



## *Get the Advantage at Job Interviews*

Job interviews are all about communication and the aim of this booklet is to introduce you to some ideas as to how you can become more successful at them. As you read and practice the content enclosed you will easily become able to create powerful impressions of your suitability for the role in any interview. When we consider communication to be about what has been said rather, what has been heard – the message that the recipient has received, we have put ourselves in a far easier position to influence. To ensure the message you intend is received there are a number of things we can influence and as you read and practice the content enclosed you will become easily able to create powerful impressions of your suitability for the role in any interview.

### *The Advantage of being Sense-able.*

There is so much amount of information in the world that we have to filter it in order that we are not overwhelmed. One way we filter is through our senses: sight, hearing, touch, thought, taste and smell. Each of us has a dominant sense – some of us are very visual while others how things sound is key for example. For our communication to be effective being in rapport is essential, that is being in tune with the other person and an easy way to do this is by matching their preferred sensory filter.

Without first having contact with someone it's unlikely we'll be aware of what their dominant sense is and therefore within a job interview it's best to cater to all senses.

As such, it's important to look good (appealing to visual people), ensure the tone of your voice is appealing and you speak clearly (appealing to auditory people) and to be authentic/be you (people with a kinaesthetic/feeling preference will be able to tell if what you say and how you say don't match), smell good (nothing potentially overpowering) and taste is less important in the context of job interviews as there are few work opportunities (that I'm aware of) where how you or they taste is vital.

## *Using language to your Advantage.*

Language is a powerful way of tapping into our senses, creating images, feelings and sounds and my intention is for you to familiarise yourself with how you can use language to influence the creation of impressions of your choice. In order for you to do this easily I want to let you know about the 5 underpinning principles to success. Psychologists, coaches and curious people throughout the world have been researching how people get what they want, that is, be successful in what they do. They have found that people who achieve what they want follow, at a mostly unconscious level, these 5 principles. I've found them invaluable – anytime I get stuck I refer back to them and can now easily see where I went wrong. I would love you to have a similar benefit so here they are, in the context of a job interview.

### *Principle 1*

#### **Know what you want and why you want it.**

- What do you want to get from this interview?
- What impression do you want to create?
- Why do you want this job?
- Why do you want to work with this company?

### *Principle 2*

#### **Take action.**

- Research the company. What is their mission? What are their values? What is their staffing structure? What challenges have they experienced? What successes have they had? What is their online profile? What do customers say about them?
- Practice creating interview questions to create the impression you want.
- Practice answering questions on a way that creates the impression you want.
- Read the job description and remember specific times you have used the skills they are looking for. Mentally prepare or write down competence

answers to illustrate this. The specific situation, what needed to be done the actions you personally took and the result of this.

- Find out if you can who will be interviewing you. What role do they have in the company? What are their values?
- While in the interview – put these questions & answers to play – you will only discover their power and how to best adapt them to suit your own needs and personality when you trial them.

### *Principle 3*

#### **Notice what happens...throughout your interview**

- Are you moving closer towards your desired outcome?
- Or further away?
- Do you feel prepared?
- Are there any questions or answers you're tripping over? Why is that? Practice more if you need to and run with what you are comfortable with.
- In the interview notice the interviewers responses, carefully. If you have the opportunity beforehand to talk with them you could calibrate their responses by having conversations that lead to enthusiastic and unenthusiastic responses – what lights their fire? What do they hate doing? Notice the differences in their facial expressions, light in their eye, twitches in their face. This will help you better assess whether your answers are lighting their fire or not.

## Principle 4

### **Be flexible...throughout your interview**

- If you notice you are moving away from your intended outcome (of impressing the interviewer/s), change something.
- Wait until the end of the interview at your peril – flex yourself throughout to maximise your results
- Was there something in particular that didn't get a good reception? You could explain yourself again in a different way? Use different types of questions, different examples, adapt your body language, tone of voice etc.

## Principle 5

### **Put yourself into the best possible state – physically, emotionally, mentally (before, during and after the interview)**

- You have control of what you think and how you feel – it's an inside out job.
- Remind yourself of how you hold yourself and what thoughts you have when you have felt the way you want to feel to perform at your best at this interview. It may be calm and confident, it may be something else.
- Breathe it in, feel and think that positive and productive state so it runs right through.
- If at any point this state fades, take a moment during the interview (it takes milliseconds) to take that deep breath again and think the thoughts that are effective for you to remind yourself you ARE calm and confident, you ARE the person they are looking for.

The more you practice these principles the easier you'll find getting the results you want. Do you have a sense of where you usually get stuck?

It could be that you're:

- Not usually very clear about what you want
- Not clear on why you want it? What motivates you?
- Better at thinking things through than taking action
- Not noticing the outcomes of your behaviour or noticing other peoples state in order that you can judge when is an effective time to broach certain questions/gain information
- Think there is only one way and if it didn't work that's the end. Practice flexing what you say, when you say it, to whom you say it and how you say it.
- Not in a productive emotional or physical state when you are taking action. If you are hungry, angry, sad or tired these will all impact on your effectiveness.

