

## **BiS Henderson Interview Guide**

### **Preparation prior to the interview**

Ensure that you know the exact time and location of the interview and you have checked the route, parking, etc and know long it will take to get there. (Note: if you have the postcode you can use [www.streetmap.co.uk](http://www.streetmap.co.uk) to find the exact location). You must know the interviewer's correct title and pronunciation of his/her full name.

### **Preparation is essential**

You should know as much as possible about the Company, the position and the interviewer. Members of the BiS Henderson team will always run through this information with you beforehand, but you must spend time gathering information such as annual reports, research who their competitors are, visit their web page and search the web for related articles and news. The interviewer will make the assumption that someone who goes to this effort to find all this out, is more likely to put the same effort into their job. If the Company has any stores, visit one or two.

You must prepare questions that you will want to ask and be asked at the interview. An interview is a two-way process. You will want to find out if the role is right for you as much as the interviewer assessing whether you are right for them.

Have 2 or 3 strategic business questions ready, such as:

- "Where do you see the Organisation expanding over the next year?"
- "What problems, if any, do you see ahead/need to overcome with the changes in xyz legislation?"
- "What plans have been put in place to stay ahead of your competitors?"

Anticipate the likely questions you will be asked and prepare your answers. For example: What are your long-term career goals? What skills do you have that are important to succeed in this role? Describe your management style. What are your strengths and weaknesses?

"Tell me about yourself" is the most typical and vague question that the interviewer will ask at the beginning of the interview. You must take this open invitation to give a clear and precise summary of your professional career and the key achievements within it. This is not the time to discuss your hobbies or family. This opening question/answer must be prepared and rehearsed to ensure a successful start to your interview. This is also the most important time of the interview – the interviewers will make a judgement on you in the first 5 minutes. Be prepared.

Study the job description/information given on the opportunity and match where your strengths lie. If appropriate, be prepared to defend your lack of experience in a particular area. Discuss this with a member of the BiS team beforehand.

When asked a specific question always give your answer followed by the result/outcome. For example, "Have you implemented SAP?". Your answer should include the size of the implementation, budget responsibility, how long it took, who was involved and impacted, what aspect of the implementation you were responsible for and the end result (under budget, etc).

Never answer a question with a simple yes or no. Great emphasis is placed on your practical experience than on paper qualifications so it is up to you to convince them that your experience qualifies you for the role. This will involve using your experience as evidence to support statements that you make in answers to questions.

The most common negative feedback about prospective candidates is their inability to articulate past accomplishments and how they can relate this experience to a new organisation. Brainstorm what you have done and how you can apply this experience to improve their organisation. Whenever possible, make correlations between your current organisation and the company that is interviewing you.

Always run through your CV, ideally the night before, and spend time recalling specific details – as many facts and figures as possible. Your potential future employer is looking not only to see if you can do the job, but if you can succeed and make significant contributions – you can only do this by giving them precise information and data. Anybody can say I can do the job.....  
*The better prepared you are the more comfortable the interviewer will feel about your suitability.*

### **Dress code**

Always dress in business attire unless specifically asked to wear casual. A dark suit, ironed shirt and dark socks (not white) for the gentlemen and a dark suit and suitable top (not low cut) for the ladies. Wear limited cologne/perfume and never apply it with your hands. You have to shake hands and you do not want to be remembered for how you smelt!

### **The interview**

Always shake hands firmly and wait until you are offered a chair before sitting. A smile is the most positive signal you can give, it re-affirms your enthusiasm and good nature.

Your attitude and demeanour plays an important role in any interview. You must ensure you remain enthusiastic, energetic and positive throughout. Do not become overbearing, aggressive or conceited. It is critical to develop a rapport with the interviewer right from the start. If you can give the impression that you have a lot in common and if he/she takes a liking to you, you will greatly improve your chances of success.

Talk in the future tense, e.g. when I join... I will (rather than would) – be assumptive,

Listening to the questions asked is incredibly important since you can sometimes give an answer without fully responding to that particular question. It is always best to take a short pause before answering or to clarify their question by repeating it.

Answer succinctly and do not waffle. If you find yourself waffling, take a deep breath and summarise your answer. Keep to the point and be mindful of time.

Let your voice show your enthusiasm and keenness – speak clearly and in a controlled range of tones. Try to avoid a nervous ‘sing-song’ tone and being monotone. Ultimately, you should try to be natural.

Fidgeting shows boredom and restlessness, crossing arms indicates an unwillingness to listen and tapping your foot is distracting and a sure sign of boredom. Smile, relax and enjoy the meeting.

Do not lie or expand your answer. Be as frank and open as possible.

Do not make derogatory or negative remarks about your present or former employers. Avoid negative phrases such as “I don’t know” or “I’m not sure”. It’s also a bad idea to get into discussions about your personal life.

Do not discuss money and do not state the salary you are looking for. If the interviewer asks you to confirm your package then do so but do not bring the subject up yourself. If they ask you what you are looking for, confirm your current package details and that you would expect an improvement but that the role and career opportunities are the most important consideration in making a move from your current role. Members of the BiS team are in a much better situation than you to discuss financial packages.

### **Closing the interview**

You must always ask the interviewer for feedback. Ask if they have any concerns or worries about your suitability for the role. If you do not ask and they do have concerns, you will not have another opportunity to discuss and hopefully, remove their doubts. Enquire about the next stage and timings. If the interviewer offers the position to you and you want it, accept on the spot. Don't be too discouraged if no definite offer is made since they will probably want to consult colleagues or interview other candidates (or both) before making a decision.

If you get the impression that the interview is not going very well – ask the interviewer outright what their concerns are. You may find that this will turn the interview around. Do not let your discouragement show and remain positive, enthusiastic and professional at all times.

Please ensure that you thank the interviewer for the time spent with you and say that you look forward to receiving their feedback once they have spoken to a member of the BiS Henderson team.

### **After the interview**

Call a member of the BiS Henderson team as soon as possible after the interview. You will be able to run through the interview with them and if necessary, they will then be able to cover any concerns you have with the interviewer.