



PRESENTATION GUIDE AT THE JOB INTERVIEW



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Introduction

Employment opportunities for youth have increased tremendously. However, as organizations are no longer homogeneous, jobs have become less structured, i.e. they are constantly evolving to keep up with the ever-changing market demands, requiring knowledge from different fields and the ability to work simultaneously in different ways.

At the same time, the employees also became more 'pretentious'. They began looking for companies that would give them a chance to use their skills—an employer that could provide them with an area for intellectual growth, a job that challenged them, and leadership they could rely on.

In the middle of these developments, large organizations are spending a lot of time, energy and money to recruit the best employees who can function as true entrepreneurs - who have the ability to look for opportunities and add value, rather than waiting for someone to do it for them organize. It's no wonder that in today's job market, recruiters don't ask what their qualifications are, but focus more on identifying what the candidate in front of them is capable of doing in an interview and how that matters his capabilities for the company.

However, today's hyper-connected world - where Facebook, Twitter, 4G, iPhones, iPads, the cloud, Big Data, mobile phone apps and Skype, and a combination of these tools of connectivity and creativity, have created a global platform of education, communication, commercial and innovation – leads individuals to access learning, reskilling, employment in trade, job search or promotion, investment and obtaining all these sources is done online. But as Friedman said, this huge expansion of an individual's ability to do all these things comes with a big difference: "More now rests on you @" (Thomas L Friedman, journalist at The New York Times).

It is also observed that a large number of candidates, despite having adequate educational experience and a good track record, are not able to secure the jobs they really want because they are not able to manage the job interview - the critical phase of the selection process.

With that in mind, here's a guide on how to interview for a job, whether it's an entry-level job or a promotion within the company.

The job interview

Overview

A job interview is an important step in the selection process of the right candidate by the organization. It is a time when the employer and the prospective employee meet to exchange information, to test each other's 'fit' and to negotiate the terms of employment. According to



Bové (2003), the job interview has a dual purpose: one, it enables the organization to find the best available person for the job by determining whether the applicant and the organization are a good fit; and two, it helps the applicant find the job best suited to their goals and capabilities.

From a candidate's perspective, a job interview is a strategic conversation with a purpose because, on the one hand, it gives the job seeker an opportunity to convince the prospective employer that he/she has the skills, the experience, ability and aptitude to do the job that the organization wants and can comfortably fit into the organization and, on the other hand, allows the candidate to gather information about the nature of the job and future prospects in the organization to determine whether the position and work environment are suitable for him/her. The job interview is thus a two-way communication process.

An interview can be described as a step-by-step process in which an interviewer 'imaginatively' enters the life of a candidate - indeed a stranger - to assess their suitability for a job.

The first stage is known as the introduction, where both the candidate and the interviewer make an effort to get to know each other. This helps both of them to establish rapport with each other.

The second stage is related to the candidate's previous experiences and hobbies, the question of which makes the candidate a bit more comfortable to answer the questions with more ease and that makes the candidate ready to face questions harder.

In the third stage - the crucial stage - it is related to the evaluation of the candidate's general awareness and expertise. Interviews are not tests or quizzes, but rather conversations between two people who are committed to finding out their common interests. The candidate must be 'authentic' during the interview - he must not leave any question marks in the mind of the interviewer for him to decipher an answer himself. Someone may not be perfect in their communication, but they need to help the interviewers understand them during the conversation, if necessary even by providing examples that can demonstrate to the employer that they are someone they can work with.

You may also be asked to talk about the professional achievements you are proud of, the reasons why you want to leave your current job, the reasons why you chose this company to go to the interview, and what you consider to be your strengths and weaknesses.

At the end, the employer will show his availability to answer any questions or concerns you may have. A candidate who asks the right questions shows that they have thoroughly prepared and researched the company they are interviewing for. Therefore, the questions you ask must be strictly related to the company.



Types of interviews

There are different types of job interviews for different jobs, functions and companies. In general, job interviews can be structured, unstructured, telephone, group interviews, individual or even stress interviews. Similarly, the number of interviews in a given selection process may vary from a single interview to multiple levels or rounds of interviews.

Traditionally, individual interviews are conducted as a complement to other selection methods such as written tests, presentations, group discussions, physical tests, etc. Sometimes exclusive interviews are held for certain selected and experienced candidates (generally for upper levels).

Corporations resort to multiple rounds of interviews, especially for entry-level jobs. Normally, there could be three levels: one, the preliminary interview; two, the main interview; and, three, the final interview.

