



Performing well at interview

For Imperial College staff

This document provides an overview to guide successful performance at interviews. It is a written resource which supplements our learning and career management provision for all staff.

The Learning and Development Centre

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Different types of selection

Interview
by panel

Interview by
single person

Group
activity

Psychometric
testing

Practical
tests / tasks

Presentations

Often a combination of the above may be used and referred to as an "Assessment Centre".

Interview by a panel

A panel is usually made up of three to five people. Listen when the interviewers introduce themselves and try to remember their names. This will help you make a connection when you are talking to them. Aim your answers at the person who actually asked the question and try and avoid just talking to one interviewer. Do not be put off by the interviewers taking notes throughout the interview. They use these notes to help ensure they are fair and transparent in their decision making.

Second interviews can be used to go into further depth. They may be used to look more closely at whether the candidate and role are a good match, or in order to distinguish between two or more candidates who performed well at the original interview. If psychometrics have been used, the second interview may incorporate or discuss the results.

One-to-one interview or series of interviews with different people

This approach may be less stressful than a panel interview, but you must take care to be consistent in your answers. The interviewers will talk to each other.

Telephone or Video Interviews

Organisations are increasingly using telephone or video interviews. These have been used for some time for international recruitment, to screen large numbers of candidates for initial interviews in person, or if panels are especially pushed for time. It is important to be as prepared and focused as you would be for an interview in person, and to communicate clearly and professionally. If you are using a mobile phone, Skype, Teams then make sure you are somewhere appropriate to take the call i.e. a quiet, professional-looking location with good reception and dress as if you were heading for a face-to-face interview.

Group activity with other candidates

These are frequently used to test communication, teamwork and problem solving skills. These activities can be very varied and could include such tasks as agreeing a strategy for surviving a shipwreck or devising a new advertising campaign.

Psychometric testing

This is used to gather information about predicted behaviour in different circumstances and identify individual preferences and approaches. The use of such testing has increased in recent years. It can be a very useful supplementary method but should not be used on its own. Tests need to be administered and interpreted by trained, competent individuals. You should be sent full details in advance including an explanation of how the information will be used in the recruitment process, and how it will be stored afterwards.

Practical tests/tasks

These are designed to provide information that as accurately as possible reflects an individual's ability to complete real job related tasks. An in-tray exercise (prioritising normal day-to-day tasks), producing a letter or interpreting a budget are common such tasks. Depending on the role, you may also be tested on typing skills, typing speed, or familiarity with software such as MS Office.

Presentation

This is common for sales, training or leadership roles. You are usually sent a brief a week before the interview. Make sure you read the brief carefully and keep within the time frame. If you save your most important point till the end and run out of time you may never have a chance to say it. Usually interviewers are assessing both the content of the presentation as well as the presentation/communication skills.

Note: if you intend to use technology as part of your presentation, check what equipment and connectivity will be available on the day and that it is compatible with what you intend to use. Ensure that any equipment you bring with you works well and is quick and easy to set up.

Assessment Centres

These may contain a variety of activities from those listed above, usually in a group setting. If an overnight stay is required, remember that you are still 'on show' during the evening!

What to expect at interview

The most common method of selection is an interview in combination with a relevant task, test, or short presentation.

Typical Interview Format

- Introductions to the interviewers
- Outline of the process
- Presentation (if required)
- Series of questions from the panel
- Opportunity for interviewee to ask questions
- Goodbyes

Roughly 40 – 50 minutes

The task/test may take place either before or after the interview, but you will usually be informed of the structure in advance. If you are not, then you can contact the prospective employer before the interview and ask them what to expect.

You may also be offered a chance to talk with someone informally about the organisation or role, to look around the workplace, or attend an information giving session where you can ask general questions about the organisation. All of these opportunities are worth using and help you build up an informed understanding of the organisation and whether it is a place you would be happy working. Even better, you may have already requested to visit as part of your own pre-interview preparation!

Remember to be polite and professional to everyone you meet; you do not know whose opinions may be gathered for the final decision – or who you may end up working with!

Preparation

There are three aspects to preparation:

Content

- What are the questions I am likely to be asked and what would I like to say in response?
- What do I know about the role/organisation/sector and what are the key messages that I want to get across? *Tip: Get feedback from others about the key things they value, and their opinion of what your strengths are.*

Practicalities

- Do I know the location of the interview and how I will get there? What will I wear to create a good impression? *Tip: Treat it like a job or project – plan your day in the same way that you would any other work task. Dress appropriately to the role – a suit isn't always necessary, but looking smart and well-groomed is!*

Mindset

- Have I got myself in the right mindset and are my nerves under control?

