

Preparation for pharmaceutical sales is required to get the job!

Pharmaceutical Sales Prep

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TYPES OF INTERVIEWS

So many people have told me *“I don’t have a problem getting an interview and they seem to go well, but for some reason I don’t get called back for the final interview”*. Perhaps we need to focus on the employer’s need to know instead of our need to tell. For example, the person you will be interviewing with has a job to do—to eliminate you. He/she has an agenda which has been set up prior to your interview. He/she is looking for very specific criteria in a successful candidate pool. He/she is looking for a specific personality type, a particular attitude. Each interviewer has a their unique style of interviewing. You need to prepare yourself for any type of interview. Here are some examples:

Simple fact-finding interview where the interviewer has a list of questions they ask and they fill in a form as you are speaking which fulfills their individual need to know for that step of the process.

Negative interviewers love to ask probing questions which would pull out any and all tendencies to be a negative person. For example: “Tell me about a time when your employer asked you to do something which was against your grain and how you handled it?” or “What did you hate or dislike the most about your past employers?” These questions are meant to pull out your negative traits. When you answer these questions, be careful because your interviewer will continue to ask questions about your answer probing more and more until he receives what he is looking for—a view of your way of handling situations in a positive way without pouting, shouting or falling apart. If asked a question about disagreeing with a manager always go the route, he is in a management position because he has more experience than me. I hope when I am promoted to manager my employees will treat me with as much respect as I have treated him/her by silently adhering to his/her way of doing things (as long as they are not dishonest, etc.)

If you have found yourself in a situation which was dishonest or less than honorable, I would not site that situation as an example because it will be held against you as you made the decision to become part of that organization in the first place. At that point they would get into how much you did to find out about the organization before you accepted the position.

Participation interviews are interviews where you are told ahead of time that you will be actively responsible for a demonstration of your abilities during the meeting. Some companies give you a typewritten scenario and ten minutes to study it and ask you to role play the scenario for them utilizing them as the potential client.

Personality screening interviews take place when your interviewer is most interested in seeking specific personality traits which he/she has seen most productive in employees in the past. Most companies seek individuals with a positive attitude. Making any negative comments in regard to anything in an interview situation is less than intelligent. If you will be working day in and day out in an office, your personality and your ability to get along with their other employees is paramount. **BE SURE TO REMEMBER THIS WHEN SPEAKING WITH THE RECEPTIONIST OR SECRETARY WHEN ARRIVING FOR YOUR INTERVIEW.** I have seen many many candidates lose positions because of the way they spoke to, treated or did not speak with respect to people who would be their subordinates.

Easy interviews are deceiving. Professionals who appear to be giving easy interviews have that agenda and are gifted at making you relax so you speak too much or tell more about yourself or your past than you had originally ever thought you would. Be very careful and remember the two ears and one mouth theory. You should listen twice as much as you speak in an interview. Answer questions honestly and openly but be very careful not to ramble or chase your tail.

Elimination interviews are hit and run types of interviews where the interviewer asks questions and dismisses you based upon your answer to a particular question. This would only happen when your interview is with someone from Human Resources. If you are interviewing with your perspective supervisor, this situation very rarely occurs unless you have answered exactly like the last person who was let go from the company. Regardless of how hard we try, we cannot control circumstances such as these where we may remind someone of someone else. In 50% of the cases we could be looked upon favorably because they liked that person and in 50% of the cases we would not be looked upon favorably.

Procrastination interviews are interviews where you are left waiting while your interviewer takes care of “something important”. Be careful once again in this situation. If you are kept waiting it may be their way of seeing how you react to certain stimuli. This would show them how much patience you would have when dealing with their customers. It may also show them how easily you roll with the punches and how positively you react to them when you’re finally admitted for the interview. Remember attitude is everything. Never lose your cool. Be honest, polished and professional with integrity which is always evident.

Behavioral interviews are normally based upon your past behaviors or achievements and accomplishments coupled with your skills and areas of expertise derived from your past employment. These interviews are strictly show me don’t tell me interviews. Without documentation and proof of success, this type of interview will certainly be a disappointment for all involved. Do your homework. Never go to an interview unprepared. Take along your Professional Portfolio. A brag book is not enough today.

Brute interviews are normally done by individuals who want to separate the good from the bad by intimidation. If you find yourself in a situation where the interviewer spends the entire interview telling you why you can't make it in this position or concentrating on why others have failed, it's by design. Your interviewer wants to know if you have what it takes to stick with the project. He/she may exaggerate the situation and tell you, you will be expected to work 90 hours per week, or I've even heard of employers telling candidates "If we have three consecutive bad months, we could go under". These interviews are meant to scare away those who are not up to the task. These are my least favorite interview types but as a recruiter, I don't get to dictate how the employer interviews. I only get to prepare candidates to be able to handle themselves in any interview situation.

What do they all look for? They all look for polished professionals with integrity and honesty who have a strong work ethic, who are loyal and dedicated to the task at hand. They are seeking employees willing to go the extra mile to accomplish corporate goals. They are looking for someone who will make them look good, someone who will make them money. Self confidence is paramount. The ability to travel could be a determining factor in positions such as specialty representatives. Location could also be very important as travel is not always looked upon favorably especially when accepting an entry level sales position calling on primary care physicians. Being a team player should always be a characteristic you bring out about yourself. Self-starters and those people who pay close attention to detail are also looked upon with much favor. Remember saying these things about yourself is not as critical as actually being this person.

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