

Tim Crowden Interview: The Job Interview (Part Two)

In Part One of this interview, Tim explained the best way to approach and prepare for that winning job interview. In Part Two, we asked Tim about how to arrive and how to successfully leave the room or end the call.

We recall from *The Job Interview (Part One)* that hiring discussions or interviews provide the opportunity to show.

- **Your values, passion, skills, experience, and talent, and**
- **Why you are the perfect fit for the role, the team, and the organisation.**

Tim proposes that there are **three parts to any job interview or conversation**.

- The beginning (how to arrive)
- The middle (the content; answering the employer's or selection panel's questions)
- The end (how to successfully leave the room or end the call)

Tim spoke about the middle during Part One, now he continues to explain how to successfully leave an interview.

'Leaving the interview is not just about pushing in the chair or ending the call. Employers want to see your potential as a leader, whether as a manager, a team leader, or a team member. **This part of the interview is where you can stand out from other applicants.**

Even when the 'formal' part of the interview ends, the employer will usually ask if there is anything you want to ask or anything else you want to say.

Tim says 'this always provides the opportunity to review and add to your answers or ask an insightful question about the position. Job interviews are not just about **your potential employer deciding about whether you fit into their team**, but also for you to consider the same thing – 'is this a role that I want to do and an organisation I want to join?'

Professional team and leader coach, Kylie Holyland says that so many of her clients focus on whether they are good enough for the role and rarely ask the question "Is the role good enough for me?". A good interview is a conversation where you can address what 'problem that they solve' by hiring you, and you can also ask how the role might use your strengths, create opportunities, and position you for career steps beyond.

The end of the interview, is an opportunity to answer or review a question that you didn't quite nail. This is the opportunity to improve your answer.

Tim suggests that this can be as simple as asking 'I don't think I provided a complete answer to one of the questions. Could you please ask the question again so that I can add to my answer?'

This question shows the employer some important things:

- You review your work.
- You want to give your best effort when you are given the opportunity.

- You are not afraid to speak up when things aren't quite right.

Hearing the question for a second time at the end of the interview can give additional clarity as you have heard and answered all the other questions, which usually means you have a better understanding of the panel, the interview thread, the position, and the organisation. Your answer will have more meaning, relevance, and context.

The employer or the chair of the selection panel will also usually ask 'Do you have any questions for the panel?'

Take this opportunity to ask an insightful or thoughtful question – not ask 'when will I hear from you'? Tim suggests a couple of examples to get you thinking.

- In this role, what are the priorities in the first three to six months for the successful applicant?
- What skills, experiences or talents does the successful applicant need to have to be effective in this role?

While there are many ways to ask this question, it will generate a spark in the employee or the selection panel member who has the line-management responsibilities for the vacancy.

Tim advises 'It is very important to listen carefully to the answer that it given'.

When the interviewer has finished, your response could be along the lines of 'Thank you. That makes me more interested in the role as it suits my strengths (briefly explain why) and my skills and experience (and maybe provide a quick example depending on time)'.

Asking and answering this question can be like answering a bonus question. But importantly, you are helping the employer visualise you in their role and their team'.

Jordan, one of Tim's clients, was surprised when she asked about the priorities of the work area. 'The manager and I had a friendly conversation that seemed to take up more time than the actual interview. We just clicked. I ended up with a job offer later that week'.

Commencing the interview starts well before you enter the room or connect to the call.

Tim explains 'this is about setting yourself up for success by being clear, calm, and confident as you enter the room or join the call'.

A couple of hours before the interview, remove yourself from all distractions and interruptions. Close your email, close your browser, and silence the phone.

'Go for a walk, do some light exercise, or go and get a haircut. Clear your mind and centre yourself so that you are ready to listen and focus'.

This is obvious, but you should allow yourself plenty of time to get to the location of the interview. You never know what might happen – your bus could be late, you could get stuck in traffic, or your senior manager could call you just before the interview and engage you in a lengthy conversation. It doesn't matter if you end up arriving early; use the extra time to read through your notes in your car or a nearby coffee shop.

And if you are prone to nerves, take a trip the day before – find the building, the nearest car park, the bus-stop, and the coffee shop. Go into the foyer and look around.

In the 10-15 minutes before the interview, there are two things Tim encourages.

- Breathe!
- Adopt a power pose.

If it's all getting a bit too much, remind yourself to take a second and just breathe. Control your breathing by inhaling deeply through your nose and out through your mouth. This will relax your brain, clear your head, and slow down your pulse rate.

When you adopt a power pose¹, you adopt body language (and postures) that are open, take up space and convey power. Tim recommends the Superhero Pose – Hands-on-Hips, legs apart, chest forward.

‘Basically, you need to exude the essence of Superman or Wonder Woman!’

The reason this posture gives you confidence is because you are grounded. You are pointing to your centre of gravity (the core) with your fingertips. Your feet are in line with your hip bones or slightly farther apart, providing you with a firm anchor to the earth. A wide chest means more expansive breathing. The changes in your body and muscles send signals to your brain, activating neurotransmitters associated with confidence and assurance. Just imagine a cape flowing in the wind behind you, and you can tackle anything!

So, take a couple of extra minutes in the bathroom, look in the mirror and see the Superhero looking back. Think of all the successful things you have done in your professional career. You have done difficult and challenging things before – you are going to smash this interview.

Now you are ready to walk into the room, calm and confident.

Kate, one of Tim's clients, said 'I laughed when Tim told me about the breathing and the power-posing. But I really wanted this job. I arrived 10 minutes early and went to the bathroom. I slowed down my breathing, stood in front of the mirror, adopted the power-pose, and reflected on and celebrated the successes in my career so far. Another person walked out from one of the cubicles and gave me a big warm smile. When I was called into the interview room, they were the chair of the selection panel. I was calm and collected when I walked into the room but became more comfortable when they gave me another big smile. They knew exactly why I had done the power pose; I was trying to be the best version of me so I could do a great interview. I won the job, and it came with a big pay rise. I am so happy working for this company'.

So, instead of doubting yourself, have a little faith in yourself. Tell yourself 'You've got this', and that winning job can be yours.

¹ For more information on body language, check out this Ted Talk https://www.ted.com/talks/amy_cuddy_your_body_language_may_shape_who_you_are?utm_campaign=ted_spread&utm_medium=referral&utm_source=tedcomshare

Tim concludes by saying 'As you may have heard a thousand times before, smiling in an interview can help you feel more confident; you appear more approachable and more positive. Just smile and the whole world will smile with you!'

Tim encourages potential or current job applicants to reach out to him so he can help you better define your life and career objectives, assess skills and strengths, and identify opportunities.

If required, Tim can assist you to construct written applications, develop your LinkedIn profile, prepare for interview, and select personal and professional referees. Tim also has a team of role-players who can conduct a mock interview.

'Coaching packages are tailored to meet your needs and your budget'.