Content – what do I know?

Have a look at your prospective job description and person specification. You will need to look at these carefully to recognise what the job entails and what is needed. Test yourself. Can you determine...

What are the key concerns of the business or the role? Who are their competitors/what do they need?	
What are the key areas/responsibilities of the job?	
What are the key skills needed?	
What are the key questions to expect from these?	
What are the key questions I could ask about the job or organisation?	

Tip: Use social media or the web to gain information on the business. Note down any recent positive achievements that you may be able to ask about at interview.

A number of questions will be common to all jobs, covering key skills and professional behaviours. Appendix one contains sample interview questions that will help you prepare.

Interviewers should aim to select and test all candidates against the key areas listed in the job description and person specification. This means that you can anticipate at least one question for each major theme in the person spec.

Look closely at the job description and person spec in order to identify the key criteria against which you're being measured – even if there is a really long list of criteria, there are usually around 4-6 major themes running through each role that you should be able to pick out. Make a note of them below for any current applications:

Identify at least one example for each of the major themes that shows what you did – pick an example that demonstrates your achievements and your general “can do” attitude. Make a note below:

In the same way as you did when applying for the role, match the skills and knowledge you have against the job requirements – be prepared to answer questions in a way that highlights the ‘matches’ and explains the ‘gaps’. Make some notes below:

Tip: Prepare and rehearse your examples, but don't learn them as a 'speech' – leave room for flexibility.

Content – types of interview and questions

You know that you'll be asked about the key skills and professional behaviours, but there are 3 main types of interview which affect the ways that the questions might be phrased:

1. **Competency-based.** This invites you to showcase how you've used or developed the skills that are being sought. An example question would be 'Tell us about a time when you've had to communicate well in order to get a job done'
2. **Behavioural.** Similar to competency-based, in that it's concerned with examples of how you've done things in the past, but is concerned with your behaviour rather than your skills. An example question would be 'Give me an example of a problem you've faced in a previous job, and how you solved it.'
3. **Situational.** This is much the same as the behavioural question, but is likely to be future-focused – asking you to imagine yourself in the situation or role. An example question would be 'You're responsible for an important project which is near completion, but receive another important project that must be completed immediately. How do you multi-task and prioritise?'

Mental preparation

Self talk

I always let myself down. I will make such a fool of myself.

Nerves

I feel breathless and sweaty. My hands start to shake.

Worst possible scenario thinking

I will forget everything I know and I will stutter so badly that no one will understand a thing I say.

What can I do about it?

Self talk

Nerves

Worst possible scenario thinking

Dealing with Nerves

Being nervous is a natural reaction to the stress of a job interview. It can produce some adrenaline and enable you to perform well. It is only a problem if it prevents you showing the interviewers your suitability and worth. Here are two techniques that can help with managing nerves:

- **Breathing techniques**

When nervous we often stop breathing properly. Our breaths become shallow and rapid. Try taking a few good deep breaths before you go into the interview. Once inside and you are sitting down just spend a few moments taking another deep breath. Before answering a question, make sure that again you take a deep breath. This will help ensure that your voice sounds strong and confident and gives you a few seconds to think about your answer.

- **Relaxation**

Think about how your body is showing your nervousness. Where are you feeling tension? Make an effort to relax those muscles by tightening them first and then letting them relax. Do this in the minutes before you go into the interview. Relaxation in combination with good deep breathing can help get your body under control and ensure that the interviewers do not become unduly aware of your nervousness. Remember to smile at the panel!

Dealing with negative self talk

Negative self talk relates to the things we say to ourselves. They sound like our internal critic. Frequently, they are things that we have said to ourselves for a long time and they are unhelpful and under-mining. It can take a while to identify them, but they need to be countered by positive self talk.

If my inner voice is saying *“I always let myself down at interviews”* this needs to be countered with something more positive and inevitably more realistic such as *“I have done well at interviews in the past. I successfully got other jobs”*.

Don't forget – by getting to the interview stage you have already proven yourself. No organisation would waste time interviewing people that weren't capable of doing the job! It's also worth remembering that all any interviewer wants is to find the right person to fill their vacancy – they want it to be you!

