

Must-do Tips No 69 - The Interviewing "Life" Skill

Wherever you go in the professional services world, the importance of being able to conduct a one-to-one or panel interview skilfully and professionally is an issue. Whether it be for hiring/recruitment purposes, conducting a service review with clients or getting post-transactional feedback from them, a significant number of professionals assume automatically that they can "cut it". After all, it's the sort of thing that they already do for a living, isn't it?

Well no, it isn't. We see the cost of such wrongful assumption in the staff or client dissatisfaction and turnover that occurs when they get it wrong. From this experience, here are three things that can help on the path to rightness.

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Tip 1 – cure the fatal lack

First we have preparation....or rather the lack of it. In this respect, some professionals try to "wing" it far too often. For example, the members of a recruitment panel who *never* meet before they conduct their interview day. Resulting in a set of disorganised (and occasionally shambolic) interventions that can reflect oh so badly on the firm's external reputation. Any professionally-conducted interview requires the investment of time and effort that is the EQUAL of the attention devoted to fee-earning work.

Tip 2 - what ARE we looking for?

If these sound basic...they are. But they happen. Frequently. Firstly, aimless trawling through a job candidate's CV in the vain hope that something of relevance will "turn up". Or the killer question that opens a client service review - "So how are things then?" - that then goes nowhere once the client has said "OK, thanks". It is ESSENTIAL that interviewers are 100% clear about what they are looking for - whether that be specific job competencies for recruitment or aspects of service delivered for a client review. These must then be pursued very thoroughly and efficiently (another big issue that we don't have space to explore here).

Tip 3 - close the talking brochure

The prime purpose of these interviews is for us to find out relevant things from the candidate or client. It is NOT to "sell" the firm - particularly in the one directional, "talking brochure" manner that some believe to be what constitutes selling. As one client of a professional service firm succinctly put it: ***"God gave us two ears and one mouth, and I expect them to be used in precisely that proportion"***.

We help professional firms improve the interviewing skills of their people. To hear more, hit 'Reply' and type **Interviewing Skills**.

For information on us, what we do, and who we work with, go to our website at www.peoplescope.com.

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Best regards.

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