



The Second Interview

You've got through the first interview and have been invited back for another. You're well in the frame for the role and now is the time for confidence – but not complacency or arrogance.

'You have to assume that every remaining candidate ticks all the required boxes and things are close,' says Jon Gregory, career coach and editor of win-that-job.com. The second round of interviews will be different to the first. Your interviewer(s) will aim to address any question marks that arose as a result of your first interview because as Gregory points out, if there weren't any concerns, you'd likely already have the job.

'They'll target your weakest areas to see whether or not they would reduce your ability to do an effective job,' he adds. *'Be honest with yourself about where you struggled in your first interview and then prepare thoroughly in anticipation of that likely probing.'*

The second interview shows that the selectors really liked you and decided to give you a chance to land the job but it also requires you to prepare so much more than for the previous round, adds Dasha Amrom. The founder and managing director of Career Coaching Ventures explains: *'This time, it is more likely to be competency-based questions that will be asked of you. I also often encounter various short tests and essays during the second round.'*

What Is The Interviewer Looking For?

In short, they want you to solve their recruitment problem. The good news is, if you've made it to the second round they've been impressed by what they've seen so far. *'They'll be looking for you to confirm their judgment and show them how you're most definitely the one they want,'* says Gregory.

The people on the other side of the desk will be hoping you can show full commitment to winning the job, genuine insight into the challenges and real enthusiasm to attack the role, should you get it.

Three Top Second Interview Tips

1. Use your first interview intel

Think carefully about what you learned about the organisation and its people from the first interview. Do your research again and use intelligence gained from that first interview to inform it. *'The interviewer will feel comforted if they see you've learned from your previous meeting and have already stepped up your game,'* says Gregory.

As part of your research, you should also try to establish who is going to be on the interviewing panel during the second round and find out as much about these people as possible, adds Amrom. Follow them on Twitter, study their LinkedIn profiles, and read their articles and blogs if they publish. *'In other words, make sure you understand their career history and their viewpoints,'* she explains.

2. Reinforce the positives

'Define the challenges that the successful candidate will face and plan to show how you could take up the reins and make real progress,' says Gregory. Build on the previous examples of what makes you the best candidate and try to hit home the positives.

If you've made it this far it is likely you managed to connect with the interviewer on a human level before so this is your chance to establish a rapport that will leave them feeling you could – and should – be part of the team. *'Be enthusiastic, likeable and smile,'* says Amrom. *'Nothing can impress more than a nice smile and a positive attitude.'*

3. Articulate your edge and prepare questions

Identify what added value you might bring, especially in comparison to the likely profile of other applicants. *'This is hard,'* admits Gregory, *'but dig deep as it can be a real deal-swing for you if things are close.'*

However, be mindful not to let this stray into unconstructive territory. Remember that all candidates have different strengths and weaknesses, so try not to obsess or worry too much about comparing yourself to others. *'Instead, concentrate on showing the best of yourself and how you're the very best choice,'* Gregory says.

Finally, don't neglect to prepare thoughtful and original questions to ask at the end of the interview, Amrom points out. *'Notable events within the company would require a question on your behalf,'* she explains. This will really demonstrate you are imagining working at the company.

'Make sure you think about the financial performance of the company you are applying to and can tailor the questions accordingly,' she adds. Has there been a recent restructure? It would probably make sense to ask something about this as well.

As always, if there's anything you want or need to know, we're here to support you so just ask.