The more you practice these principles the more they will become a natural part of what you do so let's practice!

### *Get even more Advantage with Questions*

Questions are not just a great way of finding out information but also to set your mind in a particular direction.

Consider the reason why each question you are asked has been asked – what do they want to know?

In terms of questions you want to ask, how do you want to influence the employer to make them think you are the best candidate for the job? Pepper questions that will move you closer toward your outcome throughout the interview - unless specifically told not to ask any questions.

Get really clear on your outcome, the impression you want to create in the employers mind.

- I can do the job
- I can do the job well
- I fit in with the team

- I will deliver results
- I am a good return on investment
- I am the person you want to offer the job to.

Get really clear as to your reasons for wanting this job.

- What motivated you to apply?
- Why will you be an asset to the organisation?
- What will you bring to the role?

Knowing this will give you the authenticity you need to ask and answer questions in a powerful way.

While you're doing your research, examine the job vacancy and the job description and highlight the key phrases that come up. This will give you a head start as to the language to include in your questions. Using a similar language gives the impression of commonality which helps build rapport. For example, if vacancy uses the word client – use that, not customer. Use these key words and phrases throughout your questions and answers.

### *Lovely Leading questions*

Here are some examples of powerful questions that will help you to lead the listener (the recruiter) to create a particular impression of you.

#### **a. If I am successful in the role how will this be evaluated?**

- i. This question is more effective than 'How will I be evaluated?' which doesn't place you being successful in the role. To answer the question the interviewer must create an impression of you being successful.

**b. How would I progress through the company if I am successful in this role?**

- i. Again, creating an impression of your success AND progression.

**c. If I am successful in the role, what do you see me doing for the company in a years' time?**

- i. If you have lots of rapport ask, 'When I am successful...' This creates an impression of a successful you now and also future paces the interviewer to see what you are doing in the future, working as part of their team.

**d. How do you see me fitting in with the team?**

- i. To answer they need to imagine you fitting in already
  1. If they answer positively; you'd fit in great – you're onto a winner!
  2. If they respond negatively: if they depersonalise it & describe the kind of person they are looking for – this offers you the opportunity to provide examples of how you are actually that person.

**e. Based on this interview, how do you see me contributing within the organisation?**

- i. Creating an impression of how you could contribute, visualising where & how you would fit into their company. Also a great opportunity to gauge your interview.

**f. What kind of contribution do you see me making in the company?**

- i. Same as above, only getting specific. Pay attention for any hesitancy beyond the time needed to create their picture – this is an opportunity to get information to address any doubts.

**g. Could you explain the company structure and how I can fit into it?**

- i. Expressing interest in the company and forcing them to see you within that structure. Subtle and powerful difference between this and 'Could you explain the company structure'

**h. By the end of the first year, what challenges would you like me to have overcome?**

- i. Forcing the interviewer to imagine you having worked for them for a year AND having successfully overcoming challenges.

**i. What development would you like me to do for me to be perfect for this role?**

- i. Only use if know you are already being considered for the position or when you are researching a role with a plan to apply in the future.

**j. What's important to you about X (the team, the role, the company)?**

- i. Great to ask before the interview for example when you are researching the company or in any downtime with the interviewers. This reveals what they value. You can use this information to form answers that will describe yourself as the ideal candidate. If you don't have shared values and you are not suited to the role – you know well in advance saving both your time and effort.

## *Create your own influencing questions*

While I have given you a number of questions you may want to use, in order for you to be fully flexible and able to adapt yourself in any situation I want you to be able to create your own.

As with all actions, first get clear on your outcome and the benefit of this (what do I want and why do I want it?)

What do you want the interviewer to believe to be true about you/know about you by the end of the interview?

If your intention is to:

Create an image of you getting the job....

Say: (eg. What are the tasks that need my immediate attention)...**as soon as I start...**

When I am doing the job well...

Create an impression of you as the candidate to choose...

Say: If **I am successful**....How do **I fit into**...

If **I am the person you want for this role**...(eg. What are the first challenging you see me resolving?)

When I am doing the job well...

Have an image of you doing well in the company in the future

Say: ...in **a years time/6 months**

By **the end of the first year**...(eg what results do you see me having brought the company?)

## *Influencing Answers – Handling difficult questions and managing objections*

In order to achieve your outcome of influencing the interviewer in the direction of YOUR choice, it's vital you are able to be flexible and move from what is being discussed to what **you** want to discuss.

This is a simple way of influencing conversation to enable you to highlight your agenda.

