

Interview roles

An interview works best if there is co-operation on both sides. Consider the following descriptions of roles which may be helpful to a successful outcome

Interviewer	Interviewee
Try to put interviewee at ease	Try to appear confident and at ease. Self consciousness can detract from your purpose
Give interviewee time to answer	Think before you speak but don't appear uncommunicative
Explain the purpose of the interview	Try to work out the ground-rules and scope of the interview
Keep the goal of the interview in mind	Don't ramble on about irrelevancies
Let the interviewee do most of the talking	Be informative - don't answer in mono-syllables
Pursue questions that have not been adequately answered	Do not dodge difficult questions entirely
Keep a record of key points and your impressions	Try to monitor your own performance and assess the impression you are giving
Avoid premature decisions or those based on minor details	Give as balanced a picture as possible
Establish an appropriate communication climate	Don't be over-familiar or over-formal, smile as necessary (but don't over-do it)
Consider whether open or closed questions are appropriate – use a fair number of open questions	Don't just answer Yes or No. Qualify points where appropriate, justify views, offer examples
Have a questioning strategy prepared	Try to see where the questioner's points are leading to
Prepare key questions but remain flexible	Be helpful. If possible, guide the talk into interesting or favourable areas