Worst possible scenario thinking

This is sometimes referred to as *“catastrophising”*, as in making a catastrophe out of something. Worst possible scenario thinking needs to be countered with best possible scenario thinking. So from *“I will forget everything I know and I will stutter so badly that no one will understand a thing I say”* to *“I have prepared well for this interview. I have notes with me in case I need them. I haven't stuttered since I was a teenager and it won't happen now.”*

Visualization is a technique that can help. It is a favourite technique of athletes and is equally valuable for other situations. Picture yourself succeeding in the interview, answering everything perfectly, having a laugh, being relaxed. These pictures will be remembered by the brain and increase the likelihood of being successful.

Handling the interview

Once you are in the interview you need to make it clear to the interviewers that you are capable of doing the job well and are in fact the best candidate for the job.

Practice and feedback are the best ways of improving interview technique. You can make opportunities to practice by asking colleagues or friends to help, or using a video camera or mirror.

What follows will be 'a conversation with a purpose', and that purpose is to find out whether you're suitable for the job and if that job is right for you. Here are some general pointers:

Create a good first impression by:

- Making sure you look clean, smart and crease-free
- Smiling, making eye contact and having good posture
- Using a clear and confident voice

Be a good listener. Let your interviewer know that you're listening attentively by nodding; using facial expressions that make you look interested, leaning towards the interviewer, picking up on key words they've used and asking them to expand on subjects that genuinely interest you. But never interrupt your interviewer.

Answer the question. This might seem like stating the obvious but it is a common downfall. Try to be concise but explanatory and use examples which are relevant to the specific question you have just been asked. Listen carefully to the wording of the question. It's easy to be misled by hearing a 'keyword' or 'trigger' that sets you off in the wrong direction. For example, not all questions that mention the words 'customer service' require you to talk about your experience or definition of customer service. If you aren't sure what the question is asking then ask them for clarification or to repeat it.

Be honest. If you don't understand a question, ask for an explanation. If you're faced with something you really can't deal with, be truthful about it - it's more impressive than pretending to have the answer to everything. Use get-out phrases like 'that's something I'd need time to think about' or 'that's outside my present experience' to give yourself a bit of a breather.

Be consistent. Many interviewers ask the same things in different ways as a means of checking you out. Listen to yourself as well as to them. If you feel you've made a mistake, put things right by saying, 'going back to what I said earlier about...what I really meant was...'

Know your stuff. Knowledge of the role, organisation and sector is vital and comes across in all sorts of ways, as does the lack of this knowledge! Research and prepare in advance as thoroughly as you can.

Avoid the temptation to talk too much. If there are awkward silences when you've finished saying what you want, don't fill them with nervous chatter. Some interviewers use silence to see how you'll react. Pass the lead back to them by pleasantly saying: 'Does that answer your question?' Also, stick to providing the answer requested and know when to stop! Don't inundate the interviewer with information they don't need.

Be aware of your body language. Stillness is reassuring and fidgeting is a distraction. Looking your interviewer in the eye is essential, but don't overdo it - take your cues from the interviewer. A smile sets everyone at ease, but a constant grin is unnerving. Try to sit up straight. Leaning forward makes you appear attentive and enthusiastic - being slumped conveys boredom. If you are inclined to fidget with your hands, keep them in your lap so they don't betray your nerves!

Be positive. Even if your last job wasn't enjoyable, if asked for your reasons for leaving, don't let a negative word pass your lips. Never say anything unfavourable about your colleagues, boss or job - it'll just make you look bad. Instead, find something positive to say such as: 'I genuinely enjoyed my last job, but I'm eager to move onto a different challenge and use the skills I've gained'. Then, impress them even more by stating how those skills match the job you're after.

Don't miss a trick. If you're not asked about something that you feel is important, raise the subject yourself. This is your one chance to sell yourself, so don't waste the opportunity. Remember the key messages which you want to get across; be memorable!

We asked a group of interviewers about their experience of interviewing and collected their responses into appendix two – ***What the interviewers have said...***

Interview Questions

Once the introductions and welcomes are completed the interview questions will begin. This usually consists of:

- Warm up/general question(s)
- Series of questions or tests relating to competence or behaviour and the job role, focusing on the person specification criteria
- Opportunity for the interviewee to ask questions

Warm up/general question(s)

There may be one or two questions at the start that encourage the interviewee to relax and provide some general information. It might include questions such as:

- What attracts you to this job? *Tip: Make sure you show enthusiasm and knowledge, even at this stage – know why you want the job!*
- Give us a summary of your experience to date – especially noting those aspects relevant to this post.