In the preliminary interview, the employer basically analyzes a candidate based on his basic qualifications, skills and experiences. Sometimes, preliminary interviews might as well be done over the phones. Once the candidate is deemed suitable in the preliminary round, he/she will proceed to the next level.

In the second stage, the employer makes a full assessment of the candidate, including his personality, special skills and level of professional expertise, preferably by a group of interviewers from different departments.

In the final interview, the overall objective of the employer will be to offer the job to the candidate and negotiate the terms of the employment contract.

The telephone interview

A telephone interview is designed to narrow down the list of candidates for a one-on-one interview. It's kind of like a rehearsal for the face-to-face interview. It is essentially designed to be traversed by a large number of candidates. If it is arranged by a recruiter or search firm, there is a fair chance that someone will know when the interview will take place. It is best if it happens that way as it gives space to prepare for the interview. Telephone interviews are in no way different from face-to-face interviews, he must demonstrate in his conversation energy, enthusiasm and commitment to the job.

Group interview (group discussions)

Companies have started conducting group discussions after the written test to assess the personality traits of potential candidates for selection. Group discussion is a process where participants exchange ideas and debate about the exchanged views.



Typically, companies give a topic or situation to a group of 8-10 candidates, give them a few minutes to think about it, and then ask them to discuss it with each other for about 15-20 minutes. As the discussions progress, the appointees evaluate the candidates to see if they possess the type of personality traits they want in their employees. It is mainly used to test communication skills, group dynamics and leadership qualities.

- **Content:** represents the candidate's knowledge of the topic under discussion and, importantly, their ability to present their ideas in a logical order. It also helps in assessing a candidate's reasoning ability and general disposition.

- **Communication skills:** in a group discussion, communication becomes predominantly a two-way process - one must simultaneously play the role of "sender" and "receiver" of information. But unfortunately, what usually happens in group discussions is this: while one candidate is speaking, the next candidate stays engaged in structuring their pitch. This is reflected in what is said when it is his/her turn - it could be about a new idea or it could simply become a repetition because he/she has not heard what others have already said.

- **Group dynamics:** Peer-to-peer discussion allows the interviewer to gauge a candidate's demeanor - whether they are an energetic team player or a solo and dominant or withdrawn type. It also helps the interviewer to assess whether a candidate is aggressive / submissive in his orientation towards group members and whether he is able to influence the group.

- **Leadership skills:** There are people who have a flair for assuming the role of leader in any given situation. In a group discussion, such people tend to take the early initiative to give direction - they initiate a discussion that paves the way for the group to continue the discussion logically and importantly without problems. A good leader encourages others to express their opinions and channels the discussion towards a rational goal.

Skills that matter most in group discussions:

- Ability to communicate with others.
- Listening skills.
- Openness of mind.
- Analytical skills.
- Ability to think for yourself.
- Confidence to lead a discussion.
- Ability to play a role as a team member.
- Leadership and decision-making skills.

The individual interview



As noted earlier, it is often observed that despite having the right set of qualifications, technical skills and experience, certain candidates often fail to impress the interviewer during job interviews. The reasons could be many, but proper interview preparation will definitely help a candidate to better impress the employer on one's ability to meet the requirements of the organization. Some of the key approaches that a potential candidate can explore to improve their personal interview performance are examined below:

First job interview

The first job interview helps the recruiters to select only those candidates with potential, who also resonate with the company's organizational culture. This interview is conducted by a person from the human resources department and aims to eliminate unqualified candidates for the job. Many companies have the habit of conducting the first interview over the phone, so when you apply for a job, make sure you have the details of the position and the company handy, so that you don't get caught on the wrong foot by a phone interview.

Second job interview

After passing HR, the interview follows with your direct superior or with some of the colleagues with whom you would work. During this meeting you will be asked to demonstrate your skills. For example, in the IT industry you will be asked applied questions or you will go through a quick knowledge test, so that people can make sure that you will meet the requirements of the job. Likewise, in the case of jobs that require you to know how to work in certain programs, you may be asked to show your skills with that program.

For an accountant position at a bank or an architect position, there are several standard tests to help the employer to be convinced that you have not exaggerated your training in your CV. And for a position as a teacher, you may be asked to demonstrate your knowledge. Interviews for secretarial positions are more lax, which do not have additional proof of skills. Interviews for positions in the army may also involve physical tests of resistance or strength, as well as pressure tests, to test the candidates' resistance to stressful situations.

Third job interview

If you have already passed the first two stages of the recruitment process, it means that you are on the short list of candidates remaining in the competition, and from now on the competition is fierce. The final job interview is conducted by the CEO of the company, and to convince him that you are the right man for the job, you will have to impress him more than the other candidates. Before going to the interview, document yourself about the person with whom



you are going to meet and find some common points of discussion: what college he graduated from, what is his professional path and how he ended up running his own company. This will establish a connection with the person in front of you and give you the advantage of knowing about him as much as he knows about you.

