

# INTERVIEW TOOLKIT TO EMPOWER YOUR GROWTH

We have created a comprehensive interview toolkit specifically designed for Talent & People professionals to help you boss your interview!

Our toolkit will help you to navigate the interview process with confidence, providing you with the tools and resources you need to prepare thoroughly and showcase your skills effectively. We believe that detailed preparation is the key to success, and we're here to support you every step of the way.

## LET'S DO THIS!



- What to and how to research the company effectively
- Beyond recruitment – project orientated preparation
- Perfecting your elevator pitch
- Interview techniques to prepare for (Inclu. STAR Method)
- Questions to ask the hiring manager

# WHAT TO & HOW TO RESEARCH THE COMPANY

Researching is one of the most important things you should do when starting to prepare for an interview.

This will allow you to gain a deeper understanding of the company, the industry and exactly how this role will create impact.

You are also far more likely to build rapport with your interviewer, essential for being considered for a next stage interview.

Remember, knowledge is power.

## THE COMPANY

Be able to answer the following questions:

- What does the company do?
- What is their mission, vision & values?
- What type of company culture do they wish to foster?
- When did the company launch?
- What is their current headcount?
- What initiatives do they engage in to encourage Environmental Social Governance (ESG) & Diversity, Equality & Inclusion?
- Do they show any signs of supporting with professional development?
- What is their brand identity and what do they stand for?

Finding information that answers these exact questions will allow you to tailor your answers as well as to offer you support when thinking of questions to ask them – creating a more positive interaction.

You will be able to find this information by visiting the website, social media platforms (LinkedIn), Glassdoor and their annual reports on Companies House.

## THE INDUSTRY

Lots of people are under the false assumption that because their role is to support with recruitment or HR activities that knowledge of the industry is not required.

Wrong. Remember, as either a TA specialist or People professional it will be your role to attract and retain employees. To do this well you will need to build credible conversations with both prospective and current employees. Understand the industry in which the company operates, any current trends, challenges or opportunities. Consider reading one or two industry publications, news articles or annual reports to stay up to date.

Dropping this knowledge into your conversation will score you some serious brownie points!

# WHAT TO & HOW TO RESEARCH THE COMPANY

## THE POSITION

Thoroughly review the job description and research the responsibilities of those you are not familiar with. Think about how the role links to either your current or previous role, allowing you to prepare examples for where you have succeeded within specific role requirements before.

## THE INTERVIEWER(S)

Now this is golden and shows a genuine interest to learn about the people within the business.

If you know who will be conducting your interviews, type their name into LinkedIn and have a look at when they started at the company, their career journey and the role they are responsible for within the business. If there is an opportunity you could mention your interest in some content they posted or a career milestone they hit. This will allow you to build rapport as well as tailor answers slightly, building upon the connection.

People love to talk about themselves, it's a scientific fact. Utilise this to succeed!

## COMPETITORS

It's really helpful to gain an understanding of who the company's competitors are and what they offer. This will allow you to gain a sense of the industry's landscape and even help you mention key areas you could focus on within your role in order to stay competitive.

You can do this by simply conducting a google search with the company's name and competitors.

# BEYOND RECRUITMENT — PROJECT DISCOVERY

The modern recruiter, whether that be in-house or in-agency will fulfil a wider purpose by offering more than just filling roles. In fact, we usually wear various different hats.

Take some time to brainstorm all the project based work you have experienced and contributed towards. Think about this in the form of a solution orientated approach.

You identified a problem... what was your solution and what impact did this achieve?

## PROCESS IMPROVEMENTS

Think about how you have contributed towards streamlining process efficiencies.

**There are many ways in which you could have done this:** Reducing time to hire/cost per hire, implementing an ATS, reviewing recruitment content and improving this to attract talent, using data to influence decisions, implementing a professional development scheme or working towards this etc.

Anything you have done to improve the hiring process/retain existing staff will contribute to this initiative!

## PROJECTS & INITIATIVES

Think about how you have contributed towards various projects or initiatives surrounding DE&I/ESG/employee well-being. Emphasise your awareness of the importance of contributing positively to important initiatives. Not only does this indicate an understanding of these areas, but will also help answer any questions surrounding talent attraction. Think about your approach to sourcing, engagement and brand exposure.

It's all about the bigger picture and staying on top of competition.



### KEY AREAS TO RESEARCH:

- Diversity & Inclusion
- Employer Branding
- Employer Value Proposition
- The candidate experience
- Data led recruitment
- Talent strategy

### KEY METRICS TO RESEARCH:

- Cost per hire
- Quality of hire
- Time to hire
- Hiring manager satisfaction
- Offer acceptance rates
- Candidate satisfaction

# PERFECTING YOUR ELEVATOR PITCH

Most people hate this part and sometimes will not prep and just wing it!