Series of questions or tests relating to competence, behaviours and the job role

If you have prepared well for this interview, you will have thought about the questions that the interviewers are likely to ask and will have some key points and a good examples at your fingertips. This is the material you know - now is the time to use it.

Here are some points to remember:

- Listen carefully to the question.
- If you don't understand the question – ask them to repeat it or re phrase it.
- Give yourself time to think before starting to answer – you can always ask the interviewer for a few moments to think.
- If you are not sure you have answered their question – there is no harm in checking with them.
- Interviewers may be nervous too, or have badly worded questions, so it may not be your fault the question is not that clear.

Opportunity for the interviewee to ask questions

This is your opportunity to ask questions about the post/organisation. Use this as another opportunity to create a positive impression so:

- Make sure your questions are genuine and you really want to know
- Only ask a maximum of 2 or 3 – be aware of the time pressures that the interviewers will be under
- Don't ask questions that imply you haven't read the information you have been sent or done any research about the organisation
- Role-specific questions are usually good, as they show that you are attracted to that particular job rather than just wanting to work for that organisation
- Don't ask questions about salary and pay – this is appropriate after you are offered the post, not before. The sorts of questions it might be appropriate to ask include:
 - Can you describe a typical day?
 - What development opportunities/training do you offer?
 - What kind of opportunities are there for growth in this company?
 - What's happened to people who did this job before?
 - What are the best things about working here?
 - What are the challenges facing the organisation?

Finally, round off with:

- When can I expect to hear your decision?

Opportunities to develop

All interviews – whether you are offered the job or not – provide great opportunities to learn about and improve your interview skills and to see inside other organisations.

On the way home think objectively about the interview and consider what you would like to do differently or better next time:

- 1 Did you feel as well prepared as you could be?
- 2 What went well? Were there any answers that you were particularly pleased with?
- 3 In what areas could you improve?

It may be worth writing this down, as your recollections later may be less reliable (in retrospect, there may be a tendency to concentrate too much on a particular positive or negative aspect of the interview rather than the interview as a whole). You may even wish to keep an interview log – recording the information on each interview you attend. This can help you see the areas you still need to work on, and the areas where you've made progress.

After The Interview

If you are offered the job, consider the following before deciding:

- Are they someone you want to work for?
- Does the job live up to your expectations?
- Will it move your career in the direction you want?
- Does the package on offer meet your criteria, or are there areas for negotiation?

If you decide not to take it, let the employer know as soon as possible.

If you don't get the job make sure that you ask the employer for feedback. Note it down and together with your own post-interview reflections, use it to improve and strengthen your performance at the next interview.

It is a good idea to keep a record of the feedback you receive from practising, and log what action you can take to improve.

Learning from practice

Feedback from practice

Actions I will take to improve

Appendix 1 – Sample interview questions

Opening questions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Can you tell me more about your previous role in... ○ Can you talk me through your CV/experience? ○ What do you understand to be the most important areas in this new role? ○ What do you think are the challenges that you may face in this role? ○ Why are you interested in this role?
About you	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ What are your reasons for wishing to leave your current role? ○ Where do you see yourself progressing/what are your career plans/how does this role fit with your career plans? ○ Where do you see yourself in 5 years' time? ○ What qualities do you bring to this role? ○ What skills have you learned in your current or previous roles that could apply or be useful to this new role? ○ Can you give me an example of where you have shown initiative? ○ What are your strengths/weaknesses? ○ What are the main lessons you've learnt in your career so far? How have you applied what you've learnt? ○ How would the 'Equalities and Diversity' policy influence the way you work?
Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ In your opinion, what makes a good manager? ○ How can you demonstrate that you interact and communicate effectively with staff at all levels? ○ What is the key to effective delegation? ○ What experience do you have of working with or managing budgets? ○ Have you had to deal with a difficult situation recently and can you tell me how you managed this? ○ Can you give me an example where you have provided a report or statistical information for wider use? ○ How would you ensure the effective coordination of staff development, providing effective guidelines and support for staff? ○ What experience do you have of setting staff performance objectives and ensuring the demands of workload and operational priorities are met by your team? ○ Can you describe a situation where you have had to excite and engage people? (or motivate) ○ How would you describe yourself as a leader? ○ 'Supporting the development of a strategy, being innovative and having vision are things that are mentioned in the job description. How might you demonstrate these? ○ What do you understand 'change management' to mean and where might these skills be used in this job? ○ Can you describe a situation where you have had to influence and persuade? Use diplomacy? ○ How would you go about resolving the following problem (interviewer gives example related to role – what would you do, how would you solve?)?