Online job interview

In an online job interview, 55% of the attention is captured by the image, 38% by the sound and 7% by what you say. So, you should make sure that the interviewer can see and hear you as well as possible. Familiarize yourself with the program you will use, Webex/Microsoft Teams/Skype/Zoom, etc., and practice their functionalities so that you gain dexterity.

Also, check beforehand that the microphone and webcam are working well, the internet connection is good, and the laptop is plugged in so there are no interruptions during the interview.

In addition to these aspects, take care to position yourself in front of a wall, so that the interviewer's attention is not distracted by how your home looks. Dress as you would for a face-to-face interview, and when you talk to the recruiter, your gaze must be directed towards the web camera, not towards your own image on the laptop.

Additional suggestions for online interview tips can be found in Annexe 1.

Presentation at an interview

The candidate's goal at the interview is to convince the interviewer that he, the candidate, is the most suitable person for the respective position, that he has the necessary skills and abilities. Preparing for the interview consists in learning to have a conversation with the examiner(s) and to answer certain questions.

Categories of questions that will be asked:

Questions about studies. The exact answer must be given, emphasizing successes, avoiding discussing failures. Interest in the profession is demonstrated - indifferent people are rarely employed.

Questions about professional experience. Careful! The former bosses will not be criticized!

Questions about the relevant position/firm. The candidate will find out in advance what he has to do in that position. If he doesn't have all the skills, he will show his willingness to learn quickly!

Questions about career goals. The examiner is interested in whether the candidate can contribute to the success of the respective company/institution. Any answer to such



questions must show that the candidate is competent and can become even more competent. The career objective must be compatible with the interests of the company.

A trap question: "Do you want to know something about the position in question or our company?". This question is asked to see if you are a motivated person - under no circumstances will the answer be negative!

The candidate can ask:

What are the company's development plans?

Who will you work with?

What are the specialization possibilities?

What is the work schedule?

Thus, it will demonstrate the interest in the intended job and the desire to start working!

Examiners' prejudices: Every examiner is a human being who has his likes, dislikes, whims and reservations. This fact will not create a problem! The examiner's prejudices represent a small hidden obstacle that can be overcome!

What examiners think:

The people who graduated from faculty X are very well prepared. Graduates of other faculties know nothing.

I do not hire anyone who worked at institution/company Y. Everyone there is incompetent.

I do not hire a woman for this position. Don't face the stress!

I do not hire students. They are frivolous and always late.

If, by chance, the candidate belongs to a category not approved by the examiner, the only solution is to show him that, regardless of this, he is a very valuable person and that he has qualities that greatly compensate for the things that the employer may not like!

To make a good impression:

- Clothing must be discreet and appropriate to the situation, draw attention to the person, and not stand out;

- Punctuality is highly appreciated;

- Do not chew gum or smoke during the interview;

- He greets himself in a firm and determined way;

- Copies are brought after the CV and diploma;

- Do not avoid the look of the examiner - look directly!



- A letter of thanks is sent after a few days, reaffirming the desire to work for the company in question!

Elements of stress management at the interview

For the vast majority of those looking for a job, the words "stress" and "interview" are synonymous. Stress has many effects on people – it can make them shake, panic, talk too much, fidget or lose their minds. Here are some simple techniques that can help calm down and relax when he feels stressed before an interview

a) Before the interview

Punctuality at an interview is one of the most important aspects you have to make sure of; don't unnecessarily stress yourself out - try to arrive 10 minutes before the start of the interview. If you arrive too early, you will wait and you will be worried, and if you arrive too late, you will have to hurry and you will not have time to put your ideas in order for the interview. A break before the interview, of 10 minutes, will allow you to catch your breath and get used to the environment - it is enough time, without being too much.

b) Imagine it!

You can turn your dreams into reality - use your imagination to keep your cool during an interview. Visualization is a relaxation technique, with the help of which you create in your mind the image of a stressful situation, which you solve successfully. Thus, you mentally prepare yourself to face the real situation as well as possible.

You can practice visualization a few days, hours or even a few minutes before the interview - close your eyes, take a deep breath and imagine the conversation with the employer, being confident and easily answering even difficult questions. Practice success in your imagination and soon you will experience it in reality.

c) Relax yourself!

A relaxed candidate is a candidate confident in their own abilities. Prove to the interviewer that you are calm, quiet and confident during the discussion with him and he will consider you suitable for the job.

