

Interview Advice

Are you preparing for interview?

This presentation provides useful tips for preparing for a job interview.

Before the Interview

□ Knowing the Job and the OPW

- ▶ Find out as much as possible about the OPW and the Division where the position will be based.
- ▶ This will help you decide if the job is right for you and will give you more confidence in the interview.
- ▶ Check out the website www.opw.ie and the intranet **Stór**.
- ▶ Check online for any recent announcements or press releases relevant to the area for which you are applying.
- ▶ If possible, talk to some people in the Division as this will give you an insight to the position and the work involved.

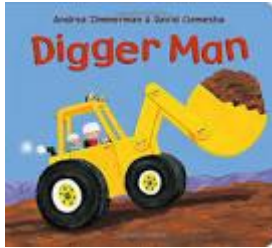
□ Knowing the skills and qualities for the Job

- ▶ Essential eligibility criteria - You must satisfy these. If you don't have these, your application will not be considered further.
- ▶ Skills/Qualities - These will be published in the Competition notice. It is important that you read this carefully and understand what is required. What skills and experience do they want? How do your current skills and experience compare.
- ▶ Key Words/Descriptions - These should give you an insight into what the employer sees as key to this role. Try to make sure you use these as a cross check against the experiences you can talk to the Interview Board about.

Skills & Experience

- ▶ Read the Competition Notice & Job Description
- ▶ Highlight key words
 - What does the job require you to do?
 - What qualities are required?
 - Be aware of the role and position in the wider organisation.

Current Position -v- Grade you are applying for.



- ▶ What are the differences between your current position and the grade you are applying for?
 - Do you need specific qualifications?
- ▶ Where will it be located?
 - Is there a longer/shorter commute?
 - How will you get to work?
- ▶ What strengths do you have?
 - Can you apply these strengths to this position?
- ▶ Identify your weaknesses?
 - Why are they weaknesses?
 - Can you improve these?
 - Do you need further training?

Completing an Application Form



- ▶ Read it first!!
- ▶ Read it a second time!!
- ▶ Start thinking about how to fill it in.
- ▶ Get the information you need, such as details of schooling, training, courses etc. List your work experience, give dates.
- ▶ On a separate piece of paper, write out the answers/examples etc.
- ▶ Don't assume that the person assessing your application/shortlisting knows who you are, so you need to be clear about your current and previous roles.

Continued.....

- ▶ Write clearly or type *The interviewer will be reading more than your application, so make it easy to read.*
- ▶ Do you need to attach a copy of both sides of your drivers licence or Safepass card or other criteria? *Copy it onto 1 A4 page and attach.*
- ▶ Ensure they are in date!! Out of date is not current!
- ▶ Have you signed the form? Signature is required....typing your name is not accepted.
- ▶ If sending application by email, scan as one document....and email to the address on the competition notice, not to another email address. Do not take a photo of it with your phone and send that!!
- ▶ If posting the application, ensure you have the correct postage on the envelope and post well before the closing date. Consider sending it by registered post and don't post on the closing date....it wont get there in time!
- ▶ It is **your** responsibility to ensure that the application is received by the closing date and time. Don't blame An Post!
- ▶ Closing date and times are strictly adhered to.

Preparing for Interview

- ▶ Know what the job involves.
- ▶ Interviewers want YOUR evidence and experience.
- ▶ What are they looking for ? (Look at the keywords in the competition notice)
- ▶ Think about your STRONGEST qualities? (Anticipate possible Q&A's using keywords)
- ▶ Think about your WEAKEST qualities? (Practice answers that make the best of them)
- ▶ WEAKNESSES: Be honest with yourself and don't fudge questions in relation to them.

Prepare for Interview Questions

- ▶ Think of possible questions
 - ▶ Prepare Answers
 - ▶ Practice getting your message across
 - ▶ Practice answering questions out loud.
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- ▶ Prepare an answer for
 - Each example
 - Each strength
 - Any weaknesses

Types of Questions

▶ Closed Questions

Are you a risk taker?

▶ Open Questions

How do you feel about taking risks?

*Answer both types of questions as if they are Open -
Give an example*

The Background

- ▶ Ask yourself the following questions:

Ask yourself the following: “How, Why, What?”

How did you organise that?

Why did you choose to do this?

What did YOU do in particular, which helped to progress things?

What was the result of your actions?

How did things turn out?

How did you know it went well?

How did you measure this?

Why do you think it is a good achievement?

How does this experience prepare you for the post you are applying for?

Are the qualities you have used here relevant to the job in question?

What have you learned from this experience that would help you in this job?

In advance of the Interview

- ▶ To build your confidence, try to run through what you would say in the interview with a friend or colleague.
- ▶ Anticipate questions that may be asked at interview.
- ▶ If possible, video/record yourself so you can hear how you sound and/or draw attention to overuse of gestures etc.

Attending Interview

- ▶ If you receive an invite to attend for interview or aptitude test - confirm that you will attend.
- ▶ Make sure you know where the interview or aptitude test will be held and how long it will take to get there.
- ▶ Arrive at the interview venue at least 5 minutes early.
- ▶ Bring all the documentation that is requested in your invite letter.
- ▶ Dress appropriately, that first impression can make a difference.
- ▶ And remember, the interview board have been on your side of the table before, they know how it feels!!
- ▶ Believe it or not, they have been nervous too!

How you appear



- ▶ A good handshake
- ▶ Smile
- ▶ Sit up straight
- ▶ Don't lean across the desk
- ▶ Maintain eye contact - particularly with the person asking the question.
- ▶ Speak up and don't speak too fast.
- ▶ Chin up and put your best foot forward!!

At the Interview



- ▶ Listen to the questions - ask for clarification if they are not clear to you.
- ▶ EBBOM!!!! Engage your brain before you open your mouth.
- ▶ Answer the Question and Expand into your message.
- ▶ Good Luck!!!

At the end!

- ▶ If there is anything you wish to add/clarify, do it now.
- ▶ Thank the interview panel.

