



## **Interview Advice**

### **Preparation for the Interview**

Why and what should I prepare? The most common mistake a candidate can make before their interview and also during the job search itself, is to carry out insufficient research on prospective employers. Research is imperative to making the difference between securing or losing a job offer. If you are armed with knowledge, you will feel more confident and positive at the interview. This attitude could set you apart from other applicants. Your knowledge about a prospective employer may give you a vital edge over other applicants during the interview process. Your knowledge of the firm's size, specialisations, recent publicised cases, major competitors, positioning in the legal world.

Having conducted pre-interview research, it will enable you to prepare and ask confidently, informed questions during your interview. It will also help you determine what skills the potential employer might be looking for, what you could offer them, your potential place within the organisation and potential career progression may be open to you. Ensure that you are also up to speed with the facts and figures of your present/former employer. You will be expected to know a lot of information about the firm you have previously worked for.

Preparation is the vital ingredient to being successful at interview. The interviewer will take the fact that you have prepared as a sign that you are serious about the firm, your job and your future career.

What tools are available to carry out my research?

There are no excuses for not being able to find out relevant information on a potential employer. In today's world, access to information is easy and potential employers are fully aware of this. A few of the many information resources include:-

- Visiting a firm's website for detailed information regarding their various departments, Partners, and teams. If you do not have access to the internet, you should visit a cyber café.
- Contacting your Noble Legal consultant who will have expert knowledge of the client, the role, the company culture, the working environment, as well as the firm's expectations and candidate requirements.
- Reading newspapers and trade journal to find out legal specific information. Most trade journals can be purchased from large news agents, or can be ordered, ie The Lawyer, Legal Week, and The Law Society Gazette.
- Using your own contacts and asking other lawyers in the field to provide information and knowledge about the firm.

### **Preparing Your Interview Questions**

An interview is a two-way process. As well as the employer interviewing you for information,

you are also attending the interview to gain valuable and vital information for you to assess the suitability of the role and the employer for your requirements. Although an interviewer will be evaluating you, the interview is an opportunity for you to also evaluate how the company's culture complements your values. An employer will expect a serious candidate to try to gather information at the interview in order to reach a decision about the role and the company. A pet hate of most interviewers is not to be asked questions by the candidate. Asking questions shows that you have thought about the interview beforehand.

Your goals at the interview are to ensure you are understood and to present your talents in the best possible way. Engaging interviewers in two-way communication by asking questions helps you ensure they are listening while you deliver your responses. Furthermore, if you can get an interviewer to talk about themselves or the company, you build rapport. Although, you can ask all sorts of questions, you might consider directing certain questions to certain types of individuals. If you are interviewing with the hiring Partner, you might ask questions about the job, the desired qualities and the challenges. If you are interviewing with the human resources manager, you might direct your questions about the Firm.

Therefore, it is vital that you prepare questions prior to the interview.

Typical questions include:-

- How has this position arisen?
- If Senior, what criteria must be fulfilled to progress to Partnership?
- Which Partner would I report to?
- What level of IT and secretarial support do you have here?
- Do you use Case Management systems
- What motivated you to join the Firm? (An excellent question to ask!)
- What How many chargable hours will I expected to bill?
- Will there be opportunities to take an active role in departmental development?
- What is the next step?

Don't forget that last question to emphasise your enthusiasm. You should prepare at least 12 questions prior to the interview. During the interview, 5 of them are likely to be answered without you even asking the questions. So at least you will have some questions left that you can ask. During the interview, it is likely that information will be given to you that will prompt you to ask further questions. Use your judgment about the number of questions you ask and when to ask them. Think of this as a conversation. But make sure you do ask questions.

### **Researching Who You Are**

Candidates can make many mistakes at interview. One that is often made by candidates' before the interview is not conducting research about themselves. It is important to understand your own experience, knowledge and skills. Formulating an inventory of your experience and skills will enable you to answer any question about your experience or skills. You must be prepared to discuss any part of your background and your CV. Therefore, read your CV thoroughly, understand it and learn what is on your CV.

Make a list of personality traits that best describe you. Decide on the qualities you would like the interviewer to remember about you after the interview. Incorporate some of the same words used in the job specification or advert. Make sure that your descriptions make you

sound unique and will be memorable but not wacky or strange. If you are asked to describe your personality you have an answer.

