

## Advanced Interview Technique

Mongolia Talent Network is the leading Executive Search and Recruitment Company in Mongolia. As such we see a lot of candidates going through the interview process at a wide range of companies. The sad truth is that great candidates sometime fail to get the jobs they deserve because they lose out to candidates with better interview technique.

So we want to use this article to build on our standard interview tips to help you get the career opportunities that you deserve...

In my view the most important thing is to go into the interview knowing the answers to the following questions:

1. What makes you the best candidate for this opportunity?
2. What strengths would you bring to this role?
3. What are your weaknesses?
4. Why are you interested in this job?

Let's take these one by one...

### 1) What makes you the best candidate for this opportunity?

Start by thinking about what is important for the role. What are the needs / requirements? You need to be really well researched on the role and company to do this well and, even then, your interviewer may have a different view so make sure you check that they agree with your summary and be prepared to adapt your answer to deal with any additions they make.

Then simply and clearly state why you are a good fit with those specific needs and requirements. As a general guide, aim for 3 bullet points against each area to keep it clear and concise.

This is an opportunity to sell yourself to the hiring manager. If you persuade them that you are the best candidate for the role, put simply, you have got the job. So be confident, try to be as distinctive as possible, and be ready to support your points with examples.

However, they won't expect anyone to be perfect so make sure they realize that you're open to learning and keen to develop in new areas. Finally, assume that your interviewers are busy people and probably interviewing many other candidates so don't be afraid to idiot-proof your answer for them. For example:

- 1) I believe the key requirements to succeed in this role are 1, 2, and 3. Is this correct?
- 2) I believe I'm a great candidate because of my fit against these. First 1... Also 2... And 3....
- 3) However, I realize that this role would develop me and I'm really excited to continue to learn and improve.

### What strengths would you bring to this role?

This overlaps with the previous question and is another way to communicate the same information. While it's tempting to have a set of strengths that always discuss, you will get further if you tailor it to the role. Use the same approach as for the first question.

### What are your weaknesses?

Honesty is important but there are two types of weakness that you can discuss in an interview – the type that will stop a hiring manager from considering you and the type that viewed differently could be strengths... A bad answer to this question could cost you the job. You must be honest but communicate carefully.

There are different ways to say the same thing. For example, I saw a candidate interviewing for a role that required an element of financial management. This wasn't an area she felt very comfortable in and she wanted to be honest and share it as her weakness.

What she said was...

- “Honestly I'm a little scared of numbers! I'm sure I can do it but numbers scare me.”

She went on to try to explain herself but she had already effectively lost the job. What she could have said equally honestly would have been...

- “While I can work with financials this is an area that I have less experience of and may require some support. I'm keen to improve but it's not my key area of strength.”

... and from there she could have guided them back to talking about her (many) strengths again.

I'm a big fan of honest answers tailored to the job description, but if you're not sure that you can communicate them properly, there are a number of classic responses to this question

For example:

- I can be too much of a perfectionist / too detail-oriented at times
- I demand too much from myself and others

Whatever you chose, always show a willingness to address and manage your weakness. And please don't try to say you don't have any weaknesses – we all have them!

### Why are you interested in this job?

Companies want to know that you're genuinely excited by the job so at the very least make sure you know what they do and are ready to explain why you are interested in working with them in this specific role.

### ***Now this final point is REALLY important...***

Your interviewer may never ask you any of these questions. But it is your responsibility to communicate the answers (to questions 1 and 4 in particular) regardless.

An interview should not be a passive experience. To ensure that you succeed you have a responsibility to guide your interviewer and to make sure that you communicate what you need to communicate.

You want them to leave the interview thinking that you are the best candidate for the opportunity and understanding that you are excited by this particular role at their company so make sure you make it easy for them. Spell it out!

If by the end of the interview, you're not confident that you've communicated this then there is usually one final opportunity. Most interviewers will ask you if you have any questions. Here's a final opportunity to say something like...

"I understand that the key requirements / priorities for this role are 1) 2) and 3). Is that right in your view?" And then you can lead on to saying that you are really excited about this role because you believe you're a strong fit to these... and you're back into your answer to question 1!

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