Customer service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ What factors make for good customer service? Any examples of where you have provided it? ○ How do you ensure that customer service levels are maintained – personally and within the team? ○ How would you deal with a complaint? ○ Who do you think are the ‘customers’ in this role? ○ Can you tell me more about your experience in supporting and training end users? ○ What would you do if you found you were not able to advise someone on their particular query? ○ Can you tell me a little bit about your previous work in a customer – focussed environment? ○ How would you go about resolving the following problem (interviewer gives example related to role – what would you do, how would you solve?)?
Teamwork/flexibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ How can you demonstrate that you have a flexible approach to your work and a willingness to adapt to change? ○ What sort of team player are you? What makes a good team? ○ Have you had to deal with a difficult situation recently and can you tell me how you managed this? ○ How can you demonstrate that you interact and communicate effectively with staff at all levels? ○ Can you tell me more about your experience in supporting and training colleagues? ○ What do you understand ‘change management’ to mean and where might these skills be used in this job? ○ Can you describe a situation where you have had to influence and persuade? Use diplomacy? ○ As you leave your current job, what do you think people will miss about you? What would they say you brought to the team?
Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Can you describe a situation where you have had to influence and persuade? Use diplomacy? ○ How would you define good communication? ○ This job involves some presentation work. What experience have you had making presentations? ○ How can you demonstrate that you interact and communicate effectively with staff at all levels?
Organisational skills/processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ How do you manage your workload and prioritise your work? Can you give an example? ○ How do you deal with pressure? ○ Give an example where you’ve had to work to tight deadlines. What issues were there? How did you cope? ○ Can you give an example of where you have set up a new procedure? How did you devise and implement it? ○ What is your experience of project management? Is there a particular project that springs to mind where you have added value? ○ What are the benefits of having good processes? How do you devise and ensure that you have them?

Administration/ICT skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ What work have you completed recently that demonstrates good attention to detail and an ability to meet deadlines? ○ Talk me through the IT software that you've used and your level of expertise ○ Can you tell me about your previous experience with handling and analysing data and ensuring that records are kept up-to-date and accurate? ○ How do you manage a high volume of diverse tasks (multi-tasking)? ○ How would you go about resolving the following problem (interviewer gives example related to role – what would you do, how would you solve?)?
General finance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Can you tell me a little bit about your previous work in the area of finance and in particular your knowledge of handling financial payments? ○ How would you ensure that all income and expenditure is being reported accurately? ○ Can you tell me about your previous experience with handling and analysing data and ensuring that records are kept up-to-date and accurate? ○ What experience do you have of working with or managing budgets?

Appendix 2 – What Imperial interviewers have said....

What do you look for in an interviewee?

- Evidence of interest in the job - made an effort to find out who we are and what we do, meet the job requirements, good communication skills.
- Ability to give specific examples from a variety of roles to demonstrate their ability
- Depends on the job, but always impressed by confidence, willingness to ask for clarification, good eye contact, ability to use examples without having to struggle too hard to think of them. Calm demeanour – neither static and wooden nor excessively flamboyant, but relaxed and attentive.
- Punctuality, well presented (not necessarily suited, but smart and clean!) and look like they want to be there.

Key learning points: good communication and interest in the role.

What makes a good first impression on you?

- Punctuality, clean/smart appearance, good eye contact.
- Good eye contact.
- Clear greeting and a smile goes a long way.

Key learning points: punctuality, appearance and demeanour.

Do first impressions always count, can they be reversed?

- They can be reversed either positively or negatively
- Yes they count, but nervousness in and of itself doesn't count against them for me – it is normal. Unless they are so nervous they are unable to answer questions at all, which makes it difficult to get a good idea of how they work
- I was always taught that you should always spend all but the first three minutes trying to disprove the opinion you arrived at in the first three. So first impressions can count, but only if the interviewer is poorly trained – not something over which one has any control.
- My philosophy is to use first impressions as follows: prove positive ones and disprove negative ones.

Key learning points: yes they count, but can be reversed.

Do you/can you make any concessions for people who have extreme cases of bad nerves?

