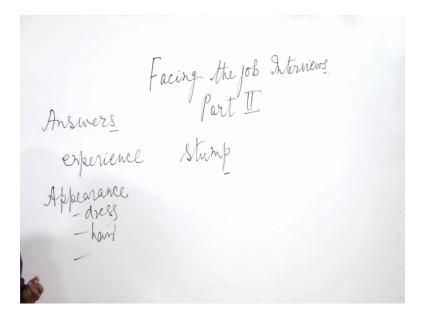
## Soft Skills Dr. Binod Mishra Department of Humanities & Social Sciences Indian Institute of Technology, Roorkee

## Lecture – 58 Facing Job Interviews Part- II

Good morning friends and welcome back to online lectures on the course entitled Soft skills. You remember well that presently we are discussing interviews and in course of interviews, we are talking about how we have to face interviews very bravely. If you remember in the previous lecture, we talked about the various do's and the dont's that are required while you are preparing for a interviews. In this lecture, we are going to talk about the variety of questions. Imagine you are going for an interview, but before you go for the interview and you have made all sorts of preparations, something that might be haunting your mind is what would be the nature of questions that you will come across.

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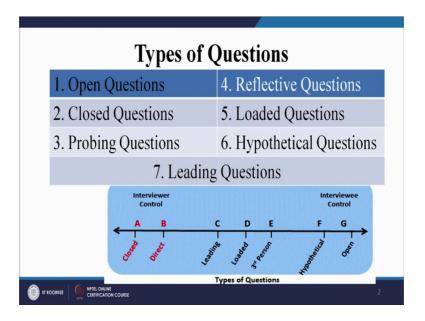
As I have told you in the previous lecture that before we go for the interview, all we need to do is, we actually have to anticipate questions. Friends, one thing that is very important is, however hard you are prepared physically; however hard you have prepared based on your appearance, but then what matters most is how are you going to perform in the interview. Here one thing has to be taken into consideration is that while I am going to

talk about the nature of questions, I am not going to talk about the nature of questions that will be from the specialized field of yours, rather I am going to talk about the general questions because I know that all of you have prepared a lot and your entire qualification is a sort of preparation that will help you encounter or help you respond to the questions of your subject area, but more than your subject area, what is required is to know how your interview will begin, what sort of questions will be put, what will be the nature of responses.

So, all of you might be thinking well ahead of time about the type of the questions. Do you think that the questions that the interviewers will ask you will focus simply on your subject area? No, not at all. They will also be talking about or they will also be throwing questions from general areas because all recruiting agencies have certain parameters, they have certain things in mind that they are going to look for as a prospective employee that you are going to become.

You remember well that you have already understood that when you are thinking of appearing at interviews, there certain parameter is in your own mind also because while we are discussing the planning in the preparation of interviews, we have talked about certain qualities that the interviewers are looking forward to finding in a prospective candidate and some of them if you remember well are integrity, honesty, sincerity, your resource fullness initiative, your leadership, your communicative abilities and quiet many more. But here in this lecture we are going to talk about and will also be showing you in detail the type of questions that you will come across. Imagine every interview that will begin initially with certain questions that are simply to familiarize.

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You now let me emphasize here that an interview is actually a physical or a face to face communication between you and the recruiters. It is more over a sort of discourse through which meaning is negotiated, through which deals are carved out because when they are going to recruit a person for their organization, they see to it that this candidate or this person will be with our organization for a quiet number of years and moreover, they also see to it that once they have had a wrong choice, they will also have to suffer for many years to come. That is why not only they are aware, but more than them you should be aware of how you should respond to because at the entry level you want a job and of course, when you want a job, you have to be very humble.

You know the answers well, but as I have been telling it is not only the answers that they are looking forward to, rather they are also looking at how you are answering because much depends upon and in every interview board you will find there are variety of people. Not all of them are only subject experts, there are some who are people who are going to test you psychologically, they are going to test your inner abilities and for that the responses which you give they are looking at the nature of the responses. Hence, it becomes very mandatory to understand the types of questions, what types of questions will be there because when we talk about the time given for a candidates interview, usually the time may vary. Maybe it is for 20 minutes, maybe it is only for 10 minutes, but then during those 10 or 20 minutes, what should be that types of questions.

