



## Consider A Mock Interview

Interviews really are the defining moment in every job search. They result in either dreams coming true or hopes being shattered.

Think of a time in your life that was extremely important to you and your immediate future. It may be a sporting event you were competing in, a driving test or a college exam. Whatever it was, I'm willing to bet that the outcome depended on your performance at that given moment. Interviews are, of course, no different in that respect.

Would you turn up to the most important match of the season without any practice? Would you come to your driving test having never sat in the driving seat for years? Would you attend a college exam without studying hard beforehand? For most of us (I hope!) the answer to these questions is a resounding NO!

That's why mock interviews are so important when preparing for a real life interview.

Aside from the (obvious) old adage 'practice makes perfect', here are three reasons you should consider a mock interview:

### 1. Non-Verbal Communication

Non-verbal communication is an extremely powerful influencer on whether or not you get the job. In fact, in a recent survey of 2000 hiring managers, 33% claimed to know whether or not they would hire someone within 90 seconds. There are lots of different examples of non verbal communication in an interview scenario, however, some of the more common ones are:

Dress sense (are you dressed appropriately for the prospective employer?)

Smiling (do you smile frequently in response to the interviewers?)

Eye contact (do you make eye contact with the interviewers?)

Posture (are you slouching in your chair?)

Fidgeting (do you play with your hair or face when you are talking?)

Body language (do you cross your arms giving a negative impression?)

Handshake (is your handshake firm or weak?)

In a mock interview, the interviewers can give you some seriously valuable feedback on the negative things you are doing during the interview subconsciously.

This is so powerful because you will get the chance to turn these unconscious negatives (things you had no idea were casting you in a bad light) into conscious positives (things that will make you stand out for all the right reasons in the minds of the interviewers).

## 2. Behavioral Interview Questions

Also known as competency based interview questions, these are often particularly difficult to answer well in an interview. They, more than any other type of interview question, need practice to get right. In my career as a Job Search Coach and Recruiter, I have seen hundreds of candidates that, whilst they were the 'perfect' candidate on paper, failed to get the job because they didn't do a good enough job of answering the behavioral interview questions.

Behavioral interview questions are based on the premise that past behavior is the best predictor of future behavior. As such, behavioral interview questions require specific examples of when you, the interviewee has displayed certain behavioral characteristics.

Some example behavioral questions might be:

Tell me about a recent successful experience you had making a speech or presentation?

Give me an example of a time when you discovered an error that had been overlooked by a colleague?

Give me an example of when you had to work with someone who was difficult to get along with?

The best way to answer these questions is by using something called the STAR (Situation, Task, Action, Result) technique. In a mock interview, you will get to practice using the STAR technique and how to structure your answers. This can be the difference between nailing a behavioral interview question and missing the mark completely. Behavioral interview questions are also extremely difficult (if not impossible) to try and 'wing' off the cuff.

## 3. Your Questions

The questions you have for the interviewers at the end of the interview could really set you apart from the competition. They could also kill your chances dead in the water. That's why using a mock interview as a sounding board for some of your questions can be super beneficial.

So, the interviewers say 'Do you have any questions for us?,' and your response is 'No, I think we've covered everything'.

This can be so frustrating because if you prepare properly for the interview, you understand everything about the role and the company, you nail your non verbal communication and your answers to the behavioral questions, only to mess everything up right at the final hurdle because you didn't attach any importance to your own questions. You were so relieved that their questions were over that you couldn't wait to get out of the room.

Bad idea.

This is your opportunity shine and to demonstrate that you really have done your homework on the company and that you have completely bought into the idea of the role itself. If you have some intelligent, well thought out questions for the interviewers, you will leave them on a high note and create a lasting and memorable impression on them.

If you consider a mock interview as part of your interview preparation, your chances of success can dramatically improve!

Credit: <http://www.careerealism.com>