## **Preparing Your Script**

It is very useful to prepare your answers to questions before the interview. In order for you to do this, you must be able to anticipate questions that will be asked, have done your research into the prospective employer, understood the job specification, and researched your own skills and experience. For ideas on your own skills and experience refer to your CV.

If you plan on saying you are good at something, prove it with a true experience story. You should be able to back up anything you say on your CV or in an interview with a story or an example of how you have done well in a difficult situation. Preparing your stories is one of the most beneficial exercises you can do to become focused before your interview.

## **Employer Questions**

### LIKELY QUESTIONS

Q. What made you apply for this position? (Employer seeks clarification of your motivation and interest in applying for the position)

R. Explain succinctly why you applied for the position

Q. Tell me about yourself (Standard employer question whereby they want to listen to how you talk and whether you can keep your answers short and sweet)

R. Always be prepared for this question or you could end up droning on and on. Feel free to ask the interviewer for clarification about which area he would like to hear about e.g. education, skills or experience. Generally, keep it brief. Talk about your qualifications, career history and range of skills. Emphasise those skills that are relevant to the position on offer. You could think of this question as "Tell me something that you have which will give you an advantage in this role or company".

Q. Briefly, please summarise your work history & education for me?

R. This is a good test of your listening skills. Respond with a brief summary only of your background and relevant education and qualifications.

Q: Can you describe for me one or two of your most important accomplishments?: (The interviewer seeks to establish whether you are successful?)

R: Select a couple of achievements that are career related. Identify the skills you used in this situation, the obstacles, your initiative and ability to meet or exceed goals and quantify the benefits.

Q: What has been the most challenging situation you have been recently faced with and how did you deal with it? (The interviewer is looking to discover your problem solving skills, your initiative, powers of logic and also what you consider to be difficult or challenging)

R: Be careful how you respond to this question. Make sure that you select a difficult work situation where you were not the cause, the possible options that were available to you, why and how you selected the appropriate option and why it resolved the situation with a positive outcome.

Q: What are your strengths? (The interviewer is looking for honesty, confidence, what value you can add, what have you got to offer that is different and what you can bring to the organisation and may also be seeking to detect any arrogance)

R: This question in one form or other is very likely to be asked. List three or four of your main strengths could benefit a new employer in the particular role on offer. Strengths you should consider to include technical proficiency, fast learning ability, determination, positive attitude and your strong inter-personal skills and team spirit. You should provide examples which show

you in a positive light.

Q: Why do you wish to leave your present job or why did you leave your last job? (The interviewer seeks to establish your motivations for leaving your last or current employer)

R: Do not fall into the trap of giving negative reasons for leaving. Provide positive reasons such as looking for more challenge, responsibility and experience. Do not give reasons such as lack of stability. The interviewer might think you have a flexibility issue or he might think that although the company is stable now, periods of economic downturn or growth can create instability. DO NOT criticize your last or current boss. This could ring alarm bells with the interviewer and they might think you do not respond well to criticism or authority.

Q: What did you like least or do you like least about your last or current job? (This question is similar to the previous question. The interviewer is trying to establish what might disinterest or de-motivate you or what could cause you to leave the prospective employer. If you were dissatisfied before, you may be dissatisfied again if there are similar circumstances)

R: You are best advised to focus on tasks or career progression rather than politics and people. However, avoid saying you disliked the repetition. The interviewer may worry that you may eventually find the role repetitive. Your best approach is to concentrate on tasks, stating that having given the question some thought you were on the whole very satisfied with your job but a certain task or responsibility which was unusually or disproportionately time consuming took you away from using your real strengths. The question is something of a trap as it is asking for a negative answer. Do not give a negative response about your boss or your company. You might talk yourself out of a job. One of the purposes of this question is to find out if you're going to be satisfied in the job for which you are being interviewed for. The interviewer may feel that if you were dissatisfied before, you may be dissatisfied again if the circumstances are similar.

Q: Everyone has weaknesses. What are yours? (The interviewer is trying to discover a reason not to employ you, what may disinterest you, where you might need help, what might prevent you from succeeding in the role and how much do you know about yourself)

R: Never say you do not have any. The interviewer will think you are not telling the truth or lack self assessment ability. You are best advised to use a professional weakness such as some experience which is not essential for the job you are being interviewed for. You could take a negative trait and make it sound like an asset. For example, say you are a stickler for meeting deadlines and will stay on top of a project until it is done according to your specifications, which may cause you to sometimes work late nights. You could describe a personal or professional weakness that could also be considered a strength and describe the steps you have taken to correct "the weakness". However, this option is open to a negative interpretation by the interviewer.

