

THE BEST WAYS TO PREPARE FOR AN EXECUTIVE INTERVIEW

by Kunal Ghosh, Director and Engagement Head at Accord India

July 25, 2016

While getting ready for an interview, we tend to focus on the tough questions and the appropriate responses to these, rehearsing often in our minds the anecdotes and stories that we should tell. But before you even get the chance to deliver these answers remember, a job interview does not start with the first question. Your interviewer will probably see you before they hear you and if you turn up looking a mess or with a frown on your face, that's definitely not the start you are hoping for.

Here are some of our top tips to help you prepare:

Self-Audit Your Online Profiles

Critically review your various online and social media accounts. Make sure your LinkedIn profile is up-to-date and is aligned with and reflective of your resume. Having a well cultivated personal brand as an executive is important for enhancing your credibility as a thought leader, but maintaining and protecting your reputation online is even more critical.

Show Up On Time

Being punctual is a must. If you are worried that you will get delayed give the journey a trial run before the interview. Just in case you are still delayed, inform everyone as early as possible. Not ideal, but no amount of excuses later can make up for not informing. But, if you arrive more than 15 minutes early, wait in your car or at a local coffee shop before going into the company building. There is such thing as being too early for an interview.

Create an Impact

Even before you get to the interview room, be courteous and positive with anyone you encounter. You could be an employee in a few weeks' time.

Look Sharp

Appearance may not be the basis of the final decision – but it can play a part. Dress “one step above the position.” While suits are a preferred option, local business practices and company culture will influence how you dress for the interview.

Preparation

Know your CV like the back of your hand. Keep hard copies of your resume handy. Do your homework on the company, the kind of people that work there, the culture and any recent news articles or business deals. Research will allow you to ask relevant and informed questions about the company that can directly relate to your position. This extra preparation will help you stand out from the other candidates who are also interviewing for the position.

Put the Phone Away

Switch it off. At least put it on silent and stow it away in your jacket or briefcase; ideally before you enter the venue.

Introduce Yourself

You're probably waiting for them to make the first move on this. Go on, extend your hand first for that introductory handshake. With just that small gesture, you're demonstrating your confidence, eagerness and self-assurance. Don't assume people remember who you are.

The Art of the Small Talk

It doesn't have to be something big—just something that will get your foot in the door and provide the right impetus to the interview. Your preparation will help in this.

Take Notes

An interview is a two-way conversation. You have demonstrated your eagerness; you have asked your questions and provided some articulate responses to those "oh-so-tough" questions. Now, demonstrate that you care and are interested in learning more about this company in order to help solve their problems. Take notes. It will help you clarify your own thoughts and give you the opportunity to provide insightful responses.

Send a Thank you Note

Don't wait. Make sure this is the very first thing you do after completing the interview.

These are some of the simple ways in which you can create a great impression when you go for any job interview. It is important to make sure that you do not try to be someone you are not. Have faith in your abilities and put your best foot forward.



About Kunal Ghosh

Kunal is a Director in the Mumbai Office and leads the engagement and research functions for Accord Group INDIA. Overall he has 20 years of work experience of which he has spent 16 years in executive search with the Accord group. Kunal manages searches across real estate, financial & professional services, media, technology, digital and consumer sectors while anchoring searches for corporate functions in finance, secretarial and legal across industries.

He previously worked with Citigroup, at Citicorp Services, where he was responsible for managing FII relationships for Global Custody Clients of Citigroup and later in the CFO's office managing the share transfer office for the listed and unlisted subsidiaries of the group.

A science graduate, he has completed an MBA in Finance from the Somaiya Institute of Management and Research (SIMSR) - Bombay University