So, they will be putting questions like open questions, there will be some questions which will be open. I will also talk about what an open question is, then closed questions, probing questions, reflective questions, loaded questions, hypothetical questions, leading questions. Now, these are the types of the questions and all these types of questions, they actually are related to some of your inner abilities, inner qualities.

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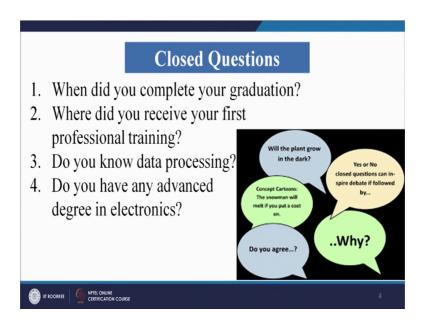
Now, when they start an open question usually in the beginning because you know these recruiting agencies, they also want people. Organizations want people, of course we want jobs, but then when the interview begins, I mean the beginning of an interview, they actually try to see they create a sort of ambiance or a sort of atmosphere where you feel comfortable and in order to make you feel comfortable, the open questions are asked and there can be any number of open questions depending upon the people, depending upon the nature of the jobs.

So, in every interview you will find the first question that they ask is tell us briefly about yourself. The second question that they may ask what is your area of expertise. Given below are the questions. If you look at the screen, you will find these are the questions which they put in the beginning. How did you happen to come to know about this job, what prompted you to apply for this job, why do you consider yourself suitable for this job? Now, if we look at all these questions, you will find that you know the answers, but

how you answer that is of utmost importance. For example, when they ask you tell us briefly about yourself, of course you will be telling about yourself, but when you are going to tell about yourself, you are going to indicate some of your qualities, some of your experiences and the other questions that they put for example area of your expertise, everyone will have his or her own area of expertise, relevance of the branch. So, all these questions of course they are a bit personal questions and the answers to these questions will determine your fate. Now, how you answer that is actually an art. You see these people who are putting questions to you, they see that they are going to recruit the right person.

So, an open question may not long for a long, may not long for a long time rather why because when I say tell us briefly about yourself, naturally you will be talking about who you are, what are your qualities, what is your experience, all these sorts of answers will be there and this is simply to create a sort of familiarity because interview as I said earlier is a sort of discourse between two parties. It is not only a sort of face to face communication, but it is a sort of interpersonal communication and as we have discussed and defined while talking about interviews that these people want to enter into your inner chamber, so that they can get some proper responses. Next to that is closed questions. Now, what are closed questions? In closed questions, you will find you do not have many more options, where in open questions you will speak so many sentences, you will also bring variety while you are going to answer, but in closed questions you will have certain limitations.

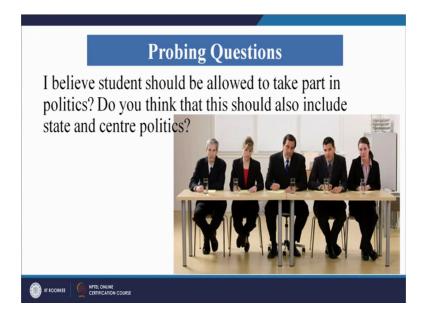
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What limitations? Either you will say yes or you will give some exact timing. For example, when did you complete your graduation, when did you do your B.tech, where did you receive your first professional training, do you know data processing do you have any advanced degree in electronics. Now, all these are closed questions. Why closed? It is because the answers that you give will be very limited. I did my graduation in 2015. Yes sir, I did my graduation in 2015 with Chemical Honors or I have a Degree in Electronics. I mean can there be any other answer apart from this? No? That is why it is a closed question.

Do you have any advanced degree in electronics? Naturally the answer will be either yes or no and then, maybe when they put a closed question, after every closed question, there may be a follow up question. So, you have to remember when there is a follow up question, you have to give a justification. For example, you have a Degree in Electronics and then, you may say or then, they may ask you what is the relevance of electronics today. So, here you will have to give justification.

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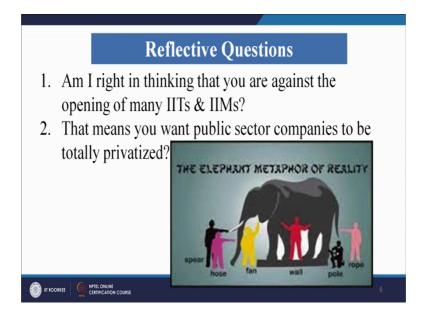


Now, next to that can come questions which are of probing nature and that is why we call questions which are going to probe you. For example, here they are going to test your opinion, they are going to test your biasness, they are going to test your attitude. Now, look at this question. I believe students should be allowed to take part in politics. Do you think that this should also include state and central politics?

