

How to Win at Job Interviews e-Course Day 3

Hello, I am Margaret Buj.

Welcome to your last lesson in the Interview Coach's free e-Course to help you succeed at job interviews.

We've covered a number of key areas in the past lessons.

- ✓ How to make your answers and examples relevant to the interviewer's needs
- ✓ How to create your answers that are specific, measurable, and relevant by using S.T.A.R format.
- ✓ How to answer that dreaded "**Tell me about yourself**" question and stand out from other candidates.

Today we will look at how to prepare successfully for even the most difficult interview questions and build rapport with the interviewer.

How to answer the interviewer's questions



You should always answer questions **directly** and try to use the **appropriate examples** from your past experience to demonstrate your skills and personal characteristics. Keep your **answers concise** and relevant and if you cite an example, keep it brief and don't lapse into telling a long-winded story.

Most interviewers will know that it is difficult to remember every area of your past quickly. They will also appreciate your wanting to provide a suitable response by **taking the time** to consider your answer. So don't be afraid to say something along lines of, "*Let me think about that for a moment.*"

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Being able to tell the interviewer about particular situations that relate to each question will be far more effective and make a far more positive impression than responding in general terms. Being able to **quantify results** will also be of great help because numbers easily impress people.

You should consider each question posed to you as an opportunity to **sell yourself** by providing some of your strengths.

You will be **evaluated on your answers** and not the strength of your resume/CV.

Your speech and tone of voice



All the way through the interview you want to be able to maintain a constant and predictable manner in the way in which you answer questions. You do not want to be able to answer some questions immediately as if you are reciting a script because there will be times when you won't immediately know the answer. Throughout the exchange of information your voice should be firm and warm, well modulated and relaxed. Try to be conscious of *not speaking too fast* and becoming emotionally involved to such a degree that your speech and voice are affected. If you feel rushed during the interview, this will manifest itself in the way that you speak. By *remaining calm* your voice won't let you down and thus won't create unnecessary problems for you.

When sitting down and your body language



When you're seated to begin the interview you will want to be as comfortable as possible. At the same time you will want to appear as enthusiastic and professional as is appropriate under the circumstances. At all times you should **sit up straight** and towards the front edge of your seat so as to appear eager. Do not lean back in your seat and definitely do not slouch in it.

To prevent your hands distracting others, simply cup them together and let them rest either in your lap or on the table before you. Keep all your gestures subdued. If you can't hold your hands together, then perhaps hold onto the pen that you brought along. Just don't be tempted to tap with that pen because that is worse than distracting - it is irritating.

Other things that you **shouldn't do** are:

- ✗ chew gum,
- ✗ twiddle your thumbs,
- ✗ hum or whistle a tune,
- ✗ stretch any part of your body,
- ✗ find yourself staring at someone,
- ✗ use slang or swear,
- ✗ fidget and touch anything that isn't yours that is on the table or in the room. Never cross your arms because, not only is this a very defensive position, it also creates a very negative impression.

When you are asked a question - even a difficult one - do not cast your eyes downward, or look up towards the walls and ceiling for the answers. Strive to maintain eye contact with the interviewer who asked you the question. Once you've completed your answer look at interviewers and smile politely.

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Making a concerted effort to end your answering of especially difficult questions with a slight, but natural smile should overcome your giving away feelings of discomfort or any other negative emotion.

Practice questions.

If you'd like some help to come up with the questions... **here's a few to start things off...**

- *Tell us about yourself*
- *What is your career ambition?*
- *Where do you see yourself in 3/5/10 years' time?*
- *What are your main strengths?*
- *What is your main weakness?*
- *Give us three adjectives that describe you best.*
- *Why do you want to join our company?*
- *Why do you want to leave your current job?*
- *What do you think will be your biggest challenge in this job?*
- *What makes a good team player?*
- *What makes a good leader?*
- *How would you describe your management style?*
- *How would you handle a non-performing colleague?*
- *How do you measure success?*
- *How would your manager motivate you?*
- *Do you work better as part of a team or alone?*
- *How do you handle stress?*
- *How do you deal with criticism?*
- *Describe an instance where your work was criticised.*
- *How would you rate your communication skills and what would you do to improve them?*
- *What do you know about our company?*
- *Have you ever been in a conflict situation with one of your colleagues and how did you handle it.*
- *Describe something you have done to maximise or improve the use of resources beyond your own work unit to achieve improved results.*
- *Tell me about a time when you changed your priorities to meet others' expectations.*

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- *Give an example of how you provided service to a client/stakeholder beyond their expectations. How did you identify the need? How did you respond?*
- *Describe a situation in which you were a member (not a leader) of a team, and a conflict arose within the team. What did you do?*
- *Describe a time when you provided feedback to someone about their performance.*
- *Describe a situation where you inspired others to meet a common goal.*

Now you've got an initial set of questions which leads us to coming up with answers for each of these questions.

I would like you to think about two or three action points / three things you could say (in summary form) for each of these questions.

NOW read out the question aloud... and then use your 3 bullet answer to help you answer the question in full this time – out loud again.

Try to keep to the question asked... be concise and confident! **Practise, practise, practise...**



practice makes perfect

Finally, if you have found information in this free e-course useful, you will love my new e-Guide "Land That Job!" available at www.LandThatJob.co.uk

It contains lots of samples of CVs and covering letters, examples of STAR answers to competency-based interview questions, advice on how to handle specific concerns in the areas of education, age and experience, and practical techniques to help you close the interview successfully and negotiate the best possible salary!

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Find out more at www.LandThatJob.co.uk

Need some personal feedback and help?

If you are finding it difficult to come up with a convincing answer to specific interview questions, or would really like some personal coaching in your interview technique, you might want to consider booking an interview skills coaching session. In just 1.5 or 2 hours, I will help you come up with answers that will present your skills and experience in the best possible light.

For more information about my 1-to-1 interview coaching sessions or to read some recent testimonials, please visit www.interview-coach.co.uk or contact me on Margaret@interview-coach.co.uk

Want to **skyrocket your chances of getting any job** that you interview for?? [Click here](#) to purchase my 'Land that Job' e-book. You can get it for £15 instead of £27 when you enter VIP15 in the coupon box when you check out.

Warm regards,

Margaret Buj



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