Q: In what circumstances do you find it difficult to make decisions? (The interviewer seeks to discover your decision making ability or lack of it)

R: You should give examples of decisions that you have had to make when you have had insufficient information. Be very careful not to show weaknesses or allow your answer to display you as someone who is reckless.

Q: Why do you want to work for this company? (The interviewer is looking for an answer which shows you have thought about where you want to work)

R: The answer to this question will make you stand out as a more informed and competent candidate provided you have researched the company and the industry before the interview. Your answer to this question should incorporate the fact that you have researched the company, the knowledge gained about the company and where your background, experience and skills can be used in a positive beneficial way. You should also include a statement providing two reasons why the job is a good match for your skills, strengths' background and experience. Your answer must demonstrate your interest and enthusiasm for the company and its aims and how you could be a member of the team. Let the interviewer know you are being selective about where you want to work and you're not just going to take any job offered to you.

Q: Tell me about a time when you had to juggle priorities to meet a deadline? (If you hear at interview "tell me about a time when", the interviewer is using behavioral interviewing

techniques. Beware!!! The basis of this technique is to use your past experiences and behaviour as an indicator of your future success. In other words, if you can demonstrate through examples that you accomplished something before, the interviewer is likely to believe you are equipped to do it.) This particular question seeks information about how you handle priorities and deadlines, respond to pressure and your flexibility.

R: Your answer must give a specific example or examples even if it is difficult because there are regular occurrences.

Q: How would you describe your personality? (The interviewer is asking this question for two reasons. Firstly to hear how where you place the emphasis on your description and secondly to see how quickly and creatively you can think on the spot.

R: This may appear to need a straightforward answer. It does not. This question presents you with an opportunity to distinguish yourself from other candidates by describing yourself uniquely and at the same time selling yourself. Use your personality trait and describe how you use it in a work situation. For example, do not only say "I am highly analytical", say "I am very strong at analysing data and transforming it into meaningful information". Say "I take pride in never missing a deadline" instead of "I am reliable". In other words provide personality traits plus benefits. Your answers must convince the interviewer that your personality is the best one for the job.

Other questions

## WORK HISTORY

- Describe one or two of the biggest disappointments in your work history? (Interviewer seeks to establish what de-motivates you and where you have been unfulfilled)
- What is important to you in a firm? What things do you look for in an organisation? (Interviewer wishes to discover if your values and requirements match the employer's values)
- Why do you think you are qualified for this job?

## JOB PERFORMANCE

- What are your strong points for this job?
- What would you say are areas that need improvement? (Interviewer looking for your weaknesses)
- Do you prefer working alone or in groups?
- What example can you give me of when you have been out of your depth?
- What do you think about working long hours and/or weekends?
- Give me an example of your skills in managing or supervising others?
- What are some of the things in your current/last role you felt you have done particularly well or in which you have achieved the greatest success and why?
- What were some of the things in your last job that you found most difficult to do?

## DEALING WITH PEOPLE

- Tell me about the last time you disagreed with your Partner. How did you resolve this?
- What kinds of people do you like working with? (Be careful when answering this question)
- Tell me about a time when you were working with someone who wasn't pulling their weight, and they had a different value system than yours. How did you deal with this person? (Give specific examples)

## CAREER- GOALS

- What is your long-term employment or career objective?
- What in your past experience affected your present career objectives?
- If you had this job, what would you most like to accomplish?
- What do you see this job leading to?
- Why do you think you would like this role?

## SELF-ASSESSMENT

- Can you describe for me a difficult obstacle you have had to overcome? How did you handle it?
- How would you describe yourself as a person?
- Why would you consider yourself a self-starter?
- What do you consider to be your greatest achievements to date and why?
- What things give you the greatest satisfaction at work?
- What frustrates you the most and how do you usually cope with them?
- What reservations should I have about you as an employee? ( Interviewer is asking you about your weaknesses)

## DECISIVENESS

- Do you consider yourself to be thoughtful and analytical or do you make up your mind quickly?
- What was your most difficult decision in the last three months? What made it difficult?
- The last time you were unsure what decision to make, what did you do?
- How do you go about making an important decision affecting your career?
- What was the last major work problem that you were confronted with and what action did you take?

## MOTIVATION

- Do you have a professional goal and what is it?
- How do you determine what constitutes top priorities in the performance of your job?
- What motivates you?