Here are some **tips** to keep calm during the interview:

- *Breathe rarely and deeply (and, of course, silently).*
- *Sit as straight as possible, and don't cross your arms or legs, keep them relaxed.*
- *He speaks rarely and takes frequent breath breaks.*
- *Smile – it's contagious!*



d) Take breaks, don't panic!

During any interview, something happens that does not go according to your plans: either there is a too long pause, in which the silence becomes oppressive, or you stutter or cannot find the words to answer a difficult question. DO NOT panic – now is the time to apply the relaxation techniques presented above. It is easier to control your fear and panic as you feel them appear, than to relax when you have already lost your calm and control over your ideas. So, take a break the moment you feel like you're starting to panic, repeat in your mind that you can get through this moment, take a deep breath, concentrate and resume the interview. A short break of only 10 seconds can be exactly what you need to regain your composure and control, and the interviewer will certainly not even notice this.

Interview techniques for the marine industry

Whether you work at sea or on land, you will probably have to go for a job interview at some point. Regardless of your years of experience, it is very unlikely that you will get a job without passing an interview. It's not a perfect system, some fantastic employees interview poorly and some terrible employees are great at interviews, but for now it's the system we have to use.

Below is a list of 10 common pitfall questions in naval job interviews that require extra attention from candidates, as well as the most appropriate answers to each of these questions, or, conversely, the ones that they are better off answering. avoid them.

Question:	Best answer:	Worst answer:
Tell me something about yourself.	YES - What the employer wants to hear is a summary of your experience and the reasons why you are the right candidate for the position. Create a short "advertorial" in advance that contains: a summary of recent experience (maximum 10 years), studies and certifications relevant to the position, specific skills and achievements that correspond to the requirements of the position.	NO - "What would you like to know? "
What are your salary expectations?	YES - Try to avoid the answer if the question comes very early in the selection process (for example	NO - "I am not willing to accept a salary lower than 3,000 euros. How much do you offer?"



<p>What are your strengths?</p>	<p>during the telephone interview); show yourself flexible and rather interested in the career opportunity represented by the vacancy. If you still have to provide this information, offer a wider range and add that you are willing to discuss at the time of the offer.</p> <p>YES - The answer must include concrete and demonstrable skills that are relevant to the job content, for example: I have the ability to generate sales: I managed to bring 10 new customers to the previous company, which brought an increase in the volume of receipts 10% above target in the first year.</p>	<p>NO - "I'm a team player, I'm communicative, etc.", which are already overused and have become empty of content and difficult to demonstrate with examples.</p>
<p>What are your weaknesses?</p>	<p>YES - Present an example of a skill you developed over time that was a challenge early in your career.</p>	<p>NO - "I have no weak point" or "I'm a perfectionist, I have too much trust in people", who are over-used..</p>
<p>Where do you see yourself in 5 years?</p>	<p>YES - "I was told that I have the potential to occupy a management position, therefore I would like to develop these skills over time" or "I want to become an expert in the area of risk management, to develop processes and procedures that bring results important to the company I work for".</p>	<p>NO - "In the position you currently hold" or "I don't know".</p>
<p>What did you like most about your previous job?</p>	<p>YES - Make a connection between your answer and the needs of the company and/or present an example of an initiative or a series of extraordinary results that you have achieved - eg. "the fact that I had the opportunity to contribute to the increase of sales in the region by over 50% in the last 3 years".</p>	<p>NO - Don't answer without thinking about the needs of the company. If you say that you liked the independence that the previous position offered you and the company you are applying for needs people who can fit into a very strict system of organization and reporting and who do not exceed the limits of the job, this it could disqualify you.</p>



What did you like least about the previous job?

YES - "Although I liked most aspects of the job, one limitation was that I no longer had opportunities to learn something new or take on new responsibilities."

NO - Subjective aspects, regarding the relationship with colleagues, bosses.

How quickly do you think you can adapt and contribute to our company?

YES - "I think I can adapt in a very short time. In the positions I held previously, I had to accumulate a lot of information in a very short time and I adapted quickly. For example..." and gives a concrete example. Even if the position you are applying for is in a completely different industry than the one you worked in, identify those transferable skills and offer them as an example. Shows initiative and motivation.

NO - "Since I have no experience in this industry, I will probably need a little more time to adjust."

Why did you leave your previous company?

YES - In the case of a reorganization, say exactly what the reality was: "The company went through a reorganization at the level of several departments and the position I held, together with others, were abolished. This had nothing to do with individual performance."

NO - "I was fired because I didn't integrate into the team."