***The issue is not x it is y***

***The issue isn't (the problem they see) it is (the benefit I offer you/flip side)***

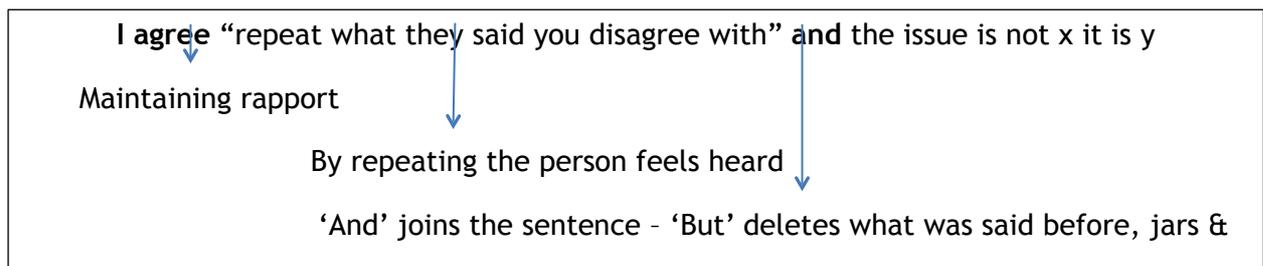
**How is my situation an advantage/of benefit to the company?**

**Shifting focus from a perceived negative to a positive**

<b>Negative</b>	<b>Positive</b>
Being young	Energetic, able to be trained in the way of the company, fresh approach, insight into youth market, determined, eligible for government funding
Being older	Experienced, proven track of results, established work ethic.
Being a parent	Ability to multi-task, ability to respond to situations quickly, ability to prioritise, responsible
Lacking experience	Determination, openness to ideas, easily trained in company procedures, fresh approach
Sacked from a job	Learned from experience and aware of pitfalls
Having a criminal record	Determination now to succeed, aware of potential security/legal pitfalls and can highlight so company avoids, negotiating skills, ability to respond to situations quickly, resilience, lessons learned, skills developed while in custody.
Lack of qualification	Make up for with attitude, evidence with results (matter more than qualifications), willingness to gain qualifications

Lacking in skills	Ability to learn quickly, willingness to train, emphasising attitude and results in previous roles, plan to up skill
Frequent change of job	Quick learner. Attitude – give 100% energy to role emphasise commitment to results and personal development
Long time out of work	Refreshed, determined, keen to learn, new perspective
Stayed with same company for years	In depth knowledge, loyalty, commitment, reliability

### Examples of objections & how to respond



“You don’t have the experience we are looking for”

I agree, you think I don’t have the experience you’re looking for and the issue isn’t my experience....

- It is the results that I will deliver
- It is how interested in this position I am
- It is about whether I can do the job. Let me demonstrate how I can do the job (using examples)
- It is about how I provide a benefit to your company
- The issue is about what you are going to do about this job to make sure I stay
- The issue is about all the reasons I want to come and work for your company – let me explain these
- The issue is about why I want to join your organisation, which is xxxxx

- The issue is about realising the skills & experience I have and how well that fits with the role
- The issue is how well I fit the role and how my strengths are relevant to this role. Let me expand....
- The issue isn't what my salary requirement is but what you think the job is worth?
- The issue is I'm interested in working with you

### **Remember...the issue is not x it is y**

"I'm not sure you have the skills we are looking for"

I agree, you're not sure **I have the skills you are looking for**, and the issue isn't this so much as...

- The issue is (highlight why you are confident you are able to do this job)
- I have already explored training to give me these skills which will be completed by the time I will due to start in this position. The issue is that the positive attitude and fresh approach I will bring.
- The issue is how well I fit the role and how my strengths are relevant to this role. For example...
- It is about whether I can do the job. Let me demonstrate how I can do the job (using examples)

### **Influencing until the end**

The beginning and end of conversations tend to be what we remember most which is why interviewers take notes. With this in mind you can use your influencing skills to ensure that you give a strong introduction and conclusion.

You will be reflecting and assessing how you are progressing throughout the interview and now at the end you have another opportunity to move towards your outcome – of being the candidate selected for the role.

Consider how you have got on so far. Are there any areas you don't feel went so well? If so, use the questions at the end to overcome this.

Are there any areas you felt went really well and want to highlight again to ensure it's fresh in their memory?

Is there anything you are still curious to find out in order that you can make a well informed decision whether this role is one you want to invest your time and energy into?

Use your understanding of how to create influencing questions that will get the information you want while creating the impression of you being already in the position and performing well.

As always, be clear on your outcome – why are you asking what you are asking? What impression is this creating of you? It is for this reason that it is wise to steer clear of questions about pay and holidays.

For example:

Can you tell me about the training that is available **to help me continue to perform well** in the role?

(see the difference between this and 'can you tell me about the training this is available?')

If **I am successful in this role**, what are the priorities **you want me to work with you** on first?

(rather than, what do you want me to work on first?)

If **I am the person you want for this role**, when and how do I expect to hear from you?

(rather than, 'when will I hear from you?' – it sounds a bit limp in comparison doesn't it?)

**There are so many layers to effective communication and I really hope this booklet has helped bring some clarity and confidence to your interview preparation. As with gym inductions, it's all very well having the information and 'knowing' about the process, but knowledge won't get you fit – practice will. Integrate the 5 principles into your practice, get a sense of where you get stuck (we all do!) and practice as much as you can in as many different ways as you can.**

*Wishing you a successful interview – let me know how you get on!*