



Interview Tips for The Old Inn

Purpose of Interview:

- To explore your suitability for the job.

The interview will:

- Go into more detail about your experience and its suitability and relevance.
- Find out how much you know about The Old Inn and how well you understand the job you are applying for.
- Test your experience with an unseen scenario or scenarios and competency based questions.

The Basics:

- While rapport is important, being too intimate or 'matey' with the interviewer should be avoided. You need to keep a certain professional distance.
- If there is more than one interviewer you will need to make eye contact with everyone. The general rule is to make eye contact with the person asking a question at a particular time but to direct your answer to everyone.

Types of Interviews:

Typically there are 2 types (biographical and competency) but more often than not a well structured interview will incorporate both.

Biographical:

You MAY be asked to talk through your experience or career to date and include things like responsibilities you had, what a typical week involved, ask you to break down how much time in percentage terms you spent and how your experience could be transferred into their job.

Competency-Based Interviews:

The purpose of competency based questions is to assess whether you are capable of carrying out the job for which you have applied. It therefore analyses your ability to handle certain specific tasks and situations, drawing on a combination of your skills and your experience. It helps the interviewer answer two key questions:

- Can you do the job?
- Do you have what it takes?

By examining your past performance, an interviewer will be aiming to effectively judge your future potential to fulfil the role for which you are now applying.

Examples:

- How did you cope with the most difficult colleague you've ever had?
- What techniques do you use to get things done?
- Can you tell me about a time when you have failed to achieve a goal?
- Can you tell me about a major project you have successfully completed?

The interviewer is looking for you to tell a brief story describing the situation, explaining your behaviour – and highlighting the benefits of your actions. It's no good just saying you possess certain abilities; you need to prove it. Competency-based questions quickly expose any fakes. Also remember that implying that everything you have ever done has not needed any additional control or effort by you will not show you are in control, but that you may lack awareness or the ability to improve things under your control.

In order to prepare properly review the job description, person specification and your application form and make the connection between what The Old Inn is looking for and your experience.

Competency-based interviews are very popular as they are considered one of the fairest and most thorough selection methods available. A scoring system may be used and interview notes will be taken so there may be periods of silence whilst your interviewer writes up their notes. Try not to assess if they are good or bad comments and don't try to read any notes upside down!

Know your Numbers

In Supervisory or Managerial Posts you will be expected to give details of your past metrics and performance against them. The panel are not looking for confidential disclosures however you should understand before you arrive how you will answer questions on your past targets and performance. If there is any doubt about confidentiality from previous employers you should prepare figures that demonstrate your ability to achieve targets that you can disclose. For example; If there are industry 'norm' figures relating to your post e.g. Gross Cost, Gross Margin, Staff Wage %, EBITDA, GOPPAR, RevPAR etc. you should be prepared to indicate your performance against the industry.

Possible Assessment Methods:

Unseen Presentations

This is a popular method of assessment because the presentation will be job specific. The key to remember is that whilst your aids are important, the panel will also be scoring on your communication skills, your physical presentation ability and the content and relevance of your presentation against the topic. Be sure to answer the exact question / address the key topic.

Competency demonstration

You may be asked to undertake a common task for the department you are intending to join. You will not be expected to produce it per the Old Inn Standards, but you are demonstrating your experience so be prepared to tell your interview team why you perform elements or the entire demonstration in a certain way and why you have approached it in a certain manner. Questions about your method are not an implication of anything wrong – the explanation of why you approached the task a certain way will most likely give the panel more insight into the demonstration than the outcome.

Role Play

You may be given a scenario, in writing or verbally and asked to respond to a scenario, your interviewer or another staff member will play a 'character' with whom you have to interact. In doing so they may assume a subservient role such as a poor performing person that you manage – if so, you should remember that this role play is about showing your personality, creativity and control in certain situations - you

should not be overly flamboyant or try to 'play a game' that plays out a character that you have assumed – the character you are playing is YOU.

General Interview Preparation:

- **Location of Interview;** know where you are going (http://www.theoldinn.com/Find_Us) and how long it is going to take to get there (good idea to do a trial run). Also consider the time of your interview, e.g. is it during traffic rush hour. Aim to arrive about 10 minutes before the interview which will give you time to compose yourself and relax (deep breaths do work).
- **Dress Code;** you should always be dressed smart for an interview regardless of the role, clean shaved with trousers, jacket, shirt and tie or a suit for men, trousers or skirt and shirt or dress for women or a suit.
- **The Company;** research **The Old Inn** on the internet. Get the name right, it is NOT the Crawfordsburn Inn or the Old Crawfordsburn Inn. (http://www.theoldinn.com/Press_Summary) is great start. But don't limit yourself to this one page. Have a good look around the internet. Be careful, however, in what you decide to use in the interview or how you use it – you are there to make a good impression and be a part of the future success of the company.
- **The Job;** your understanding of what the job will entail and your suitability for fulfilling the demands of the job should be made quite clear in the job description, person specification and advertisement. Questions will be focussed around these areas.
- **Your Experience;** see how your CV compares with the outline of the job and identify how and why you are a good match. Think how you can demonstrate that you meet their needs and how you can evidence that through appropriate examples. If there are reasons for the differences in your CV experience to the job description, offer them to the panel – don't make them work for it.
- **The Panel;** try to find out who is on the panel and their positions.
- **Strengths / Unique selling points;** know what yours are.
- **Weakness / Areas for improvement;** know what yours are.
- **Question Time;** identify any questions you might have and make a note of them – only ask a question or two if you are invited to do so.
- **Above All LISTEN to the Questions!** There is nothing worse than going off on a different direction because you heard what you thought you wanted to hear! If you don't have experience in a certain area - don't try to bluff.

Good Luck!