## WORK STANDARDS

- How do you measure your own performance?
- In your position, how would you define doing a good job? On what basis was your definition determined?

## LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

- How do you get your team to accept your ideas or department goals?
- What specifically do you do to set an example for your team?
- What sort of leader do your people feel you are?
- How do you get people who do not want to work together to establish a common approach to a problem?
- How would you describe your basic leadership style? Give specific examples of how you practice this?
- Do you feel you work more effectively on a one to one basis or in a group situation?

#### ORAL PRESENTATION SKILLS

- Have you ever made any group or public presentations?
- Have you made any individual presentations recently and how did you prepare for them?

#### FLEXIBILITY

- What do you think about continuous changes in firm operating policies and procedures?
- How effective has your firm been in adapting its policies to fit a changing environment?
- What has been the most significant change made in your firm in the last six months which directly affected you, and how successfully do you think you reacted to or implemented this change?

#### STRESS TOLERANCE

- When do you feel pressure in your job?
- What has been the highest pressure situation you have been under in the last 12 months and how did you cope with it?

#### STABILITY & MATURITY

- Describe your most significant success and failure in the last three years.
- What do you like to do best?
- What do you like to do least?
- How have you reacted when your work has been criticised? (Give an example including the outcome which should show you in a positive light)
- What have you done about it?

#### **First Impressions**

You have now done your research. You have fully familiarised yourself with the firm details and industry information; you have read and understood the job specification and the skills required; you have prepared your interview questions; you have prepared for possible interview questions and your responses to them and it is now time to attend the interview. So what do you now?

You have to make a good first impression. It is often said that an interviewee must always make a good first impression as it is difficult to recover from a poor first impression. So to

ensure you make a good first impression, make sure you do the following:

Wear your smartest suit and act in a professional manner. Appearances do count. When you look good, you feel good. Make sure you look groomed and neat. Your clothes should not be wild and loud. Your clothes could be described as your packaging and should not take attention away from you as a product. You are more likely to be hired if you are well presented as you will be regarded as a future representative of their firm. This advice is given despite the dress down policy of many organisations today.

Make sure you arrive on time and know the exact time and location of the interview and who you are meeting and their title. Your consultant at Noble Legal will provide you with the contact name(s), address and also a map of how to get to the interview if required. Please allow plenty of time to get to the location, in case there are travel delays.

Look confident and sit confidently whether in the reception or the interview room. When you slouch, whether sitting or standing, you are giving a negative impression about you and your confidence level. A slouching posture looks tired and uncaring. Sit up straight and when you stand, make yourself as tall as possible: head held high and shoulders held back.

Inside the interview room, if there are any other interviewers you will be introduced to them. Make sure you look at them when greeting them, smile. Make sure you remember all their names so you can address them throughout the interview. Eye contact and smiles can indicate a confident and upbeat attitude. Look the interviewer in the eye when replying to questions. You don't want to stare, as this shows aggression. Occasionally, and nonchalantly, glance at the interviewer's hand as he/she speaks. By constantly looking around the room while you are talking, you convey a lack of confidence or discomfort with what is being discussed.

Do not fidget, play with your hair, click pen tops, tap feet or unconsciously touch parts of the body such as your neck, mouth, nose or eyes. Gesturing with your hands is very natural but do not get carried away – it can be distracting.

Many employers look for enthusiasm and energy. This is a good opportunity to demonstrate your social and interpersonal skills as well as your excitement about the opportunity for which you're interviewing.

You should speak with enthusiasm and energy and use a firm voice to demonstrate confidence. Your voice and the volume of your speech convey a strong impression. Your vocabulary will say something about you, as well as your knowledge of the industry. It is important to use words that the interviewer understands – possibly talk their talk.

If the sun is in your eyes, or the chair is shaky, make sure you say something rather than feel uncomfortable and fail to concentrate on the interview.