"It was a personal revenge of my boss"

"I felt that I achieved everything I could achieve in that company and I am looking for a position that will allow me to develop further".

Why do you want to work here? Or Why should we hire you?

YES - Summarize the reasons why you are suitable for the position.

NO - Don't show interest only in the financial aspects or the benefits the company offers.

Once you have the skills and experience to apply for a job, you should start working on your interview skills because, like it or not, this is likely to be the difference between getting the job or not.

Why would they hire you?

Your interviewer may not ask you this question directly, even if that is the focus of the interview. Any job description will have a set of skills that you will need to meet. Before going



into an interview, you should look at these skills and have a real example from your experience that would meet the requirement.

If they are looking for a 'player' for the team, you should be able to demonstrate when you have worked well in a team; this should not be difficult if you have worked on the ship. If they are looking for someone who 'solves' problems, you need to mention an actual situation where you used your skills and solved the problem.

You must have already obtained the "core skills" required for the position (eg IMO basic courses or other courses taken during school) otherwise you would not have been invited to the interview.

Interviews usually, but not always, focus on skills such as management or communication, so make sure you can demonstrate them.

Do your research

At the beginning of any interview, you are likely to be asked what you know about the company. In reality, no one really cares what you know, but they do care that you took the time to research the company and the responsibilities of the job opening. When we say 'research', we don't just mean visiting the website. Make sure you read the job description in its entirety, check if recent news has been posted about the company (you can set up Google News Alerts for this), take a look at the company's social media profiles and check for reviews on Glassdoor (Glassdoor is a website where current and former employees anonymously review companies. Glassdoor also allows users to anonymously submit and view salaries, as well as search and apply for jobs on its platform).

If you are 'armed' with a lot of information about the job and the company, you are much more likely to impress during the interview and ask the right questions afterwards.

Play your part

First impressions matter and it's important to dress like you're closing a deal no matter what job you're applying for. Each company will have slightly different dress codes, but a suit or casual dress/trousers for an interview is never a bad idea.

First impressions are not only based on how you dress, but also on how you behave. Smiling, eye contact and a firm handshake help build relationship and demonstrate trust. People will judge you within the first few minutes of the interview.

Don't be late

It's better to be two hours late than one minute late. HR managers are busy people, they have teams to coordinate and therefore their time is valuable (time is money). If you are late, regardless of the circumstances, you will disturb and represent a minus and you will have a



fight 'to give' to get back afloat. Of course, arriving on time shouldn't be a problem, but if you're coming from a greater distance or there are other factors beyond your control, make sure you allow yourself extra time. If you know you're going to be late and there's absolutely nothing you can do, make sure you call ahead to explain and apologize.

If you're five minutes early, you're on time.

Check your social media history

91% of employers now check social media to 'examine' candidates. Do you have a 'skeleton in the closet'? Are you tagged in the photos from that escape from the ship in the port of Singapore? Your social media accounts have a very long memory, and you should feel comfortable talking about anything that's there in a job interview.

If there's something in your social feed that you don't feel comfortable talking about in an interview, delete it, or at least make sure your account privacy settings are set up so that people you don't know them so they can't see them.

Ask questions

In addition to the fact that the questions you ask can reveal a lot about your potential employers, they will create a good impression of you. If you only ask about salary, time off and bonuses, it will become quite obvious to interviewers what your priorities are. Asking about learning and development opportunities, company culture, and the direction the company is heading for the next five years will show that you're not just interested in money and free time.

The interview is a two-way street, it's not just about whether you're pleasant. You will probably be committing to work around 40 hours a week for the next few years and make sure you know the details before making any kind of decision about the proposed offer.

Job interview for a cadet position

For starters, how you conduct yourself in interviews is crucial - and that goes for both face-to-face interviewing in an office and interviewing over the phone or a video call. You need to be confident - but not so confident that you give the impression that you 'know it all'.

That won't impress anyone - especially if you're applying for entry-level jobs!

You should also do some research on the shipping company you are applying for a cadetship with. This is a kind of 'standard politeness' and shows interest in the job and the company. Remember that there are plenty of other cadets out there looking for a job, and if you show up for an interview without even a basic knowledge of the company that should be hiring you, that probably won't work in your favor!

Let's take a closer look at the cadet job interview questions and answers you may face.

Questions and answers for cadets



First of all, remember that if you are applying for a cadet job, the shipping company or crewing agency will carefully check your CV and documents. Depending on the circumstances, they may also have requested a reference check from previous employers.

They will probably also want to know the test scores (Marlins, etc.).

So now let's look at some of the questions and answers you might face during an interview for a cadet job.