Now, here the answer that will be given will be your own opinion and when you are giving your own opinion, whatever sort of interview it is whether it is an interview either of UPSC or a state civil service examination or of some other services or suppose an engineering examination whatsoever, now these questions are to test your suitability, test your opinion because you know it is a person's opinion and when they are going to take a person in their organization, they actually say to it that this person can create, this person can bring a new difference and difference that will be brought will be by ones opinion. So, what will be the answer to this question? I believe student should be allowed to take part in politics. You can answer to my knowledge. Sir I believe that yes a student should take part in politics and this is going to help them in their career in the years to come because all of us see today that we need good leaders and if the students can understand and learn the traits of leadership right from their school or college age, they will emerge as a better leader and they can bring changes in the organization.

So, your answers have to be weighed very properly. Next to that is reflective questions. Again here they will put questions which are going to test your rationale, which are going to test your logical approach, which are going to see how forward looking person you are, how you can justify the answer.

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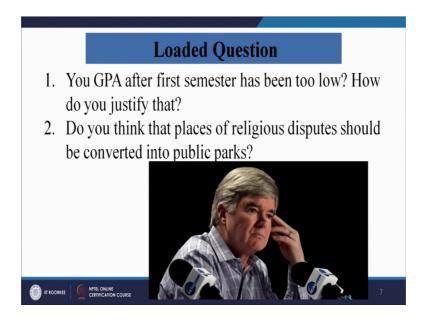
For example, if they say I am impedance right in thinking that you are against the opening of many IITs and IIMs. Now, imagine such a question is there, what will be the answer? The answers may vary. Suppose if it is asked to me, I may answer I do think that opening of IITs and IIMs is a very welcome approach, but the question is the quality should not deteriorate because when we have so many institutions, so many premier institutions, it will of course will be very difficult to find suitable faculty members, suitable professors and there may come a time when there will be faculty crunch as is being witnessed nowadays.

Now, somebody else may also say no I am against this approach because I believe that if there is a good number of premier institutes, it will become very difficult not only for the students, but also for the faculty members to see that they are doing something great. Somebody also may say if something is to may number we cannot think of having a good quality. What I mean to say is that in such a situation, answers may be different and here I am reminded of the elephant metaphor and you all know that when a group of blind

people, they were asked about how is an elephant, since they were not able to see and they could feel only with the help of their touch, all of them had different answers.

So, when we asked reflective question, the answers may be different. That means, you want public sector companies to be totally privatized. Again then we have a question. Do you think that all organizations, all government agencies have to be privatized? Again when you give an answer to this question, the answer may either be in the positive or in the negative, but you have to have certain justification. So, when a reflective question is asked, we are going to test not only the opinion of the person, but we are also going to see how the person is forward looking, how the person can think well ahead of time. Next comes loaded questions.

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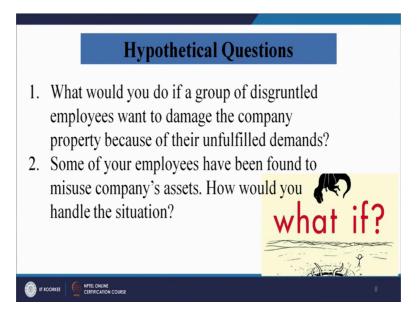
Now, as the word itself says loaded question is a question where the interviewer or where the recruiter sees that there is some amount of biasness. For example, if the question is like this. Your GPA after first semester has been too low, how do you justify that? Meaning there by the person or the interviewer, he tries to see that there is a fault in you. There again may be a question. Do you think that places of religious disputes should be converted into public parks? In a loaded question, the questioner or the interviewer puts his own mind and how you are going to react, how you are going to respond that is totally your responsibility.

My dear friends, there may be quite a good number of questions, but it is not only the questions, but it is of course the answers that matter and when you answer, no answer is good or bad, but then how you are going to, what would be the language, what would be the approach, what would be the presentation, how you will be giving answer, what will be your non-verbal behavior, all these things go a long way in making them decide whether you are suitable candidate or a suitable employee that they are looking forward to. Hence, your answer has to be very logical, it has to be very justified, it has to have an element not only of truth, but also an element where a lot of reasoning is there.

