Developing Effective Interview Techniques and Skills

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Agenda

• About PwC
• What is an interview?
• What does Employability mean?
• Competencies
• Developing Employability Skills
• Exercise – Align your competencies
• Relate your competencies during the recruitment process
• Questions
Who we are

Our business areas:

- Assurance
- Tax
- Risk Assurance Solutions (RAS)
- Consulting
- Actuarial
PwC facts

Most popular Graduate Recruiter in 2008, 2009 and 2010

Global Turnover in 2011 was US$29.2bn

Over 250 graduates and 100 placement students recruited in 2011

Largest graduate recruiter in Ireland

Worldwide we employ over 169,000 people in 158 countries

2,000 people work for us in Dublin, Cork, Limerick, Galway, Kilkenny, Waterford and Wexford

Audit 35% of companies on the Irish Stock Exchange
PwC Recruitment Process

Step 1
- Complete an application form

Step 2
- Case study (30 mins)

Step 3
- Interview (45 mins)
What is an interview?
What is an interview?

• Two way conversation with a purpose

• Opportunity for the interviewer to gain evidence

• Opportunity for the interviewee to show their skills and obtain further information

• Not an interrogation

• Show that you are employable!
What does employability mean for you?

Employability means...

- Skills and experiences you have gained at school and university or through employment or extracurricular activities that you can transfer to the workplace
  - Think about your experiences and use these as your examples and try and relate to work
What are employability skills

Employability means...

• How you relate these to the competencies assessed during a company's recruitment and selection process

• Also referred to as transferable skills or competencies
What is a competency?

• Competencies are “areas of personal capability”

• Combination of knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary to perform the job
Competencies

What competencies do employers assess?
Competencies

Develop self and others through coaching

- It’s about getting the most out of others and yourself
- Are you committed to developing yourself?
- Demonstrate the things you’ve done well
- Act on feedback
- Being passionate about development – and able to show it!

  e.g. Helped a friend learn how to drive
Competencies

Communicate with impact and empathy

• It’s making yourself heard
• Get your point across
• Bring others around to your way of thinking
• Express yourself clearly in conversation and on paper
• Know how to express the examples to us

 e.g. Persuaded a company to sponsor an event
**Competencies**

**Be curious: learn, share & innovate**

- It’s about going that little bit further
- New ways of doing things
- How have you made the most of learning opportunities
- How do you share your learning
- Committed to learning and using your learning

*e.g. A time when you suggested a way for something to work more efficiently*
Competencies

Lead and contribute to team success

• It’s about being an excellent team player
• What examples do you have where you have worked as part of a team?
• What role(s) did you assume whilst operating in these teams?

  e.g. Tackled a course related project as part of a group or fitted in to a new team at work
Competencies

Be passionate about client service

• It’s about being passionate about what you do and delivering the results to your clients
• Have you contributed to a sports group or a society or a meeting?
• Have you gone beyond expectations in a part time job?
• It’s about offering a helping hand and going that ‘extra’ mile
  e.g. Dealing with a difficult customer
Competencies

Build & sustain relationships

- Have you maintained working relationships with people?
- Have you demonstrated an ability to get on with other people?
- Have you met a ‘client’ deadline/delivered what you said you would?
- It’s about showing loyalty
  e.g. Keeping in touch with a contact you’ve made on an internship
**Competencies**

**Demonstrate courage & integrity**

Honesty and Integrity is vital to a business

- Have you diffused a situation using tact and diplomacy?
- Have you delivered the best standards and maintained highest levels of confidentiality?
- It’s about keeping your cool

*E.g.* A time when you have spoken up when you felt something was not right
Competencies

Acquiring and applying commercial & technical expertise

It's about being commercially aware

- Have you done your research
- Have you sought out opportunities to develop expertise
- It’s knowing how to add value

e.g. Demonstrate your knowledge and your understanding of current business issues
**Competencies**

**Manage projects and economics**

It’s about delivering work to the highest standards

- Have you juggled different priorities?
- Have you handled different resources/budgets?
- Have you dealt with the unexpected?
- It’s always having a plan B

* e.g. Organised a large social event
Competencies

Be open minded, agile with change and practical

- Have you adapted to unforeseen situations
- Can you work out the best solution when you come across the unexpected
- It’s being adaptable

e.g. Coped well with an unexpected piece of course work
Exercise

Matching your skills to competencies
Exercise – employability

Your task ...

In small groups match your skills and experiences to each competency

Report back in 15 mins
Techniques

Providing evidence – STAR

• **Situation:** Set the scene
• **Task:** Explain what you did
• **Action:** What actions did you take
• **Result** Explain what the outcome was
‘I play football with my local team and last year after losing a big match we were very unmotivated. (S) So I wanted to do something to raise the teams spirits. (T) I thought the best way to do this was to organise a team night out. So I spoke to everyone on the team and asked what would they like to do. The majority wanted to go for dinner so I took it upon myself to make all the arrangements (A) It was a great success and it definitely raised morale as we went on and won the next two games and they also awarded me best team player in our annual awards’ (R)

Top Tip: don’t give hypothetical answers – give specifics of past experiences
Interview techniques

The Funnel

- Open questions
- Probing questions
- Closed questions, reflection
- Check understanding

- Open a new subject with an open question
- Probe to explore an area
- Ask closed questions for specific facts
- Summarise to check your understanding
Sample questions

• Tell me about a time you have worked in a team?
  - What was your role? What challenges did you face?

• Tell me about an occasion when you had to persuade others around you to your way of thinking?
  - What was the situation? How did you go about it?

• Tell me about how you plan and prioritise your workload?
  - Have you ever experienced a set back? How did you deal with it?
Sample questions

• Tell me about a time when you have set yourself personal development goals?
  - What was it? How did you go about achieving it?

• Why are you interested in this particular position?
  - What research have you done? What skills do you possess for this role?
Exercise

Interview practice
Exercise – interview practice

Your task...

In small groups prepare answers to the sample questions and then role play as interviewer and interviewee!
The Interview – Preparation

- Know the exact location of where the interview is
- Know what you are going to wear - Dress professionally
- Know your application form/CV
- Research the organisation
- Familiarise yourself with competency based interview techniques
- Prepare key examples for the interview
What employers expect you to know

• Why you want to join their organisation
• The nature of the work you would do
• What your career aspirations are
• Awareness of further study (if applicable)
Top tips for Interviews

• Be professional at all times
• When you meet your interviewer for the first time – SHAKE HANDS (firmly, but politely) and introduce yourself
• Sit up straight, relax and breathe normally
• Be aware at all times of body language – make eye contact and SMILE
• LISTEN attentively to your interviewer – pay attention to the format of the interview and the questions asked
• If you do not understand any of the questions ask your interviewer to repeat the question or ask for clarification
**Top tips for Interviews**

- When answering questions take your time before you speak – ensure you take enough time to THINK and REFLECT about your response
- Answer all questions honestly and concisely
- Use actual examples of your past experiences when answering questions to demonstrate your skills and competencies in dealing with day-to-day situations that arise
- Act naturally and be yourself
- When invited to, ask your questions
**Reasons for failure**

- Attending the interview but not preparing for it
- Providing superficial information or waffling
- Failure to listen to questions
- Answering a question that was not asked
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www.pwc.com/ie/graduate

http://www.facebook.com/PwCgraduaterecruitment
Thank you!

Questions ?