



PG Essentials: Interviews and other types of assessment

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Interviews & other types of assessment

- Preparation
- Their questions to you
- Your questions to them
- Practical points
- How you present yourself
- Other types of assessment

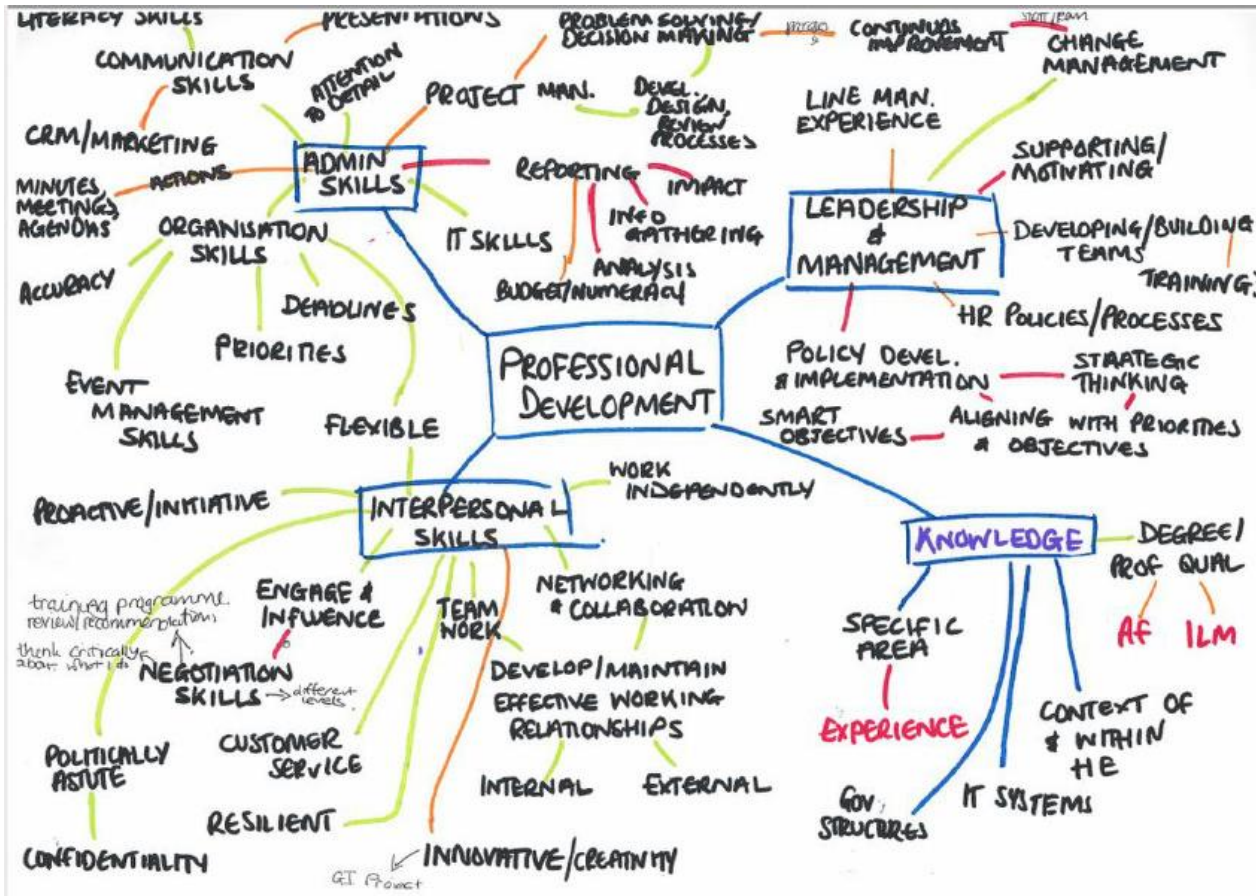


Preparing for Interviews

Where's your evidence ?

- Catalogue your achievements
 - Can't always assume they realise the value of your qualifications or academic experience
- Review the skills & knowledge they demonstrate
- Practice explaining them to someone who wasn't there when you did them

Catalogue your skills & achievements



Headings:

- Skills
- Sub branches:
- Achievements
- Or

Headings:

- Achievements
- Sub branches:
- Skills

Your Starter for 10 ...

- Tell me about yourself ...
 - Assume you are being interviewed either for
 - a specific type of job in which you are interested
 - or an academic job or PhD in your field
 - Give a 1 minute answer to the person next to you



Testing Your Motivation

- Why did you study ... ?
 - Looking for passion, enthusiasm - and ability to communicate about your subject
- Why do you want this type of work?
- Why do you want to work for this employer?
 - Looking for passion, enthusiasm ... and evidence of research
 - Show how what **they** say is important to them is aligned with what **you** value & can bring to them

Strengths-based interviews

Who are you really? What motivates you?

- What energises / engages you?
- What are your preferences?
- What do you choose to do?
- How do you ***feel*** about things?

(More in “Interviews: Beyond the basics”)

Convince me ...

