

Interview Tips and Tricks

Now that we have done some work on CVs, why not proceed with interviews? Pre-interview work is as important as the performance during the interview. Start preparing for it when you fill in the application form, not on the way to the interview room!

1. First of all, decide if you are going for the interview! If not, let the Medical Staffing dept know that you are not attending. One common complaint from the medical staffing officers about the overseas doctors is lack of courtesy in informing that they aren't going to come down for the interview. It is a good practice and will help you if you ever happen to apply to that hospital again.
2. Similarly, if you are delayed for the interview, do let the medical staffing dept know in advance.
3. Read the job description again, carefully. Most interviewers at SHO posts are looking for a 'hunger' for the job rather than your competence.
 - a. Do the department/consultants have any special areas of expertise? May be worthwhile to know so that you can 'lead' the interviewer into that Area.
 - b. Ideally visit the department in advance. If not possible, at least have a word with the current SHOs over telephone. Find out about the job, work Intensity, training, protected teaching, audit and academic activity etc.
 - c. Find out about the availability of accommodation, particularly if married accommodation isn't provided by the hospital. In many areas, rented accommodation is prohibitively expensive.
4. Dress smartly. That doesn't mean flashy. You should feel comfortable in your clothes. So often, one finds the interviewee totally uncomfortable in western attire. There is nothing wrong with wearing salwar kameez if that's what you wear everyday. Most paediatricians don't routinely wear suit for work, and are unlikely to be persuaded by a three-piece suit.
5. Prepare a portfolio. It should be concise yet should reflect your achievements. A good portfolio takes time to prepare, and is one common deficiency among overseas doctors. Bring it with you as you enter the interview room and if the consultants don't ask to see it straightway, offer it to them at the beginning.
6. Bring you PLAB, Hepatitis B, GMC, MDU certificates as appropriate with you.
7. Above all, relax! Most of us want to bring out your strengths during the interview, and we tend to adopt a positive encouraging attitude. It is not an inquisition but an assessment of how eager you are to learn, how you work as a member of a team, and to see if you have clear aims and keep up to date with the happenings in that direction. Have a glass of water and take a deep breath before you enter the room.

I am sure Umesh will have some more pre-interview tips to share with the group. We can later start talking about some common interview questions and the usual pitfalls, and how to avoid them.

Sanjeev

:: Best of Luck::