

# CANDIDATE HANDBOOK

PROVIDED BY KINGSTON CONSULTING

**KNOWLEDGE | ACCOUNTABILITY | EXCELLENCE**

## INFORMATION FOR CANDIDATES

### Selling Yourself

Selling yourself when going for any job is vital. This starts first with the CV and then with the subsequent interview(s) - the first interview often being with the Recruiter.

### Preparing a CV

At Kingston Consulting, we always re-type candidate CV's into a standard format and, depending on how much information is on the candidates CV to start with, we may add to it. Following an interview with a Senior Consultant, you will be advised as to what we feel is missing and how best to represent yourself on paper.

Whilst information such as detailed education, hobbies and contact details are important, these can be summarised and are not often as important as your current successes, deal wins, projects involved in and key achievements.

We recommend that a CV should be clear, concise and informative and Kingston Consulting will give you advice and help on how to structure your CV. Briefly for each job you should have the following:-

- **Introduction** - 3-4 lines about the company you are working for, the division you are working in if it is a very large company and your remit on joining.
- **Responsibilities** - outline in **BULLET POINTS** your key responsibilities
- **Key Achievements** - outline your key achievements. Things which have made an impact on your time in the job, projects you have worked on and the size of the project / sale and names of clients worked on or won.
- **Industry Training** - Any **CURRENT** relevant training including sales, technical or personal development training

By keeping to the above - especially the bullet points, your CV should be easy to read and will show:

- **who you worked for**
- **what you did**
- **and what you achieved**

### Research Prior to Interview

We cannot stress how important it is to thoroughly research the company you have an interview with. With internet access readily available, there is no excuse for not knowing your stuff!

At Kingston Consulting we provide a detailed Briefing Pack on all our clients, which usually contains 25 - 40 pages of useful information not only on the Company, products and latest press releases, but often information about the company benefits and working environment. This together with the Job Specification should give you most of the information you need to know. However, always take a look at a company's website to get a feel for the company, how it markets itself and it is always useful to make sure that you know the basics before an interview:-

- Bit of background about the company / formation / management team
- Turnover and latest results
- Product information relative to your interview
- Latest Press Releases
- Case Studies

By researching the above, you will prove at interview that you have done your homework and are interested in the company. Even if you are not asked any of the above, having undertaken the research you will go to the interview with more confidence and a better chance of selling yourself.

It is important the day before interview to check the company's website news section, to ensure you are abreast of any news announcements. Nothing worse than going to an interview and being asked "what do you think of our announcement" and having to admit that you don't know what they are referring to! --- this does happen believe me!

Finally make sure that you have spoken with your Consultant at Kingston Consulting before interview to clarify any points or to answer any questions you might have before you attend interview.

## Preparing for Interview

Most people appreciate how important it is to prepare for important client meetings or presentations, yet so many people fail to give the same attention to interviews.

Interviews are not something that we do every day but are meetings that need to be planned for. Even the best presenter, technical consultant or sales person could improve their meeting with a little additional thought and planning. Apart from ensuring that you have a smart dark suit, crisp shirt/blouse and polished shoes, some prior preparation at whatever level you are never goes amiss.

We are often asked for ideas on how to prepare which is sometimes difficult to answer as each individual has his or her own way of preparing, but here are a few tips that candidates have found useful:-

**Take 4 sheets of paper or card and on each write the following:-**

### Background and Experience:

#### ***Bullet point your career history:***

- Why did you move to each company?
- What did you learn?
- Any major highlights or promotions?
- List your key achievements

### Key Strengths and Skills:

***List these, at least 7 or 8 that relate to many areas including:***

- Market knowledge
- Sales & presentation skills

- Product/technical knowledge
- Relationship building skills
- Management skills
- How well you work in a team
- Personality
- Why are you successful

### **What can you bring to the company?**

#### ***Bullet point the key points:***

- Why should they take you on?
- What added value do you bring?
- What difference will you make?

### **What can the company give you?**

#### ***Bullet point the key points:***

- Do they offer you a career path?
- Is the culture right?
- Is the overall package and remuneration in line with what you require?

Last but not least, arrive in plenty of time, and ensure you have worked out the best route to the company's offices.

We wish you luck with your interview, and would ask you to ring your consultant following the interview, while it is fresh in your mind. We will always do our best to get you feedback as soon as possible following the interview.