

## Top Ten Interview Hints

### 1. Be on time and get the right location

Public transport and traffic is never predictable so always allow more than enough time. Aim to be early as there is no harm waiting once you are there. If you are unsure how long it will take you, do a practice run and make sure you know where it is you are actually going!

### 2. Dress correctly

Ensure you are well presented and you look smart and professional for any interview. This will give the school the right impression, so wear a suit or something similar.

### 3. Have a good night's sleep

So that your mind is fully functioning, ensure you get a proper night's sleep and you are fully relaxed and fresh in the morning. Take a bath before bed and have a warm drink to help you go to sleep if you are feeling nervous.

### 4. First impressions count

From the moment you walk into the building, you must be polite and friendly to everyone. Smile, look pleased to be there and give a firm handshake to anyone you greet. A wide range of people within the school may be asked for their opinion on you once you have left your interview, so make sure you treat everyone with the same level of respect.

### 5. Preparation - the school and job role

Research about the school is imperative as you may get asked questions about it. This shows you have done your homework and makes you look like you are interested and enthusiastic about working at that particular school. Make sure you know exactly what is required in the job role so that you can tailor your answers to suit.

### 6. Preparation - the questions

Practice for the interview but do not memorise or over-rehearse. Get a friend or colleague to do a mock interview with you to get used to being asked questions and how you portray yourself to others. Prepare a list of questions that you think you might be asked and plan your answers. A useful tip is to look at the job description - this should enable you to define the qualities the school is looking for and emphasise the skills and experiences that you have which best demonstrate them.

## **7. Behaviour in the interview**

Here are some bullet points to think about when you are actually in the interview:

- Speak up, make sure you are clear and speak at a moderate pace.
- Do not be too smarmy or over-familiar with the interviewer.
- Build a rapport so the interviewer enjoys speaking to you.
- Make sure you understand the questions and if you are unsure, clarify them.
- Give detailed answers and use practical examples to illustrate your skills and abilities.
- Avoid waffling - be concise and only talk about what they have asked you for.
- Always try to tailor your answers to the job role you are actually going for so that your skills reflect those they require.
- Do not bad-mouth previous schools or members of staff.
- Do not fib - you are likely to get found out and it is usually obvious through body language if someone is not telling the truth.

## **8. Body language in the interview**

Lean forward slightly to show you are interested in speaking to the interviewer. Ensure you have good eye contact with them, and if there are multiple interviewers make sure you talk to each of them in turn. Try not to use hand gestures too much, and avoid crossing your arms and legs.

## **9. Your Questions - the end**

Always turn up with a list of questions in your head about what you want to know from the school. Prepare for these, such as 'How many other people are you interviewing?' or 'When are you making final decisions?'. It makes you look keen and engaged with the process.

## **10. Remember it's a two-way process**

It is important to remember that the interview is a two-way process. Although the school is trying to find the best candidate for the position, you can also use the interview process to assess if you want to work there. Try to ascertain if the culture and philosophy in the school is one that you would be happy to work in.