### **Interview Do's, Interview Don'ts**

- Do make sure you have prepared thoroughly for the interview
- Do make sure you are not late for the interview and if delayed, phone your consultant
- Do make sure if you are late you extend your apologies for your lateness
- Do make sure you give a firm positive handshake and SMILE when you are first introduced to the interviewer or interviewers
- Do make sure you introduce yourself courteously
- Do make sure you sit down only when you have been offered a seat
- Do make sure during the interview that you maintain eye contact with the interviewer who is asking a question and during your answer but when answering do not exclude any other

interviewers present

- Do make sure you are alert
- Do make sure that you listen carefully to the questions asked
- Do make sure you think about your answers and how you want to express them
- Do answer assertively but not aggressively
- Do ensure you answer questions honestly, fully, clearly and precisely
- Do make sure you correct a statement you made but did not mean by simply restating what you wanted to express
- Do smile during the interview but don't over do it
- Do make sure you relax. Remember its an interview not a firing squad!
- Do not forget what is on your CV
- Do ensure you appear positive and enthusiastic during the interview
- Do ensure you demonstrate how your skills and experience can be of benefit
- Do make sure that for every responsibility or requirement on the job specification, that you have at least one example of an experience or a transferable skill that covers that requirement for the interview
- Do show that you have a willingness to learn and develop
- Do make sure you ask some or all of your prepared questions on the firm and the role
- Do demonstrate your enthusiasm by letting the interviewer know at the end of the meeting that you are interested in the position, asking when a decision will be made
- Do make sure you thank the interviewer for their time and SMILE
- Do make sure you contact your consultant at Noble Legal with feedback
- Don't be rude or impolite to receptionists
- Don't dress loudly or outrageously for an interview
- Don't slouch in a chair
- Don't fidget or pick your nails
- Don't have your mobile phone switched on
- Don't be verbose or long winded in answers to questions. You will bore the interviewer
- Don't give yes or no answers only to questions. Make sure you expand your answers
- Don't lie about your experience or skills. It is likely you will be caught out
- Don't make any derogatory or negative comments about your previous employer/boss
- Don't raise questions about salary in the 1st interview unless the interviewer does; ensuring you get the job or an offer for a further interview is the main priority at this stage - salary negotiations will follow at a later stage. Your Noble Legal consultant is a trained negotiator -

leave it to him or her.

### **Interview Conclusion**

Ask about the next interview stage if appropriate. There may be an explanation of how the process will continue. Try to find out when you should hear back. However, do not appear pushy. Some recruiters will not want to commit themselves to any timescales until they have had time to consider all the candidates who could comprise both internal and external candidates.

(You might have a surprise if the interviewer offers you the job on the spot. If you would like to accept it, then do so. However, if you require further time to think it over, ask for more time tactfully and qualify your reasons. Provide a definite date as to when you can provide an answer.)

For permanent positions, it is unlikely that you will be offered a job instantly. The interviewer will in most cases need to consult colleagues first or interview other suitable candidates.

Make sure you say that you look forward to hearing from them. Finally, thank your interviewer for his or her time, shake hands and smile. Do not forget to say a personal farewell to each person present at the interview. Remember to pick up business cards in order to write thank you letters if need be or if you are asked to call the interviewer in relation to any questions you may have.

Do not ignore the receptionist when you leave.

### **Post Interview**

It is essential that you call your consultant after the interview and provide feedback. Often the consultant cannot get the prospective employer's feedback without first getting your feedback. You should call the consultant immediately after the interview or if the interview occurs early evening, the next morning. Any delay in you providing feedback can slow down the whole process. It is also for your benefit to gain the interviewer's feedback on how you fared at the interview. Whether the feedback is positive or negative, it is important that you take on board the comments and observations made and use it for future interviews or to take corrective action.

### **Second Interview**

The second interview is another hurdle to overcome in the competitive race for the job offer. At this stage, the numbers of candidates have been whittled down to usually two or three. Therefore, the odds are becoming more favourable for you.

In order to give yourself the greatest advantage possible, you must again prepare thoroughly. Depending on who conducted the first interview, the second interview could be conducted by Human Resources if they have not been involved in the first meeting. You may be meeting with one, two or three people, perhaps your prospective Partner, or someone from human resources, or with several interviewers in a panel interview or a series of one to one interviews. At this interview, the people you meet will be examining two particular areas:

- Your competency to do the job. The focus of questions will be on examining your current skills, experience, abilities and learning capability.
- Your ability to fit in with the firm, its culture and work well with their existing employees? The assessment of your personality and inter-personal skills as well as the personal impact you make in the role are critical factors which will determine whether you beat your competition.

Often, you will be asked more searching questions than in the first interview, so you will be required to give fuller answers to different questions.

Having fully prepared again will give you the confidence and ability to get you through the second interview stage. Follow the advice we have given for preparation at the first interview stage. Preparation should concentrate on all the practical and intellectual aspects of the interview.