- This can in practice be difficult to do, since extreme nerves can adversely affect performance to such a degree that you could not fairly appoint the candidate.
- Yes, try to help and put them at their ease, say that we can come back to a question, etc. My idea in interviewing is not to pull them apart, but to give them a chance to show what they can do.
- I think some allowance can be made, but one has to consider the job. If recruiting for a trainer who has to be able to work with a regularly changing clientele I'd be more worried than if recruiting someone to work in a small and stable team.
- Generally I try to be extra encouraging.

Key learning points: depends on the job, but interviewers will be understanding of nerves.

How much research on your organisation, department or role do you expect people to have done?

- Widespread internet use makes obtaining information easy - there is no excuse for not having done any research. I was very impressed with a recent candidate who had tested the student application process by applying for a course. However, I think the level of research should be consistent with the job - I would expect someone going for a senior role to find out more than someone going for a very junior one.
- Yes, I expect people to have looked into background, but don't have to be an expert.
- I expect them to understand the core business/profession e.g. size of organisation, current news, recent trends and whatever knowledge about the particular department that could be easily gleaned from the website.
- I'd at least expect them to have read anything we'd sent them (JD, etc) and also to remember what they've put on their application.

Key learning points: depends on the job, at the very least an effort to understand the role concerned is needed.

Does it count against candidates if they haven't done any research prior to the interview?

- Yes - doing research shows interest and enthusiasm, that they are well prepared, etc.
- I would worry if they know nothing that they have not thought through the position, but I do not go out of my way to test them. Usually a good interview starts with a short brief about the place, the team and the job.
- It's a bonus if they've done research, but I am wary of people who quote facts or 'catchphrases' that they've learnt parrot fashion, just to indicate that they've looked on the web. In that instance, I'm actually more likely to be impressed by someone who admits not having done extra research but then asks an intelligent question.

Key learning points: it shows lack of interest if you haven't, so on balance – yes.

If you offer the opportunity to ask questions, does it count against them if they don't have any?

- No, a lot of detail can be obtained via the web or may have already been covered in the interview - this may cut down the need to ask questions.
- Personally, it leaves me with a good impression if questions are asked - again, shows interest.
- In most cases, yes lightly.
- Not necessarily.

Key learning points: not necessarily, but a relevant question can give a very good impression.

What do you consider to be good and bad questions to ask?

- Good - interest in the job or making a career with us e.g. progression/promotion opportunities. Bad - money and holidays.
- Not impressed by questions which are asked for the sake of it, or which we have already covered, or which go on endlessly!
- Good = asking clarification about the nature of the job based on information imparted during the interview and clarifying next steps if these have not already been made clear. Bad = Making yourself look greedy or ill-informed.
- Good questions will usually be quite specific to the role, as it shows a grasp of what the role involves. I have also had people ask me how long I've been with the company/why do I stay - bit of a risky one, but it turns the tables!

Key learning points:

Good = showing an interest or understand of the role or company.

Bad = things that have been covered already or that seem "greedy".

Any things that interviewees have said or done that have "turned" around your opinion, for better or worse?

- Bad - speaking too much or too little and not answering the question. Good - giving relevant examples of experience, showing that they are articulate and able to express themselves clearly.
- For me there isn't a formula, just good examples of things they have done in previous jobs.
- I once interviewed someone who I didn't feel would be able to work in the environment I was recruiting for. At some point something was said against the royal family and he defended them with a real passion. This convinced me that he would be able to hold his own.
- Sloppiness and derogatory comments about their own interview at the end, or apologizing and giving excuses during it.
- Bad - someone who was doing ok answered a question about dealing with conflict by telling me how she regularly told her manager to F off. Language and aggression of that sort are instant 'no's.
- Good - someone doing poorly who didn't look outwardly nervous, stopped halfway through and said 'look, I'm really sorry but my nerves are getting the better of me and I'm aware I'm not doing very well'. From that point on, she lightened up, interviewed better and got the job!

Key learning points: communication skills are key.

Any other advice/good practice you want to pass on?

- Always be yourself, many people do not have every single skill/experience required by the job. It is ok to admit that you don't have everything as long as you demonstrate that you are keen, willing to learn and be flexible.
- Be honest! Be yourself - do not pretend to be what you think they are looking for. If you do and you get the job you'll have to keep on pretending for ever.
- Be positive, be authentic and listen! Also helps to know why you're going for the job in the first place.
- The more preparation you do, the more in control you'll feel, the more relaxed you're likely to be and, therefore, the better you will interview. Also, interviewers aren't perfect, so shouldn't be feared - an interview is also for you to decide whether you like them/the role.

Key considerations: be yourself, be honest and be prepared!