



INTERVIEW TECHNIQUES

Do Your Homework

- 1 Prove your Marketing passion by knowing the latest competitive agency news (who has won which account for instance). Know the latest communication trends. Have an opinion about them.
- 2 Prepare your questions by showing an interest in what the company has achieved, who their key people are and the clients they work for..
- 3 As crazy as it sounds, always know where and when the interview is taking place. Always try to be at least 15 minutes early. If you're unsure of an address ask us to give you the details again or type the address into streetmap.co.uk or into maps.google.co.uk.
- 4 Study the DNA agency notes that we will have sent you - they will have all the crucial background information you need about the agency you're visiting, their culture, what they do etc. Don't leave it to the last minute to refer to these. Make sure you know it backwards and forwards.
- 5 Research your interviewer. Show you've done your homework by knowing their background, where their expertise lies, how long they've been at the agency, etc. Useful websites include LinkedIn, mad.co.uk and Brand Republic – don't forget that company websites often have biographies of key management members.
- 6 Visit the agency website. Learn what they have to say about themselves.

At the first meeting

- 7 Always switch off your mobile phone. First impressions speak volumes at this stage.
- 8 Be clean, neat, tidy and appropriately dressed. If in doubt, over dress. It is always better to overdress than be under dressed. Also, you can ask us about culture if you're unsure. We've met the people you'll be meeting, and therefore will understand what will work and what won't.
- 9 Be friendly, open and honest in your approach. Think about what you respond well to based on encounters with other people. You need to do the same, as people will tend to employ candidates that they'd enjoy working with or who they are comfortable will fit into their agency culture.
- 10 Take your time before answering difficult or specific questions. And don't be afraid to say that you don't have an answer. Always do say that you'll get back to an interviewer though - and make sure you do.
- 11 It may be tempting if you've had a particularly difficult experience, but please don't ever be negative about your current or previous work places. Doing so creates entirely the wrong impression about you and your attitude.



- 12 Only discuss salary if the interviewer mentions it. At this stage the meeting is all about fit, personality and understanding your predilection for being able to do the role.
- 13 Consider putting together a small portfolio of selected campaigns that you've worked on. It's not something that candidates do that often (unless you're creative - in which case look at our [portfolio advice](#)) but many interviewers are interested and it gives you something to show.

At the second meeting

- 14 Talk about why you're back, what you like about the role, the company or - if it's a different interviewer - what you liked about the person you previously met.
- 15 Be clear about what it is that makes you stand out. Is it your skills, your attitude, your commercial ability? All three?
- 16 Share case studies where your involvement has directly impacted on the success of a project.
- 17 Be proactive and show a can-do attitude. Clients will want to see that you're able to hit the ground running.
- 18 When talking about a specific situation, always clearly communicate what your objectives were before detailing what the action you took was. In this way you're clearly demonstrating your complete understanding of the issues and why your solutions were right.
- 19 Salary is now relevant, so be clear about your market worth. Discuss this and other similar roles with us. We'll be able to give you a good steer with this.

Presenting - as part of the interview process

- 20 Focus on the positives, for instance, where you have demonstrated key strengths, solved commercial issues or led from the front. However, you must always be honest: be wary of exaggerating achievements.
- 21 Rehearse your presentation thoroughly either with a friend or partner or us. And be friendly in your delivery. Own the time that you're presenting by controlling the flow. Don't be afraid to inject a little humor into your presentation, it could help ease your nerves, but do not over do it. Invite questions at any stage and, if presenting using PowerPoint, always include an Executive Summary so that your audience understand what you're going to talk about.
- 22 Don't be afraid to stand (even if others are sitting) and point out key objectives. Like we said, this is your chance to own the room.
- 23 Avoid lengthy PowerPoint presentations. Keep detail to a minimum and always project your key points so that you can talk up/flesh out any detail verbally. Too many words on the screen and your audience will be too busy reading to listen to what it is you're saying.
- 24 Sum up why you're interested in joining the company and don't forget to reiterate your key strengths.
- 25 Ask open questions and don't worry if you don't have all the answers - this presentation is a starting point and should simply show your audience how you think and approach things.



- 26 Add a little theatre to the presentation and engage your audience. Have them interacting with you and your subject. They'll be far likely to remember you for that reason.

Some questions you could ask throughout the process

- How would you describe the typical day for the person doing this role?
- What type of person fits in well here?
- How will I be able to develop my career within the agency?
- Is training provided?
- What's the vision for the company going forward?
- Who would you say are your main competitors?
- Why do you think people want to join the agency?
- Why do people usually leave the company?
- How often do appraisals take place?
- What has been the company's growth over the last 12 months?
- How long have you been in your current position? What was it about the agency that made you want to join it?

Above all, be yourself and enjoy the process. This is your moment to shine and like everything, the more you practice, the better you'll get.