First, an interviewer may ask you how many contracts you've had so far. If you are a cadet and just starting work, don't worry because you are not expected to have a lot of contracts.

They will also normally want to know what your level of English is as this is obviously important for this type of job where the official language is English and you may be working with seafarers of different nationalities.

Another common interview question is why you left your last job or previous employer. The most important thing to remember here is not to badmouth your previous employer!

And it's very likely that the person interviewing you will want to know when you're available and ready to go to sea. Be as transparent as possible here, whether it's a shipping company or a crewing agent, they will need to know this information so they can match the next crew change date for the ship where the job is available .

You can also expect an interviewer to ask about your previous experience working with different nationalities, the types of ships you've been on, and your experience with different types of cargo and how to handle it.

Knowledge of maritime conventions

Other questions might involve your experience in dry dock and whether you have your PSC (Proficiency in Survival Craft) certificate. An employer will likely ask you about your knowledge of the International Safety Management (ISM) Code, the International Ship and Port Facility (ISPS) Code and the Maritime Labor Convention (MLC).

You may also be asked about your knowledge of international conventions such as SOLAS ([Safety of Life at Sea](#)), MARPOL ([Prevention of Pollution from Ships](#)) and STCW ([Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping](#)).

Other questions

A potential employer will also want to know if you have been involved in any accidents or incidents, if there are any problems with alcohol abuse, and your expectations from the shipping company as well as your future plans.

Shipping companies and crewing agencies will be keen to know how you will cope with life at sea - especially if you are early in your career and applying for cadet jobs.



Spending months away from friends and family can be difficult and it takes a certain type of personality to cope with life at sea. It is in the employer's interest to ensure that you will be mentally fit to work as a cadet for an extended period of time away from home.

Obviously, an employer will need to know your experience and length of time at sea and that all your documents are in order before making a decision to hire you, but they may also want to talk to you about a better understanding of how you deal with the very specific challenges of life at sea.

For example, they might want to know what you would do if you noticed a fire on the ship? How would you cope if you were 'man overboard'? As a cadet, it's understandable if you don't know procedures for specific situations, but from your answer the interviewer can figure out whether or not you realize how serious an emergency is.

Other questions for the cadets would be for example drawing signal lights for different ships - eg a drifting ship etc. This shows the interviewer if the candidate has learned COLREG (the Convention on the International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea), which they should have done in their first years of college.

Other cadet job interview questions refer to explaining difficult hypothetical scenarios, such as if you were the only capable person on board during an emergency, what would you do if you had to abandon ship? Or what would you take with you in the lifeboat on the command deck? These types of questions give an interviewer insight into how you would react if faced with emergency situations and whether or not you know about various safety equipment and general rescue rules

The question almost always asked in a job interview

Regardless of the job you're applying for, if you're early in your career, many interviewers will ask why you chose that profession. Answering this question will give great insight into your motivation and dedication to becoming a good naval officer, but it's also a great way to test how well you can communicate in English if English isn't your language .maternal.

Life at sea is challenging but rewarding, but if you're struggling to break into your chosen profession, we hope these interview tips will help. Other common questions you may encounter in an interview for offshore jobs can be found in Annex 2.

Mistakes to avoid in an interview

1 You are unprepared

If your interview is at the shipping company, staffing agency or crewing agency office, make sure you know where it is and how to get there. It sounds obvious, but if you're not



familiar with the area and don't plan your route and figure out how long it will take to get there, you could be late for the interview.

This will put the interviewer off and make you look like you're not serious about the job. Even worse, they may refuse to see you, especially if they have other sailors scheduled for interviews on the same day.

The solution: If you can, do a test run beforehand. If you can't do that, at least check Google Maps and find out roughly how long it will take to get to your destination.

2. You don't do your homework

One aspect that will cause a potential employer to always put up 'red flags' is to have a candidate who shows up for an interview and knows nothing about the company where they have applied for a job. It's true that seafarer jobs are mostly short-term contracts, but that's no reason not to make the effort to learn a little about the company.

Put yourself in the shoes of the interviewer: Would you want to hire a candidate who shows no interest in impressing you? It might be "just" a six-month contract you're hoping to land, but knowing something about the company you're applying to gives you an edge over the eight other candidates you're up against. Why not do some quick research for ten minutes?

The solution: 'Old' Google (or your favorite internet search engine!). Check out the company's website and take a look at their social media accounts. For example, Maersk's LinkedIn page should tell you everything you need to know about the company in just a few clicks!