Next comes hypothetical questions. Now when we work in any organization, institute, company, whatsoever you may find the situations, keep on changing. At times there may be crisis, at times there may be catastrophes, at times there may be calamities. As a person who is actually in the seat or at a post, he has to take decision.

As I have been telling since the beginning of this course that all communications finally to some decision. So, you as a leader, you as a CEO, you as a manager, you as an administrator, you as a person who looks into the nitigrity of the organization have to take a decision in such a situation. You I mean the recruiters want to see how in an unforcing situation, this candidate will react and that is why they put hypothetical questions.

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For example, what would you do if a group of disgruntled employees want to damage the company property because of their unfulfilled demands? Now, what will be your answer? I mean you know that such a sort of initiative, such a sort of reaction by the employees may take place at times, but you as the proprietor, you as an administrator, you as a leader what will you do to quell this because it is a critical moment and you have to take some decision. For that you may not wait because things may go worse, things may become bad. So, the time is to test what will be your initiative.

How you will react some of your employees have been found to misuse companies assets? How would you handle the situation? I mean this again may be a question and answers, may again be different. I may say I will see to it that three is third eye. I mean most of the organizations have CCTV cameras to watch. Now, the question is how will you respond? Sometimes some people may say if I come to know about a particular employee who is trying to destroy organizational assets, maybe I will talk to him first to persuade or maybe if he is not because initially all of us try to have a sort of dialogue, we try to understand the situation, we try to know where the problem is and unless until you know the problem, you cannot find out the solution. So, you may talk to them in the beginning, but then if things go out of hand, no doubt you may take some action. So, every individuals answer will be different and the initiative of the reaction of the decision that you will take because in course of time, there may be some more people who are going to do that.

You see every nowadays newspapers are having news in plenty about the demands to so many things, what action can be taken you know. So, how you do not want a loss to the organizational property? You also do not want that this should instigate other people. So, during such situation what will you do? I mean you may have your own answers because you are all qualified people, intelligent guys. You may have your answers, but then I am simply telling you that this may be the nature of questions, weigh your answer well before you answer them.

Next is leading questions. At times you will find whether certain questions or the recruiters they try to see how much obsessed you are, how much inclined you are towards a particular job. At times they also want to see that during critical hours if we have to take certain decisions, are we in favor of some decision, certain decisions or not.

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See for example, if there is a question like don't you think our company is the best as far as a reputation is concerned? Now, if such a question is there and if it is put to me and I want to get a job, naturally since I want to get a job, I will of course say so far as my knowledge is concerned sir, your company's reputation is very good and that is why I want to have position here, I want to get a job here because it will be a proud moment for me to be recruited to your organization. When I want job my dear friend or when you job, do not give an answer that may disturb, that may obliterate, that may block your chance of getting a post. There is no harm in going with them by saying that their company has got a very good reputation.

Next question is do you think that the company should be free to retrench people in times of a market tumble? Now, this is a question which is of course a leading question, but then here the question of ethics is also concerned. I mean if a question like this is put to me, my answer will be sir you are right that there are at times market tumble, but then as employees of this organization, all of us have to save this market tumble. If we have recruited some people, it is perhaps not ethical to retrench people during times of crisis. We have been learning since beginning, together we go, together we rise, together we fall.

So, when answering such questions, you may say we may call a meeting of the employees and we measure our agonies and we may elicit their responses because if we sink today,

all of us will sink. If we sign today, all of us will sign. We have to save this agony, we have to save this trouble, we have to find out what best we can do and if there is some amount of sacrifice from us, we are ready to do that. I mean it is not only the correct answer, but then it is also the answer that takes into consideration the ethical segment, ethical aspects of an employee as well of an organization.

Apart from these questions, I mean these were some of the questions which can be asked in the beginning and when you have satisfied them because you know we have been saying that in communication, a rapport is being created and when a rapport is created, we become more interested as recruiters and when we become more interested, we start asking questions about experience because finally you are interested in a candidate or in an employee. So, then we start asking questions about experience and accomplishments.

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## Questions about experience & accomplishment

- 1. Why should we hire you when there are candidates with more experience and accomplishment?
- 2. From your resume it seems you change your jobs frequently? Any specific reason?
- 3. What was your most memorable experience in your previous job?
- 4. What do you prefer ---- working in team or doing it all alone?



