

## How to stand out in Executive Interviews

No matter how seasoned you are, or how many times you have sat on the other side of the hiring desk, interviews are tough. First impressions are lasting impressions and regardless of how well recommended you come, how strong your resume is; or how robust your industry reputation, it's your performance on the day that dictates your success.

A polished interview performance will not only stand you apart from your competitors, but will enhance your professional brand and potential value to the firm, and strengthen your remuneration leverage in subsequent negotiations.

But what can you do to ensure you give your best in an interview? Here are some strategies for preparations and on-the-day performance enhancement.

- **Take Control:** The best way to ensure success and project confidence is to use due diligence to know your subject intimately. Make use of your resources, networks and technology to gather relevant information on industry trends and challenges, the organisation and its need's and most importantly to define what the problem is that the company is trying to solve in their business through your position. If you have contacts use them to find out the inside story on the company and its points of pride. Leverage the internet to scour company publications, websites, media and digital footprints for crucial information. Take advantage of the company's point of contact for the position before the interview to source more information and flesh out the unmentioned attributes the company is looking for that may not have been mentioned in the advertisement or preliminary discussions.
- **Know Your Sell Points:** Once you have clarified the true root of the employer's problems, the relevant skills and experiences you can offer and should promote becomes obvious, as does the dimensions the interview will most likely focus on. Now is the time to revisit your resume and re-familiarise yourself with achievements that showcase your capacity to meet the employer's needs. Be clear on the details of these achievements including the **challenges** you were presented, the **actions** you took to tackle them and the quantifiable achievements and **results** you produced through doing this. This is the foundation of behavioural interviewing systems used by most large corporations.
- **Strategise.** Scrutinise your resume and employment history from the employer's point of view and war game out the areas you would be prodding and interested in if you were the employer. Conversely analyse your weaknesses and be prepared to address any objections or road blocks you may face in securing the role. If you are too close to the action to do this objectively, have someone whose skills you trust play devil's advocate for you. Invest in some interview coaching and simulation practice.
- **Finesse the Details:** Prior to the day make sure you have all the details ironed out including the time, address and pronunciation of the interviewers name(s) so that everything goes to plan. Have your resume on hand and a Referees Sheet outlining the contact details of your professional referees. At the end of the interview make sure to ask for the interviewer's business card so you can follow up with a thank you email. Make some notes on the interview's salient points while its still fresh in your mind so that you can coach your referees on your relevant sell points or so that in subsequent meetings with the company you can revisit and expand on salient areas.



**Use these simple interview tips and you'll ensure a polished presentation at interview that speaks to the hearts and minds of the employer. Know the company's needs and prove you can deliver the solution and your impact will not only memorable but will inspire the employer to action to secure you before they lose you to a competitor company. Good luck!**

***About the Author Gillian Kelly***

*Gillian Kelly is an international award winning Career Marketing Expert, Certified Personal Branding Strategist, and multi-credentialed Expert Resume Writer. With over 15 years in the career sector and tertiary qualifications in marketing and adult education she is adept at supporting professionals to elevate their careers, bolster their opportunities and grow their remuneration.*

*As a personal marketing expert and career sector veteran, Gillian's name has become synonymous with career marketing success and is one of the most credentialed career marketing practitioners in the world. Gillian is a multiple award winner in the international "Toast of the Resume Industry" Awards and is one of only a few individuals worldwide to be the recipient of the prestigious Master Resume Writer Lifetime Achievement Award.*

*As an active industry member Gillian's career advice and work are featured in numerous books and software products globally. As a career sector trend watcher, she is regularly sourced by leading newspapers, radio stations, career sites and wikis as a career topic expert and speaker.*

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