3. Don't dress to impress

Okay, we know you're applying for jobs in the maritime industry and not a position in the fashion industry, but it doesn't hurt to be smart about your outfit. It's not suggested that you have to wear a suit and tie, but it doesn't hurt to look neat and tidy. Show respect for the company and make a good impression.

Skype interviews? The same rule applies. Just because you're in your room and in the comfort of your own home doesn't mean you can show up to an online interview in your pyjamas!

The solution: For men, a pair of trousers, a shirt and some carefully chosen shoes should make an impression. For ladies, a skirt or trousers should also work, but casual, a blouse and heels should work. The basic rule? On the day of the interview, leave the sweatpants and sneakers in the closet!

4. Don't promote yourself



Most of us are not comfortable with "promoting ourselves". But while no one likes 'big-headed' candidates, remember that the interview is your time to shine. This is your opportunity to make a potential employer see why they should choose you over the other sailors applying for the vacancy. There is no need to be modest.

The solution: Keep in mind that if you're really shy during the interview, the interviewer probably won't even remember you, let alone hire you! You don't have to mention what a great person you are every time, but make sure you talk about your skills, qualifications, experience and achievements.

5. Changing the truth - with lies

During the interview, do not give in to the temptation to 'embellish' the truth. In the maritime industry, it's crucial that you have the qualifications and experience you say you have, and it won't be difficult for an interviewer to catch you if you've lied.

There is a reason why you need to have the right skills and qualifications for these types of jobs. Changing the truth about your skills/competencies will not help your career in the long run.

The solution: It just comes down to being honest. If you think you are lacking in some areas, try referencing your experience and filling in the gaps with correct information. Also, a potential employer would rather you be honest and say that you may not have a particular skill but are willing to learn, rather than lie about it.

6. Talking unprofessionally about your current or previous employer

The mistake is encountered in interviews regardless of the field in which the job is located, that is, not only in the maritime industry. You might think you'll "grow in the eyes" of a potential employer by badmouthing one of their competitors, but you'll only end up showing your unprofessionalism, disloyalty, and the fact that you're a difficult person, a whole host of traits that don't they won't impress any interviewer.

In fact, this is truly one of the worst mistakes you can make in an interview, so just don't do it, no matter how tempted you might be or how unfair you think your current employer is treating you.

After all, if you talk bad behind your current or previous employer's back, what's to say you won't do the same about that company in the future if you leave the job?

The solution: If you have negative feelings about your current (or previous) employer, instead of bad-mouthing them, talk about the challenges you felt you had to overcome in your role and how you dealt with them.

7. Don't ask questions



Yes, we know that an interview is "the place" where you are asked questions to find out more about your skills for seafarer vacancies. But that doesn't mean it has to be one-way communication. Being shy and withdrawn brings you no gain.

In fact, if you don't have any questions about your job, company, ship, and so on, your interviewer will probably think you're not that interested.

Why you should "research" the companies where you apply for seafarer jobs

Asking questions is a great way to show the potential employer how keen you are to win the contract, and it's also a great way to learn more about the ship and your crew responsibilities.

The solution: Ask questions about the ship, the crew, your career development opportunity and future contracts, i.e. anything that shows you are interested in the position.

8. You don't end the interview on a positive note

Don't let the interview end on a negative impression/detail. Take control and make sure it ends on a positive note. After all, the last impression you make on your potential employer is just as important, if not more so, than the first impression.

Let's say your interviewer has ten more sailors to discuss the vacancy with. You need to make yourself memorable for a chance to win one of these seafaring jobs.

The solution: We're not suggesting you do a song and dance in the final stages of the interview, but you should definitely thank the person or people you spoke to for their time.

Let them know it was a pleasure meeting them and learning more about their company and the job openings. And finally, don't forget to let them know that you are definitely still interested in the feature and look forward to hearing back.

Also, say goodbye and thank you to all the employees you meet before leaving the premises and keep your phone in your pocket or bag - it won't impress anyone if you give the impression that the interview interrupted your precious Facebook time!

Conclusion

We must remember that an interview is basically a process of determining the alignment between a company's requirements and a candidate's qualities and capabilities. Failure to be taken up by a company for a job is not a reflection on the basic merit of a candidate, but is merely a reflection of the incongruity between the job requirement and the candidate's capabilities. If you go into an interview with this basic understanding, it will be tension free and can do well in the interview.

Therefore, participate in the conversation with enthusiasm and contribute knowledge to the conduct of the interview. Many times it is found that, candidates talk a lot in an interview



but never seem to get to the answer, which will definitely bother a recruiter. Second, it gives the impression that the candidate is not an effective communicator. Either way, it is against the interests of the candidate.