Think about your first interview carefully. It is very possible that the main areas that the questions were concentrated on will again be a focus but even more intensive this time. Be prepared to answer questions on firm material, brochures, website, and presentations. Interviewers have taken the time to read your details, so make sure you read details on the firm. You may be asked very similar questions to ones asked at first interview, particularly ones that you found difficult or where your answers were more vague than other answers you had given. Interviewers in this instance will be probing perceived weaknesses or confirming or clarifying their opinions of you. If you prepare in advance, you will be more confident in answering these questions and your responses will be stronger. Make sure that you do not contradict your earlier answers, as notes will have been taken at the first interview. If asked about achievements, provide new information and examples.

Remember, the interview is a two way process. The second interview could be your last chance for you to clarify any doubts you have or clarify information gained earlier about the firm, its culture, the role and your professional development. Use the second interview to benefit you. Find out if you like the firm, the role and the people you will be working with. These are people you will have to spend a lot of time with so it is best to find out now. If you are introduced to your peer group, ask what it is like to work for the firm, what the office atmosphere is like and have the reasons for them joining the firm been fulfilled.

Provided you again prepare for the interview, the prospects for your success are very high.

Remember to give immediate feedback to your consultant, who will be waiting to find out how you thought the interview went. You should include areas you felt you were weak or where you are worried about a specific answer you gave, or where you did not press home a point about a special skill or experience you have. Your Noble Legal consultant can cover this for you when they call the employer.

### **Testing – Personality and Psychometrics**

Many employers today use some form of testing during the interview process. For some candidates, there is a wariness of the unknown. Tests are likely to measure your personality and your ability and aptitude.

#### **PERSONALITY MEASUREMENT**

The reason why an employer uses this form of measurement lies in the belief that a person's performance in a job does not depend solely upon ability; their personality also plays a critical factor. Used in conjunction with other measures and assessments, personality measurement can provide a useful insight into an individual's style and how they see themselves in terms of their fundamental characteristics. This information is generally derived from the answers to a series of multiple choice questions administered using both paper and pencil or a computerised questionnaire (possibly online). Personality questionnaires are not tests and are often un-timed. It is worth remembering that there is nothing daunting about personality measures - what comes out is determined by what you put in - it is a structured way of getting you to describe yourself. The questions are designed to identify how you prefer to react in certain work situations – how you interact with people, your managerial style, thinking style etc. There are no 'right' or 'wrong' answers, because people tend to have different but equally understandable reactions. A typical question might be: "In meetings, I frequently voice my opinion without being asked". You would then be asked to record to what extent you agree with this statement. Usually you are given multiple choice answers to questions. When completing the questionnaire you must try to respond to the questions honestly. Some of the questions ask about similar situations, but in slightly different ways. Answer them in terms of how you see yourself, not how you would like to be. If you do not answer honestly, your results could appear odd and not reflect who you really are.

## ABILITY AND APTITUDE TESTING – PSYCHOMETRIC TESTING

Measures of ability and aptitude have been shown to be excellent indicators of future performance. Consequently they are often used as a part of the selection process to help improve the overall quality of the selection decision. These tests are often known as 'Psychometric Tests'. Psychometric assessments are standardised tests and questionnaires. Tests can take a variety of forms and be administered using paper and pencil or a computer display and keyboard. The tests could, for example, measure your ability to draw correct inferences from abstract, verbal and numerical information and may take the form of both abstract, numerical and verbal reasoning tests. Verbal reasoning tests are a test of your skill at making sense of reports which cannot be relied upon to be objective, truthful or even consistent. Numerical tests are designed to test your skill at reasoning with numbers. Abstract tests are designed to test your skill at finding similarities and differences in groups of patterns.

The tests are used to help gain a better understanding of your abilities, personality and motivation. The specific assessments you complete are usually identified as providing relevant information linked to the demands of the role(s) for which you are being considered. Test materials are carefully controlled and not generally available for inspection or practice, although there are websites available which give example questions. In line with best practice, however, test takers' guides are often made available to candidates prior to taking the tests to allow them to become familiar with what will be expected of them when they sit the tests.

After the testing day, a profile will be put together to identify your ability, strengths and areas for development in relation to the role you have applied for. When the test is over your answers will be scored and this information will be used to help decide whether you will be suitable for the job, the organisation or training programmes provided.

### **The Job Offer**

You have completed the selection process and are awaiting news.....Congratulations! You have received a job offer and wish to accept. What happens next?

