

Tips for Interviewing

The IAEA conducts the majority of its interviews via videoconference. This is normally the only chance for a candidate to make a lasting impression. The interview panel usually consists of two levels of supervisors for the vacant post and a representative of human resources. Additional colleagues who will work closely with the incumbent may also take part. The following are suggestions to keep in mind for the interview.

1) KNOW THE VACANCY

Review the vacancy notice and ensure that you understand all of the requirements. If you are unfamiliar with organizations with which the position requires partnership, or if you are unfamiliar with any IAEA standards, look them up.

If you do not have the vacancy notice, contact IAEAStaffing@anl.gov for a copy.

2) DO YOUR RESEARCH

Learn as much as possible about the IAEA, both as an organization and in the global climate. Also know about the hiring department and section, its mission statement, activities and current projects. The Agency's website is the best source for this information.

Expect some questions regarding your knowledge in this area and your ability to execute the mission.

3) PREPARE EXAMPLES

The IAEA focuses on candidates providing examples in the interview from their careers, and applying those to what they would be doing at the IAEA. Emphasize skills that were gained and not so much just experience.

Sample: Tell me about the most difficult technical problem you've ever faced. How did you handle it? And in retrospect, would you handle it the same way now?

Sample: Have you ever dealt with difficult people? What happened and how did you handle the situation?

4) TECHNICAL QUESTIONS

Give details about your knowledge of the specific topic, as well as any related knowledge or background which may help you in performing the tasks of the post. Remain succinct while addressing any details that you may not have expressed in your application. Do not give a lecture.

If you do not know the answer to a technical question, the best strategy is to address your broad familiarity with the general topic, acknowledge that you have not had experience with the details of the subject, and then go on to link knowledge or skills that you do possess to how they will help you in gaining the necessary expertise.

5) MANAGERIAL QUESTIONS

Be prepared to address your prior management experience, and have an example or two ready of a time when you solved a problem as a supervisor. If you have limited managerial experience, draw also from team projects where you played a leadership or coordinating role on the team.

Sample: Have you ever fired anyone?

Sample: How do you motivate people? And how do you stay motivated?

6) BEFORE THE INTERVIEW

Practice at home with a video recorder so you can see if you have any off-putting habits such as touching your hair or putting your hand over your mouth. Think about the best position to sit in that looks professional and friendly but is still comfortable for you.

Dress conservatively in solid colors, keeping jewelry to a minimum, as you would if you were going to a face to face interview. Various shades of blue work well on camera.

Make sure you know who is initiating the call and, if you are dialing out, what number to use. Arrive ahead of time to test the equipment and get comfortable with the controls. Set up the room the way you like it, and adjust how the camera focuses on you. You have the option to see or hide yourself with picture-in-picture (PIP) on the screen.

Take a notepad and pen with you, and take notes if you feel it is appropriate but don't become distracted. Have a copy of

your resume and the job description to refer to but don't read from them.

7) DURING THE INTERVIEW

Talk to and look at the camera, not the screen, when addressing the interviewers to give the impression of eye contact. Sit up straight, look alert and interested. Smile! At the end of the interview, resist the urge to wave goodbye.

Minimize noise as rustling paper or squeaking chairs are amplified on video. If you would ordinarily bring a list to remind you of important points, set it on the table in front of you and glance at it from there.

Avoid reading into non-verbal reactions. These are much more difficult to interpret over the video connection, so try not to be distracted by attempting to analyze an interviewer's behavior. Concentrate on your message.

Also, do not over-analyze the tone or phrasing of a question, especially if it may cause you to take offense or become confused, as the video connection makes personal interaction more complicated. In addition, some of your interviewers may not be native English speakers, so cultural differences may be a factor.

8) EXPECT TO BE TESTED

Remote testing has been implemented for all positions. After the interview, an appointment will be set up and a test will be sent via email. You will be given a set amount of time (ex. one hour) to send the completed test back. Tests may include questions on problem solving, analytical thinking or project management. For certain jobs, you may be tested on specific required skills, usually essay type questions.

Director-level and section head posts may now also be subject to a personality questionnaire and psychological interview.