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The need for mastering the finer aspects of interview is a universal need which can hardly be exaggerated considering the decisive role it plays in the selection of a right candidate for the right job. But in the present context where every employee in every organization is expected to do more and be more, it is but natural that the very nature of interview is undergoing a sea change. As a result, interview is no longer a linear process.

Art Of Facing Interview

Broad Outline

Facing an interview is an art that anyone can master. Today Interview skills are among the most sought after skills being learnt and taught. This is mainly because the number of people seeking jobs is constantly on the rise, whereas conventional jobs are shrinking globally. The need for mastering the finer aspects of interview is a universal need which can hardly be exaggerated considering the decisive role it plays in the selection of a right candidate for the right job. But in the present context where every employee in every organization is expected to do more and be more, it is but natural that the very nature of interview is undergoing a sea change. As a result, interview is no longer a linear process. The very purpose of interview is different now as it caters to the ever changing needs of time especially by meeting new challenges of the organization. It is incumbent also on the part of the interview panel to be recommending or selecting only those candidates who give the impression that they are the most suitable persons for shouldering the given roles and responsibilities at the given point of time. There could, however, be different criteria for deciding the suitability of a person in different interviews depending on the organizational goals and value system. That is to say an ideal candidate for one company may be considered a misfit in a different environment. Interview is thus a complex process based on a number of intriguing factors of consequence which may not always be quantified. Interview can be described as a formal activity even if it may take place in an informal ambience like Coffee Day. These days, it is becoming a fashion especially in corporate sector to do away with many rigid norms and rules of interview such as dress code. They are in fact encouraged to be informal while interacting with the interviewer who many a time may not be a person with the grey hair. This new trend in interview is only in keeping with the spirit and the need of time.

Back to Basics

First of all, let us get back to the very basics of an interview. From the point of view of an interviewee, it is of vital importance to understand that an interview held anywhere in the world is primarily a process of interaction between two or more people either in person or on line thanks to the advancement of technology. But such interaction is deliberate and purposeful. There is always an ulterior motive and that motive is to get a right candidate having the potential to perform certain roles and responsibilities. In every interview there is a time constraint. Given the complexity of human nature, it is well nigh impossible for any interviewer to be totally objective about selecting a right candidate. An interview can therefore be viewed only as an attempt to judge the whole based on a sample gathered during a brief interaction. The candidate has got to be prepared well in advance so as to leave the interviewer fully convinced about her/his credentials for the job. As a

Global Training Head of a Company, I had the privilege to interview a number of candidates, both from India and the Netherlands. I would like to share with the students a couple of points based on my experience.

Interview Process

A) Group Discussion

Every interview has a structure, which is expressed through its selection process. Many a time, interview is preceded by GD which may serve as the qualifying round for the personal Interview. Success at interview thus implies success at the Group Discussion first. It is important for the potential candidates to go for GD round with adequate preparation. The preparation for GD should not be confined to gathering of facts on current topics alone. It is of paramount importance for the students to know that GD is also the test of one's behavior in a group. One must not show any aggression while discussing the topic. You need to be logical and what you say must be substantiated with relevant data and statistics. One is also expected to exhibit an attitude of cooperation and coordination. You must be able to get along with the group. Today we live at a time where interdependence is of much greater significance than one's individual genius. Hence, it is a myth to think that one who dominates is considered the smartest one. The truth is otherwise. The selectors prefer a candidate who shows the sign of being a good team player.

B) Personal Interview

Personal interview holds the pride of place in the selection process of a candidate. There are some facts that need to be borne in mind. For instance, an interview invariably begins with the exchange of greetings followed by almost a routine question, 'Please tell us something about you. There can be warm up personal questions relating to one's family or home town or schooling. Reasons for applying for the job could be the most important question. You should be able to give convincing answers also for leaving your previous job. It is but natural to expect some relevant questions from your field of specialization. For example, if you are an MBA, you ought to remain prepared for some content related



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questions; you must be thorough with business concepts and market trends as well. Before you go for an interview, you must be clear about your future goals & career expectations. Personality related questions like your strengths and weaknesses assume added significance in today's troubled time. It is of crucial importance to know about the salary you need and the choice if any about the location of work. Lastly, you should be mentally prepared even to handle stress questions which aim at finding out your mental toughness. Just keep cool & respond appropriately without getting provoked.

Strategies for Success

A lot of factors combine together to contribute to one's success in interview. It pays to understand your strengths and weaknesses. Knowing about yourself is as important as knowing about the organization where you are seeking an employment. Do interact with some employees of the Company rather than downloading facts from Google. It is advisable to be formally dressed even if informal dress is permitted. William Shakespeare had a point when he said, 'apparel oft proclaims the man'. Besides your appearance, you must plan for the interview well in advance as preparation adds to your confidence. Planning begins with making a professional Resume which must be original based on your academic and professional credentials. The planning also

includes everything like dress, documents and time for reaching the venue. Proper preparation implies anticipating the relevant questions & preparing for the same. Do seek the guidance of a professional and practice well before the D day arrives. It pays to remain positive and passionate throughout the interview. Your motivation level ought to move in the ascending order. It would be in your interest to avoid any argument with the Board as an ideal job seeker is expected to be as humble as willing to learn more. A learning attitude on the part of the candidate is as vital as an attitude of gratitude on the part of any employee.

Summing up

As organizations across the world flatten, companies prefer people who are self motivated and are keen on learning new set of skills; they are driven by purpose and passion. In an age where values and ethics are decaying, those who are well grounded with their faith intact in traditional values like honesty, self belief, confidence, helping attitude and above all a burning desire to prove an asset to her/his organization would stand a fair chance in interview. Let me conclude with the pragmatic advice as quoted by Daniel H Pink in his celebrated work DRIVE, 'one business leader, who did not want to be identified, said it plainly, "If you need me to motivate you, I probably don't want to hire you." □