For example, here are some questions which are related to this field. Why should we hire you when there are candidates with more experience and accomplishment? I mean this is a very straight question and you have to answer and when you answer, you have to talk about your own quality, you have to say of course sir, you can hire me because I am a prospective candidate you are looking forward to. I process the qualities which your company is looking forward to and I think if I am appointed, I will stand through your expectations.

Now, that can be another question as from your resume, it seems you change your jobs frequently. Any specific reason? Now, whatever may be the reason, but remember no organization or no recruiter would like a reason. When you say I did not had very good term with my boss. So, weigh your answers before you answer them or you can always say that of course, I have changed jobs, but there are some personal reasons. I have had a very sound relationship with all my employees which I am maintaining even today and I think my experience will help me, my experience will strengthen me to work more smoothly in your organization. What was your most memorable experience in your previous job? Then, you can say whatever the answer be. What do you prefer working in team or doing it all alone? Now, this is a question which is very pertinent, which is very relevant today. Nobody would like an employee to work in isolation. So, answer to such a question, you can say of course people may work in isolation, but working in teams have always advantage and these advantages are we can save time, we can build relationships and we can find out better solutions in the times of crisis and all. If you might be thinking that they can ask only questions of general nature and questions of experience of ages also, but at times they also ask questions just to stump you or just to embarrass you.

What will you do at times was, oh god it could have been better such a question might not have been asked because when you are going to answer these question, you feel that you which is of course which is dangerous on both ways. Where do you see yourself after 5 years from now? Many enthusiastic people would say sir I would like to see myself in your position, but that is not a right answer. My dear friend you have to be very modest when you answer such question and you can say I will work hard because I am an industries person and I think in the days to come because of my experience, because of my work, because of my initiative I think I will get a suitable position in the days to come.

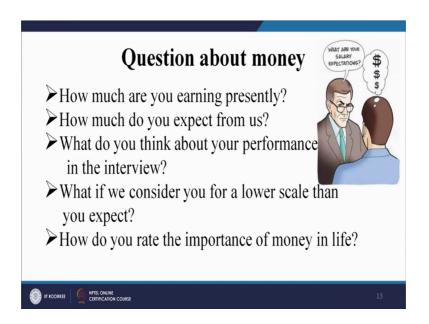
Suppose your boss shows dissatisfaction with word, how do you react? Again this question they try to see that since they are going to take you, what will be your nature of working? Are you very aggressive, are you simply see thinking of going alone or you think whatever you say whatever you do is only important? So, an answer to such a question again you have to be very modest. Are you ready to take a foreign assignment soon after you join? Now, this question here they will not wait for an answer, but remember every now and then you have to respond in such a manner. Of course sir, I would love to get a foreign assignments. Actually it will be very exciting for me to work

with an organization where there are opportunities where I can learn so many things working with people of different cultures, different nations, different languages. So, you have to be affirmative. Affirmation both in life as well as in job works a lot, it works wonders.

So, be affirmative how would you deal with a co-worker supplying the false data? Now, this is again a question where whatever you answer. So, you have to answer I will try to verify from various sources in order to know what my co-worker is doing nowadays. It is not difficult to verify without even letting other people to understand that their cases are being verified. Again there can be some personal questions which you always want that they should not have been asked and such a question is about strength, about weakness. As I have been telling that you have to be affirmative if a question is about a strength. You talk about a strength that you have. If they asked you a question about weakness, present your weaknesses in such a manner even weakness becomes a merit. For example, if such a question about weakness is asked, you can always say sir I have been a hard worker and I do not feel satisfied unless and until I had brought perfection to my work that at times becomes a sort of tag on me. I at times have to suffer physically, but for me work itself is more important. Now, here you are talking about your weakness, then you are also talking about your merit. Now, there can be question like do you take alcohol?

Now, this question no one even like, but then there is nothing to hide because if you know if you do not take alcohol, you can say I do not take alcohol or you can say I am sober sir, fine and if you check again you can try to hide something, but you can say occasionally I do take, but I am not habituated. Again there can be a question what if you are not selected? Now, this question again is a very dangerous question and you have to be affirmative. As I said you can say I do think that with the sort of answers and with the sort of capabilities, with the sort of degree and with the sort of requirements, your recruiting agencies looking forward to I think I am quite hopeful that I will be selected, but in case I am not selected, I will try to learn my shortcomings, my mistakes and would utilize and improve upon in the next interview. I mean never compromise with affirmation. You have to be hopeful, you have to be affirmative throughout.