- Behavioural/competency interviewing
 - Having done something in the past is the best predictor of whether you could do it in the future
- “How” vs “what”
 - **How** you did things is often as important to an employer as **what** you did

Behavioural/Competency Questions

- Give me an example of ...
 - ... the most effective team effort / collaboration you've been part of
 - ... when you've had to persevere to achieve a difficult objective
 - ... where you have developed an innovative approach to something at work
- **S**ituation, **T**ask, **A**ctions, **R**esult, (**R**eflection)

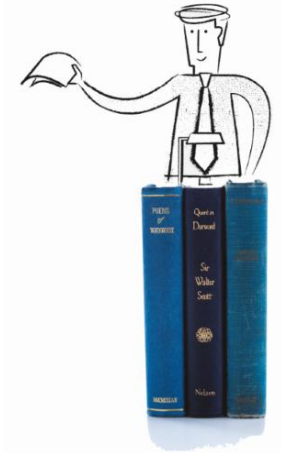


Forensic Interviewing



- Level 1 - ask the question
(Give me an example of an effective collaboration...)
- Level 2 - ask for evidence *(how did it come about etc)*
- Level 3 – personalise *(what was your role?)*
- Level 4 – generalise
(what do you think makes an effective collaboration?)
- Level 5 – challenge
(but what about? ie something you haven't mentioned)
- Level 6 - ask for more *(give me another example)*

The Art of the Spin Doctor



- Need to present a positive interpretation of your life – even the bad bits
 - What are your weaknesses?
 - Why did you fail that exam / repeat that year / leave that job ...?
 - What's the worst ... part of your masters/PhD or person you've dealt with ?
- Think of what you learnt, how you would do things differently, how you persevered through adversity

Your Chance to Shine

Need to find the
right balance

- What are your strengths?
- How has doing research/a postgraduate degree prepared you for this job?
- Why should we take you?
- Is there anything else we haven't covered which you would like to raise?

Other Questions

- Will you be a good investment ?
 - Where do you see yourself in 5 years time?
 - What ideas do you have for further research?
 - What are potential sources of funding?
 - Which other jobs have you applied for?
- Other questions which worry you?



Your Questions



Do ask questions

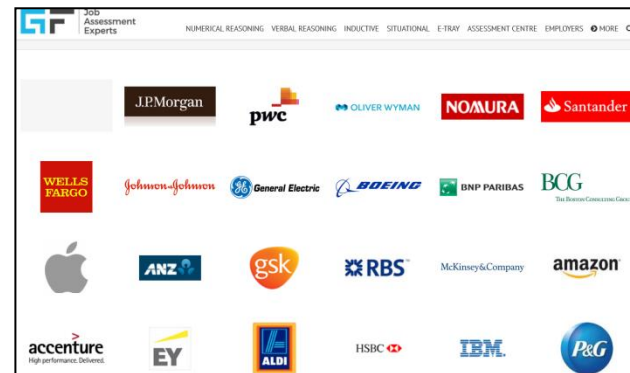
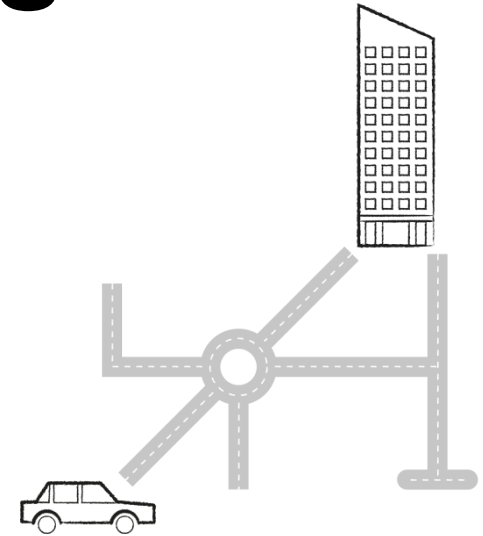
- about your future in the organisation
- for academics - their research !
- highlighting the benefits you could bring

Don't ask questions

- about salary, car parking, pensions ...
- which are answered in their recruitment literature / website
- about page 43 of the annual report


Practical Points

- Plan
 - Where do you have to go ?
 - How do you plan to get there ?
- Check
 - Who will you see ?
 - What will they put you through ?!
- Practice



www.graduatesfirst.com/employers

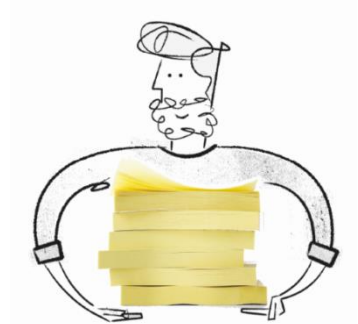
Presentation

- First impressions are crucial
 - Punctual, unflustered, neat appearance
 -  Firm handshake - no bone-crushers or limp lettuces
 - 😊 SMILE
- Eye contact
- Positive body language
- Look confident and interested



What else can they put you through?!

- Aptitude tests – verbal, numerical, logical
- Situational judgement tests
- Personality tests
- Game based assessments



Support - www.manchester.ac.uk/careers/psychometric

- Two resources – both need UoM login to create own account
- Graduates First – practice tests, personality profile, potential interview questions and more ...
- Profiling for success – personality profile, learning styles and career interests inventory

What else can they put you through?!

- Case study interviews
- Assessment centres
 - Group exercises & discussions
 - Presentations
 - In-tray/inbox exercises
- Graduates First – case study, in-tray, presentations, group discussion info – including what assessors are looking for



Careers Service Support

When you have an interview coming up

- [Book an interview simulation](#)
 - Give us much notice as possible
 - Upload to CareersLink a copy of your application AND details of the job for which you will be interviewed, at least a day in advance
 - We'll prepare questions to suit
- [More support for interviews and assessment](#)