**CELEBRATE!!!**

Ask your Noble Legal consultant to respond verbally on your behalf and convey your acceptance. Often you will need to do this first before you receive a written offer of employment. Employers like to have the comfort that they are not wasting their time by drafting and sending out offer letters to candidates who are not enthusiastic or really interested in working for them.

You should always send a written confirmation of your acceptance. If you have received a verbal offer and have accepted, and you then receive a standard offer letter, it is only courteous to write back. Also to avoid any misunderstandings, it is always prudent to receive and respond to such documents in writing. Also you can ensure that all the details of the offer are set out in writing and are clear.

Sometimes as a matter of course, an employer will automatically send out an offer letter to you. If you are currently in another job, it's likely that you will have to work a notice period. If your new employer wishes you to start as soon as possible, the offer letter should arrive quickly in order for you to resign quickly.

### **Handling your Resignation**

In today's society, where a job is no longer guaranteed for life, handing in your notice is something many people become accustomed to. But like most things, there are right and wrong ways to approach situations. When it comes to resigning, there are certain etiquettes to abide by to ensure success and a smooth resignation. In an ideal world, resigning from your job would be pleasant and straightforward. Your boss would be understanding and supportive of your needs and no bad feelings would arise. The fact is, too few employees experience such an easy ride.

How you handle your resignation has an impact on your career. Approaching your resignation in the wrong way could be detrimental to your immediate future. After all, a good reference is not just valuable, but vital.

Once you have made up your mind to resign, your most urgent task is to inform your manager. A letter of resignation is the formal way to communicate your action and it acts as a legal document stating the date from which you wish your notice period to begin.

If you are leaving on good terms, or are sorry to be leaving behind colleagues and friends, you may want to add an extra sentence or two thanking your boss for the opportunities you have been given, and expressing your regret. A touch of sentiment, can go a long way and costs nothing.

On the other hand, if your resignation is as a result of adverse working conditions or, worse, a clash of personalities with your boss or another colleague, it can be dangerous to go into detail. Simply state your intention to resign without stating reasons. There is no need to elaborate. Remember, the letter has one sole purpose – to inform your employer of the date you wish to terminate your employment. Keep it simple and succinct. You have decided to move on, and written the letter that legally notifies your employer of your actions. How do you feel?

It's not uncommon to experience a mixture of emotions. You may feel guilty or anxious as you try to visualize the expression and reaction of your boss and colleagues. How will I be treated during my notice period? What if they try to convince me to stay? What if they don't? You might feel that you will lose friends.

The reality is, most people at some point in their lives, including your manager, will have been in your situation. Despite the fact you may have been a valued member of the team, life will go on at the employer – your boss will survive.

There is never a 'right time' to resign. Just use your common sense and judgment:

- Keep it confidential – your superiors will appreciate being the one to decide who else to tell, how and when to break the news.
- Be sure of your reasons for leaving - if necessary, rehearse them.
- If you don't want to reveal where you're going, there is no legal right to declare your intentions.
- Be prepared for a negative reaction, even anger - take it on the chin, ignore the comments and re-state the facts clearly and simply. You are just resigning – the shock to them will pass.
- Do not be swayed by comments such as “It won't be the same around here without you” or “You were in line for Partnership”
- Remember your reasons for leaving and stick to your guns!

Remember to inform your new employer of your start date if you have not done so in the acceptance letter.

### **Counter Offer from Employer**

Look at the logic behind the counter-offer. Of course, what we would like to do is view a counter-offer as a sign of our unrivalled importance and value to our employer, a definite signal that they'll stretch to serious lengths to keep us!!

However, companies are very reticent to lose good and sometimes bad members of staff.

A counter-offer is an offer from your current employer to rival the one you have received from

your future employer, to convince you to stay. Counter-offers can take many forms. A straight increase in salary - usually to meet or beat your new offer - additional company benefits, a sought-after promotion or new job title, additional responsibility, a change in role, more involvement in sexy projects or any combination of the above.

Counter-offers can be confusing. Leaving a job, especially if you have been there for some time, is difficult. Being put under pressure to stay, and having your reasons for leaving challenged, undermined and even blown out of the water, certainly doesn't make it a piece of cake. Even though you worked hard to get the new role and have been really looking forward to it, you find yourself thinking: maybe I do owe something to my current employer. Maybe I do lack loyalty and maybe the company will suffer unfairly if I leave?