

# May the force be with you to ace that interview!

Well, it's that time of year again – a day revered by Star Wars fanatics and pun enthusiasts alike – May 4th, otherwise known as Star Wars Day. Get it? 'May the 4th be with you.' For those unfamiliar with the franchise, the Force is the energy field created by all living things: the Jedi utilises the 'light side' of the Force, while the Sith uses the 'dark side.' (Why did the Jedi cross the road? To get to the Dark Side. Okay, sorry, we'll stop.)

All jokes aside, the Force is a handy metaphor for thinking about how to approach your next job interview. Young Jedi's have to study and train so that they can learn how to harness the Force effectively. They're taught that there's no substitute for hard-work and that, despite their obvious talents, they can't assume they'll automatically have success. Similarly, with job interviews – there's no replacement for careful preparation, dedication and an awareness that nothing should be taken for granted.

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Interviews can be nerve-racking, but there are some things you can do to get yourself in a better headspace – to harness your inner Force, so to speak.

- **Mindfulness.** For the Jedi, training is primarily mental – it's about maintaining control in stressful situations and performing at the optimal level, even when under immense pressure. So, with that in mind, how can you channel your inner Jedi when preparing for your next interview?

Kristine Tuazon, Principal Consultant at Good People HR, suggests several tactics to help get you into the right frame of mind. The interview process can narrow job seekers focus, she says. It's important, therefore, not to lose sight of the values that will shine through in your interview and, hopefully, give you the edge on your competitors. Appreciation and gratitude are chief among them, Tuazon believes. "Before your sleep, thank yourself for getting this far into the process, thank the company for the opportunity and thank the interviewer in advance in your head for their time and the chance to present yourself and your skills," she says.

- **Visualisation.** Tuazon also suggests going through some visualisation activities before the interview. "Visualise yourself in the role, doing well – contributing, making a difference, getting the business to the next level," she says. "Also, visualise the interview going well – you and the interviewer getting along, understanding each other, laughing

and, overall, a positive vibe.” These types of techniques can help you prepare and remain focused in the interview.

- **Mastering the fundamentals.** It’s vital, however, to remember that all Jedi training is built on solid foundations – an absolute grasp of the fundamentals, in other words. There’s no substitute for a healthy body and a healthy mind – tenets that are good for everyday living will hold you in good stead when it comes time to perform well in your interview. It’s important, therefore, that you eat well and sleep well before an interview. You might also want to think about doing some exercise to get your blood pumping beforehand or practising some meditation to get you in the right frame of mind.

Simon Benedict, Human Resources Director at Epworth Richmond, emphasises the importance of mastering the fundamentals of the interview process if you’re to give yourself the best chance: “Never forget the basics: prepare and find everything you can about the organisation you are seeking employment with and understand how the role fits into the structure.”

“Make sure you understand what the requirements of the role are and be clear about how your skills and past experience will contribute to the success of the role,” he says.

“Remember that the interview is a two-way process and prepare questions that will help you decide whether this is the job and organisation for you. Be clear about what your key achievements and skills are and be ready to pitch them in the interview even if not asked about them directly.’

Like any good Jedi knows, ultimately success rests within you. You are the only one that can control your destiny – no one else can determine your path for you. With meticulous preparation and commitment, there’s no reason why you can’t ace your next interview. May the Force be with you.