Now we are not encouraging you to rehearse word for word a description about yourself, career milestones, achievements etc, but prepping for key points would allow you to feel more relaxed and confident when asked the often dreaded 'tell me about yourself' question.

Here are some areas to focus on...

## Understand your audience:

Don't plan a blanket pitch. Tailor your pitch for the role you are applying for demonstrating your skills/experience in order to highlight how you would be a value add to their business.

## Highlight your strengths and achievements:

Give them something to get excited about! For example, with my last employer I was able to improve DE&I hiring by 80% or this year, I received an award for XYZ...

## Differentiate yourself

The competition is fierce.

Think about what makes you stand out. What will you offer? What problems can you work towards to solve for them? What makes you a value add to the business?

## Keep it concise

Aim for your pitch to last around 30 seconds.

Keep it brief and to the point, using the company's values and the specific role requirements as your key driver behind the content you wish to share.

# FREQUENTLY USED INTERVIEW TECHNIQUES

The top four interview techniques frequently used are: **Behavioural-style**, Scenario-based & Cultural fit interviews.

Each can be used within conjunction with one another, so best to prepare for all three! This will simply be a question of having some examples ready as well as conducting an in-depth brainstorm of your skills & experience.

Once you have done this, it can be used for any interview you have, so its worth it!

## BEHAVIOURAL-STYLE

Key focus here on your past experiences & behaviours that will predict your future performance. You may be asked to give an example of how you handled situations in the past surrounding conflict with a hiring manager, a difficult brief, internal processes etc.

### Example questions:

“Tell me about a time when you had to convince a hiring manager to change their recruitment approach or strategy. What was the situation, how did you approach it, and what was the outcome?”

“Tell me about a time when you were leading an internal initiative and faced unexpected challenges or roadblocks. How did you overcome those challenges and keep the project on track? What was the outcome, and what did you learn from the experience?”



### Tips to handle these types of questions:

- Use the STAR Method (Situation, Task, Action, Result). Describe your situation, the task at hand, your actions to solve the problem and the results/impact this action had on the solution.
- Make sure to be specific and detailed
- Use this as an opportunity to highlight key skills you have used (ideally those on the JD!)
- Use positive examples and perhaps mentioned a learning opportunity that derived from the situation. This shows your adaptability.

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## SCENARIO-BASED

These focus on providing you with hypothetical scenarios, asking how you would respond to them.

### Example questions:

“ We have just received a large investment and are required to scale our Tech team rapidly in order to meet a deadline for our product launch. You’re struggling to source and attract quality candidates that meet our needs. What steps would you take to meet our deadline whilst not compromising on the quality of candidates?”

“We have set a goal to increase diversity within our workplace. It is your responsibility to lead this project. You have noticed, however that our recruitment materials are slightly outdated, perhaps leading to a lack of diversity. What steps would you take to identify and address this problem so you can meet our desired goal?”



### Tips to handle these types of questions:

- Use the STAR Method
- Listen carefully to the question. Don’t hesitate in asking them to clarify any areas in order to consolidate your understanding of the question.
- Show your thought process. They want to see your approach to problem-solving, so make sure you explain your reasoning behind your actions and decisions.
- Again, showcase your skills!

# FREQUENTLY USED INTERVIEW TECHNIQUES

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## CULTURAL-FIT

These will assess your alignment with the company's culture and values. These usually surround your working style, personal values and past experiences within a similar environment.

### Example questions:

"Can you give me an example of when you had to prioritise competing tasks or projects. How did you manage your time and make a decision on what areas to focus on first?"

"Describe a time when you had to have a difficult conversation with a colleague within your team or a hiring manager you were working closely with. How did you handle the situation and what did you learn from it?"



### Tips to handle these types of questions:

- Be honest and authentic. Don't focus on what you think they want to hear – they want to gain an understanding of your working style to see if this could be a cultural fit/add to their business
- Consider the research you have done on their company culture. If any of those areas align with your personal values, mention this!
- Provide examples to your answers. You could use the STAR method again to make sure these are in line with the question being asked.



# SAMPLE QUESTIONS TO ASK THE HIRING MANAGER

This is super important. Interviewing is just as important for you as it is for the hiring managers.

You want to make sure that the opportunity you are putting yourself forward for is right for you. This is about empowering your growth! Don't focus too much on questions that will make you sound 'impressive'. Focus on the factors that are important to you, which will help you decide between offers when you are faced with that situation.

Make sure you are armed with questions surrounding the companies culture & personal progression.

- Can you shine some light on your company culture?
- How does your company contribute towards ESG efforts?
- What are the dynamics of the immediate team?
- How do you promote DE&I in the workplace?
- How will my impact be measured?
- How is success measured in this role?
- What are some of the challenges this position will face?
- How could I progress professionally here?
- How do you celebrate key achievements as a team?
- How do you onboard new recruits?

