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HOW TO ... handle job interviews

15 Dec 2013 | Margaret Harris

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THERE is plenty of information around for first-time job applicants, but what about those people who have been working for many years and now have to go to an interview, possibly for an executive position?

Zinhle Matentji, founder and MD of SearchSpecifics, has this advice:

Just as you did when you set out for your first interview, dress appropriately and beware of the nonverbal messages you send through your body language, general behaviour and appearance;

You might feel that your years of experience mean you do not need to do any research into the position, but do not let arrogance lose you the job. Take the time to find out about the company and the position you are being interviewed for;

When it comes to being interviewed for an executive position, the process is usually longer and can be more personal. This makes the rapport between interviewer and interviewee crucial. Gather information about the interviewer beforehand — their career history, what projects and deals they have worked on, other companies they were employed at and in what positions, career successes, as well their personal interests — so that you can immediately establish common ground;

Find ways during the interview to show that you understand your industry at a macro level and that you are informed about developments both locally and globally. Give examples demonstrating your problem-solving skills and how you have overcome challenges in the past and improved or transformed systems and processes; and

Do, however, be careful not to come across too strongly or as someone who has all the answers, because this may be considered arrogant behaviour on the part of someone who has not worked at the company in question and is at this stage still an observer.

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