

Career Newsletter Supplement

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About this column

We are constantly bombarded with tones of information coming from various sources making it sometimes difficult to be able to catch up or even understand. Utilizing the knowledge and experience sourcing from a network of KPMG HR professionals around the globe we have decided to launch a supplement within our Career Newsletter aiming to gather all this information and bring light into various employability issues, give insights into recruitment concerns (CV writing skills, interview questions, code of conduct for job interviews), explore employment options and trends and many more – the list is not exhaustive. Readers of this column will also be able to contribute with ideas for topics they would find useful or would like to know more.

How to mess up an Interview

Your CV may open the door to a company but it is the interview that will get you in. Interviews are used by the vast majority of companies as their basic selection tool indicating their massive role in

the recruitment process. However research has shown the predictability of an interview, whether, in other words, it predicts the subsequent job performance, reaches no more than approximately 60%. Interviewers therefore aiming in making a good prediction tend to be thorough and persistent, taking into consideration whatever information is given to them throughout the interview either explicitly or implicitly. A candidate on the other hand should always anticipate competition, especially during times when the unemployment rate is high. A candidate should, therefore, be fully aware of what an interview may entail; the basic interview questions; the main performance indicators of the position; the winning points of an interview and finally what to avoid. It is important to note that an interviewer may appreciate more a candidate with less relevant working experience or lower academic performance who is able to present himself in a proper, honest and intelligent manner in an interview.

Below are eight mistakes a candidate is

recommended to avoid to ensure a successful interview:

1. Untidy / Inappropriate Appearance

One way of understanding a company's corporate image is through the appearance of their employees. Companies therefore expect their employment candidates to resemble that image. Wearing provocative, overly casual or untidy clothing; having untidy, messy or dirty hair/fingernails, as well as excessive make up and jewellery at an interview could create a very bad impression to your interviewer that will be hard to reverse later. It is advisable then prior to attending an interview to find out what the correct and appropriate dress code is.

2. Arriving Unprepared

Arriving to an interview unaware that you will be asked basic interview questions regarding the employer you are targeting, your strength and weaknesses, grades/GPA's, projects you have had, future career plans etc then what you are indirectly saying is that you are not really interested and are not taking the whole process seriously. Do not forget that the interviewer tries to predict your future work performance through your answers and if these are poor then the picture they will gain is that of poor performance.

3. Lies / Exaggerations

During the interview you may feel the need to exaggerate or tell some white lies to make yourself more impressive to the interviewer. This is quite risky and you will more than likely get caught. When asked for their interests and hobbies candidates may be tempted to exaggerate or even "invent" hobbies or interests to make themselves more appealing. Imagine however, if the interviewer ends up being an expert in the field. Equally important is the fact that nowadays most employers perform background checks for shortlisted candidates those exaggerations and lies will come to the surface and this will definitely not be to the benefit of the candidate. Information tends to spread quickly, especially in small places. Hence lying could not only destroy your chances with one employer but also, if word spreads, with other employers also.

4. Having a relaxed approach

You may find yourself being interviewed by a 'cool' and friendly individual. As a result you may also find yourself becoming overly relaxed, probably losing your initial formal approach. This is a

method used by some interviewers to check the boundaries of your professional approach. Be very careful as the interviewer may see your informality as disrespect and apathy.

5. Overly expected answers

A candidate's aim at the interview is to differentiate him/herself from the rest and win the job. Giving predictable answers to predictable questions will not get you where you want. Try to be innovative in your responses and use examples to support your arguments in order to be more convincing. Our intent is to cover some of these questions as well the reasoning behind them in forthcoming issues of our newsletter.

6. Aggression

A common way of evaluating a candidate's ability to handle stress is by pushing them to their limits. An interviewer might pose a question such as 'I really don't think that you are capable for this position'. Your reaction will be indicative of your persistence and ability to maintain control under stress and pressure.

7. Slandering Previous Employers

It is easy to get carried away and bad mouth former employers, especially if the interviewer is pressing for reasons as to why you left your previous employer. This is driven not only by his/her desire to understand your way of thinking but also to understand how other companies work. Be especially careful of this as on one hand the interviewer might find the information useful but on the other he/she may not appreciate the excessive flow of information and assume that you might do the same once employed there. Also, as previously mentioned it is a small world and former employer may somehow know the interviewer.

8. Bad Moods

Bad moods are always reflected through our facial remarks. Even if you are having the worst day of your life or you have become extremely nervous, always try to smile and remain professionally friendly throughout the interview. Smiling is an indicator of good communication skills, a competence required in most jobs either for client contact or for successfully cooperating with colleagues.

Next Issue

On next issue, read more on interview tips/skills and CV writing skills.

Contribute your ideas

Should you want to contribute an idea on a topic of your interest please send an e-mail to recruitment@kpmg.com.cy.

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KPMG vacancies:

<http://www.kpmg.com/cy/en/joinus/Pages/default.aspx>

KPMG client vacancies:

<http://www.kpmg.com/CY/en/WhatWeDo/Advisory/PerformanceTechnology/PeopleAndChange/Pages/Careers.aspx>



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