

8 tips for second round interviews

Congratulations! You've made it through to the second round. According to Amanda Buxton, Director at Buxton Pratt Consulting, second-round interviews are usually only offered to two or three candidates, so being invited to a second interview is definitely good news.

"But the competition is much tighter by the time you get to the second round, so you have to be on top of your game," she says.

Here are her best pointers to help you nail your second interview.

1. **Prepare for in-depth questions**

If you have made it to the second-round, you have demonstrated you are capable of performing the role. The interviewer now wants to drill down on your personality and problem-solving skills so they can decide if you are the right fit for the company and the team you will be working in.

"Questions will often be more pointed in relation to the actual position, so it's a good idea to have a backlog of recent examples of work you have completed. Be ready to explain in detail the results you achieved and how you went about achieving them," Buxton says.

"It's also worth reflecting on the questions that were asked in the first interview. Often questions you answered well will be asked again, or if there were questions you struggled with, this is your chance to answer them with more confidence."

2. **Be ready to meet new people**

Companies have different reasons for offering second interviews – sometimes it's to determine who amongst a select group of candidates is the best fit for the role; sometimes the hiring manager is required to invite a senior manager/s as part of the approval process; other times it's to see how well a candidate will work with other team members.

Whatever the circumstances, you should treat the second interview as another opportunity to demonstrate why you are the best person for the job.

"Remember it is just as important at the second interview as it is at the first to dress professionally," Buxton says.

"It's also useful to do some research on the people who will be interviewing you. Try to find out a little bit about their skills and backgrounds. If there's something you have in

common, this can be a great way to break the ice,” Buxton says.

3. **Research the company**

Buxton says it’s particularly important at the second stage to demonstrate your knowledge of the company. Learn as much as you can by reading the company’s website and social pages.

Also research the position itself, including reporting relationships, external relationships and the future direction of the department you will be working in.

If you’re unsure about anything, the second interview is a good opportunity to find out.

4. **Have a list of questions ready**

The second interview is a great opportunity to find out more about what it will be like working at the company.

“You want to ask as many questions as you need to determine if the company and team is right for you. Remember, at the second interview, you are interviewing the company, as much as they are interviewing you,” Buxton says.

5. **Consider your salary expectations**

It’s always a good idea to be prepared to discuss your salary expectations at the second interview, but wait for the hiring manager to raise the topic first, Buxton says.

Research pay scales of similar roles and be confident and clear about your salary expectations, including base salary, super, and other perks, such as working remotely, flexible working hours and opportunities for professional development. Setting a time-frame for when your salary will be reviewed is also a good idea.

6. **Have a plan**

One of the best ways to set yourself apart from your competition at the second interview is to provide your prospective employer with a plan for your first three months in the job. Keep it simple and address how you will get up to speed quickly in areas where you might not have experience.

7. **Discuss next steps**

At the end of the second interview, the interviewer will usually tell you what the next steps are and when you will hear back from them. If not, don’t be afraid to ask.

Another possibility is that you might be offered the position on the spot.

“If they do make an offer, there is no harm in asking if you can have a day or two to think about it,” Buxton says. “Just make sure you are clear about when they will hear back from you with a decision and make sure you follow through.”

8. **Follow up**

After the interview, always send an email to thank your interviewer/s for their time and for the opportunity.

“Keep the email short and professional, and reiterate when you expect to hear back from them with a decision, or when they can expect to hear back from you.”

Good luck!

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