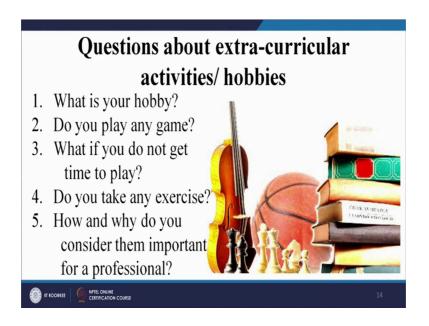
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Sometimes they may ask questions about money. It is always better you do not disclose about money and again you have to be very rational and you can say you have already mentioned the salary structure in the advertisement and I think based upon my qualification and my performance in the interview, I will be placed as per the requirement, as per the canons of the organization.

How do you rate the importance of money in life? You can always again answer money is important no doubt, but money alone is not important. Money makes us get things, money fulfills our needs, but needs are not only monetary, needs are not only materialistic, needs are also something different as to which organization you belong to the main thing that is important is where do I belong to. I mean you have to be very clever when you answer.

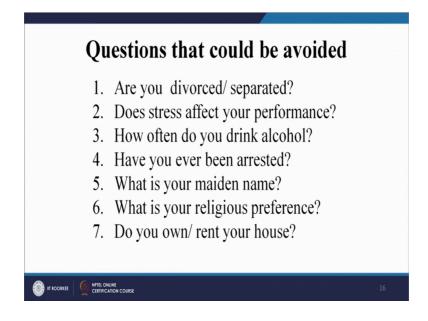
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There can also be questions about hobbies, extracurricular activities and in these questions you know what you will answer. You are all intelligent guys my dear friend. So, there is no problem about this then. There can be questions about general awareness and in general awareness, they may talk about something that is happening around you, something that about a new product that has been launched by a particular organization or by the organization where you have applied. Sometimes they can also ask questions about nuclear policy nowadays, they can also talk about demonetization which is very important.

Now, whatever question they asked what is of utmost importance is to know how you are going to answer. There may also be questions about nowadays it is being seen that people are making misuse of organizational assets. Now, here they are going to see how ethical you are and how you responded to. That is very important. Other certain questions which you often think that this question have to be avoided.

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For example, somebody talking about somebody asking you questions about are you divorced, separated, do you have your own house, to a women candidate if somebody ask what is your maiden name, I think these questions are rather interference and you need to understand how to guard them. The need is not to react, not to overreact, but if you feel that this question has to be answered in a very rational manner, what is your religious preference if they ask me, my answer will be I believe in humanity. Nothing is as important a religion as humanity

Do you own your house? You say you do you believe in a rented house. Till now I have been living in the accommodation provided by the organization that I have worked for and I do understand that your organization also has this facility and in course of time if I feel and if I have the capability, I think I will have my own house. I mean you have to be positive throughout and here you can remember what I have talked about in the lecture on positive thinking.

Now, having known the types of question, having known the nature of questions and since you also have anticipated or if you have not, it is time you start anticipating the questions. Now, there are certain tips that I want to give you. What you should do before interview and what you should do during interview and what you should do after interview? I mean there are certain things which are very important and in the previous

lecture, we talked about appearance where we talked about dress, then your hair whatsoever. So, select the dress that you will wear now. This selection is very important. Sometimes people do not understand what color of dress should they wear. So, wear a dress that is comfortable, choose the color that is at times not pinching the eyes of the recruiters. I mean it has to be a very sober color. Ensure that even though they are not costly, they are well washed, well ironed. Do not be very obsessive about your dress that before you go for the interview, you go to buy a new pair. No, that is not advisable.

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## Things to do day before interview

- 1. Select the dress you will wear. Ensure they are well pressed and suits the occasion/job requirements.
- 2. Ensure that shoes are polished and are formal
- 3. Collect all testimonials and keep them in order. Don't forget your call letter etc.
- 4. Don't forget to watch latest news bulletin.
- 5. Keep a pocket comb with you.