So the rule of the game is: be concise and specific and ask if they need additional details to avoid 'flooding' them with unnecessary information that can sometimes inadvertently reveal the real face of the candidate. So the key to winning an interview is to be positive, professional and genuine and demonstrate how you can add value to the job using concrete examples from your own past.

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Annexe 1. Common questions in an interview for offshore jobs

I. Shipping personnel

It doesn't matter if you've had fifty interviews or if this is your first time being interviewed for a seafarer job: actually, an interview can be a nerve-wracking experience. You know you have the qualifications and your seafaring CV is relevant enough for a maritime company to invite you for an interview, but the face-to-face experience can make even the most 'tough' person feel emotional.

Well, no two interviews are the same, just as no two candidates or employers are identical. And, of course, you might be asked a question that surprises you. But you can also have an idea of what you will answer when you are asked typical interview questions.

What are some typical interview questions?

Question 1: What are your strengths and weaknesses?

The trick here is to start with a weakness. That way, you can end your answer by talking about your strengths - leaving the answer to this question on a positive note!

It's even better if you can show how you turned this weakness into a strength. This will show that you are a positive person who strives to improve.

Sample answer: "I'm a cadet, a student at the Naval Academy, so I don't have much experience at sea. BUT I have successfully completed my training until now and I am eager to learn".

Question 2: Why do you want to work for our company?

Note that this question isn't really about you, it's about the interviewer finding out if you've done any 'research' on the company. For many jobs in the maritime industry, attention to detail is crucial. If you have done your homework and read information about the company you are applying to, it will show that you have a meticulous approach to tasks.

How do you learn more about the company? Take a look at their website, read their blog if they have one, check out their social media accounts (LinkedIn is probably the best place to start), and if possible, talk to other friends or colleagues who have concluded contracts with them. This should be enough to give you a decent picture of who the organization is and what it stands for.

Things not to say: "I need a job." "The money is good." "Because you have a vacancy for a junior electrician and I'm qualified."

Sample answer: "The company has an excellent reputation and I would like to find a shipping company that I can be loyal to and work with in future contracts."

Question 3: Why do you think you would be suitable for the position?



This is a fairly simple question and you should specifically refer to your previous work experience, qualifications and/or relevant skills to demonstrate why you are the right navigator for the position.

Sample answer: "I think I am the right person for this position because I have 6 months on container ships where I was assigned as a junior electrician."

Question 4: Do you have any questions for me?

Ah yes, the point where the interview is coming to an end and you might be 'caught' if you don't have any questions to ask your potential employer. As a last resort, you could always go with a polite "no, I think you've covered everything." But it's actually much better to have at least a few questions pending.

In this way, you will show that you are 'engaged' in the interview and, more importantly, interested in the job you have applied for.

Sample answers: "What do you like best about the company?" "How long have you worked here?" "What are the next steps in the recruiting process?" or "Is there anything special about this type of ship?"

II. Students / cadets

1. Tell me about yourself!

Hello,

Nice to meet you sir!

The person in front of you is a recent graduate of (School Name), with a Bachelor's degree in (graduated field), being connected/enrolled in various professional organizations.

2. Why should we hire you?

You should hire me as I strongly believe that I am a competent graduate of _____ and am very confident in my skills and knowledge for my training as a future Naval Officer. I also have the necessary training certificates and documents to go into cadetship.

3. What are your strengths and weaknesses?

I believe my greatest strength in life is my determination to achieve my dreams.

My biggest weakness is that I'm afraid of failing. But as I fail, I learn from my mistakes.

4. Why do you want to be a naval officer?

I want to be a naval officer because I believe I can use my leadership skills to motivate and inspire my crewmates to become and act like a leader.

5. What can you say about your career?



I can say that, my career is a challenge for me. Every day I learn something new. It makes me a better person.

6. How many years do you want to be Chief Engr. or Captain?

7. How long will you work in our company?

I think it is an opportunity to work in this company. So, I will stay here as long as the company needs my service.

8. What is a navigator?

A navigator is a person who is part of a ship's crew and assists as a crew member in its operation and maintenance. I can say that seafarer is a hero of modern time because he sacrifices his life every day.

9. What is the reason you want to be a navigator?

The main reason I became a navigator is not to travel around the world, but to be a Chief Engr. or successful Captain. I want to work aboard ship and help my family.

10. What motivates you to become a navigator?

My biggest motivation is my dream to become Chief Engr. or Captain recognized for professionalism by peers.

11. What is leadership?

Leadership is the ability to inspire or influence others towards the achievement of the goals proposed by the leader. Leaders have followers. If someone has followers, he or she is a leader.