourself, and remember to be interesting with regard to tonality.

Don't fidget, jangle pocket change or throw your arms around too much. It looks messy and detracts from the message you are trying to deliver.

Ask questions of your audience, and leave enough time at the end for them to question you.

### **The 60-Second Pitch**

Make sure it's 60 seconds long. A pitch that's too short will not impress the interviewer, and they won't be too pleased if you overrun.

Do your homework. Visit the company's website; find out who's who; and read the latest news and press releases.

Be positive. Think about the outcome you want from these 60 precious seconds.

Practice makes perfect. Rehearse your piece over and over again until it flows properly for you. Let the mirror be your mentor, or get a friend to be your audience.



Remember to breathe. Any presentation can be very difficult, so remember to just take a few deep breaths and calm yourself before you deliver.

Pace yourself. Keep your delivery steady. Don't try to fill the 60 seconds with so much information that it sounds rushed.

Use the right words. Be confident and avoid words such as "if", "maybe", "perhaps" and "I think". Instead, use positive, can-do words and phrases like "when", "I can", "I will", "I am" and so on.

It's not just what you say. How you say it matters too. Learn to use a variety of tones and emphases to get your message across.

Mind your body language. Watch the non verbal signals you are giving out. Your stance and hand gestures will very easily give away how you are feeling in the situation, so practice is very important. Using the mirror again, try to go through the presentation running the words silently in your head just to see what your body is doing. Or, if you are fortunate enough to have a camcorder, record yourself and then play it back without the volume. You will be amazed at how much this will help you to fine-tune your presentation.

Develop the way your body "talks". It is essential that you maintain eye contact with your interviewer(s). This can be very challenging if there is more than one person meeting you as the natural tendency is to focus on the person you feel you are getting on best with.