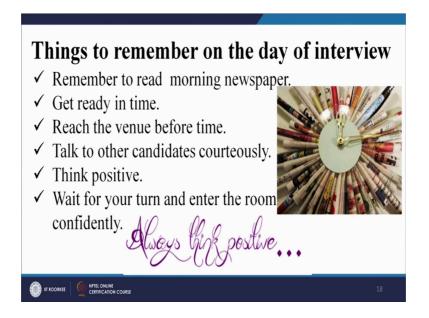


Ensure that your shoes are polished and are formal. You have to have all sort of testimonials ready and are they kept in order. You have to check and it is always advisable that you continuously I mean before your interviews, I mean 1 month 2 months in advance, no I know that you are very conscious. So, you have been reading newspapers, but anticipate even if you are reading, anticipate what are things which are very current, what are the areas from where they can ask me questions about general issues and all and if you have got a very good hair, have a very good cromb.

My dear friends, let me tell you that however qualified you are, but you have to perform in an interview if you have planned well in advance about the questions and you have anticipated well. Time has come that you have to perform and success in an interview is based on the performance. You have to become the man of the moment, you have to

become the hero of the art and on the day of the interview also, there are certain things that you have to take into consideration and they are before you.

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Go there I mean before you go to the venue, first think of it, calculate the time, so that you are there in time, before time rather and before that you must have read the morning newspaper because sometimes they ask a question and if you are forgotten to read the morning newspaper that may be a loss again. You must see that when you reach there in time or before time, what should you do? Some people often think that they should not talk to the other candidates who are there. It is better to introduce yourself to them, talk to them and you will find that during your small talk, you will gather confidence because all of us when you go for the interview, you are or we are a little bit worried or nervous, but talking to them will actually is a way your nervousness, you will feel that there are other candidates also and you have to tell yourself that you are better than so many. You have to think positively.

Imaging you know I have been telling people time and again that when you go for the interview, imagine things which have been very memorable, imagine situations which give you joy, think of that there is an interview and you are going to perform. Well, think of good things and good things will only bring good things. Wait for your turn and when the time comes, enter the interview board, enter the interview room and when you are going

to enter the room, enter as if you belong to this organization. These things are also watched and when you enter there, wish all of them a good morning or whatsoever and before they have not told you to sit down, do not sit down. Wait for their permission and then, when you sit down, thank all of them and you will find look at them.

My dear friends, eye contact as I have told in the lecture on non-verbal communication that eye contact is very important. So, give them a good look and not only the good looks, but the good look meaning there by you have to look at them when they ask questions and when you are answering again look at the particular person whosoever is asking you a question.

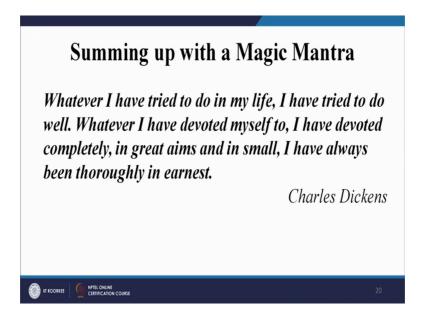
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When you have done all these things, I think you are well prepared and nothing can stop you from success. Success lies not only in planning, not only in performance, but the real success actually lies in your mind and when you have been during the interview, please do not accept an offer until You have completed all your interviews, but remember never say no. For example, there may be a question what if we recruit you for a lower position than you have applied for. So, there of course your response is very important, but you can always say first let me get selected. I think I will have to think, but then presently I need that and I hope that I will be selected. Avoid turning back to look at the members, avoid forgetting to close the door. Sometimes your interview may not have that satisfactory, but

even then you need not turn violent and close the door in a very violent manner that is not expected. Close the door in a very gentle manner. Thank all the members and then, go with a impression that you have been hired my dear friend.

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So, before we close this lecture, let us have a look at what one of the famous novelist Charles Dickens says and you can also make this your mantra. Whatever I have tried to do in my life, I have tried to do well. Whatever I have devoted myself to, I have devoted completely in great aims and in small. I have always been thoroughly in earnest be honest.

Honesty is the best policy and I am quite hopeful and you should also be hopeful that having done all these exercises and all these plannings and preparation, nothing in the world can stop you if and unless you want to stop. You should always believe that life is a continuous process and interviews are also continuous processes. Once you enter an organization, you will find that if you have more ambitions, there will be times when you will get another call. Possibility never ends, hope never ends, tomorrow never ends. I wish you all a very better tomorrow and wish you all success my dear friends. Prepare well, do well, perform well, succeed well.

Thank you very much. Have a nice day.