

Part 6 - Researching the Company

Application or candidate packs

As mentioned above, when you get an application form, it will often be part of an application pack or candidate pack produced by the organisation. These packs can sometimes be very scrappy and hastily put together, but many of them are very well-presented and give you incredibly useful information about:

- What exactly the employer is looking for
- Whether the employer's requirements are essential or desirable
- Special skills and abilities required by the employer
- Information on working conditions at the workplace
- Information about the organisations
- Organisation charts setting out company/departmental structures
- Background to the department and/or the job
- Details of salary and benefits, etc
- The recruitment process, and timescales relating to the process

These packs can be the single most useful thing you have available to you for interview preparation, so keep them safe and read them carefully before the interview.

They can help you understand how to present yourself in the best possible light and give your ideas for questions to raise and points to clarify with the interviewer. Most importantly, they can give you a real feel for the job and the company they describe, which can be very useful in helping you decide whether or not the job is really for you.

If the company doesn't send you a pack, be proactive – call them and ask them for one.

If you are invited to an interview, ask them to send you any information on the company they any have. Often companies send out a letter confirming an interview, and /or directions, so when they do, ask them to send you their company literature. If you don't ask, you don't get!

It is absolutely crucial you understand the culture and environment of the company by whom you will be interviewed, so that you can make the right decision as to whether you would be happy working for them. Research the organisation's history, its current market situation, clients, competitors etc. Websites can give you a wealth of information about companies.