What should you research before an interview?

Do you have a job interview coming up? Then you might already be rehearsing answers to potential interview questions. But did you know that researching the company you're applying for work with is one of the best ways to stand out from other candidates during the recruitment process?

Research helps you learn about what the company does, what they look for in their employees and helps you be better prepared to answer questions. It's also a great way to find out whether you'd be a good cultural match for the company and whether they'd be able to meet your own career and lifestyle needs.

In a SEEK survey, 63% of New Zealanders felt that the company they worked for didn't align to their initial impressions, making the need for candid company research ever more necessary.

Dean Davidson, Executive General Manager at Hudson Recruitment advises to "research as much as you can about the organisation - its history, corporate culture, competitors, profitably and future plans, for example." As you prepare for your upcoming interview, we've simplified this list to a few things to research about your potential new employer.

- **The company's culture, mission and values.** When candidates in our survey were asked what the most important factor was when choosing a company to work for, one in three people said work-life balance. Being equipped with the company's views on things like flexible working hours and locations, as well as other cultural values such as their input to employee development can help you prepare your own questions at the end of the interview. An example of what to ask? Something like, "I read a review that your company runs a mentoring program - can you tell me more about this and the positive impact it has had on your employees," is certainly a good place to start.

- **The company's recent achievements and news.** Nearly two thirds of the New Zealand population visit a company's website to find out more about them in the job seeking process. This is an effective tool especially when wanting to find out about the company's recent involvement in industry events and the community, as well as achievements and other general news. Another great tip; search the company's name in the "News" section of Google to find out information they may not be willing to self-publish. This will help give you a more balanced and realistic view of the company you may work for in the future.

- **Insider information such as remuneration, employee functions and the hiring process.** Don't prejudge a company based on their popularity in the market. Often the smaller and lesser known companies are more inspiring places to work, because of the

people who work there. Further to this, Davidson says, "Make sure you know your interviewer's full name and how to pronounce it, as well as their title."

Other important things to learn about a company include the skills and experience the company values in their employees, as well as their clients, products and services - so you can tailor your responses and questions accordingly.

Davidson reiterates, "It goes without saying that to be successful, you need to be prepared." So gather your research, ask people their thoughts on working at the company, and launch your employer exploration. This way, you'll be best positioned to impress the company you're keen to work for, and will know how to ensure the company impresses you!