



Winning a Leadership Position

Above and Below the Line Ideas

Considering

- 1. Panels appoint a person not an application!
- 2. Want the position – research it and ensure you let them know you have.
- 3. It's hard to talk about yourself – ask others what you should say about yourself.
- 4. Start with you – move to us – quickly!
- 5. Play to your strengths.
- 6. You are joining into the journey of a school – how can you acknowledge that and add value

Applying

- 1. Have a strong first paragraph: if you lose them in the first paragraph, you are then playing catch-up. Consider they may have read dozens of applications before yours.
- 2. What picture does your application paint of you? Use active, personalised language!
- 3. Address the criteria – don't give the panel an excuse to eliminate you.
- 4. Use an application structure.
- 5. Tell stories that illustrate your leadership of and with others – what outcomes were achieved?
- 6. Make your stories relevant to the position and succinct but powerful.
- 7. Incorporate Department priorities – no improvement - no job!
- 8. Power up your CV – don't make it a boring list.
- 9. Get others to read your application and CV – what do they think it says about you – what's missing?
- 10. Choose your referees carefully- ensure they are articulate, credible, and supportive.
- 11. Talk with your referees before you apply and after interview.

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12. Know what your line manager will say about you - if they are likely to express a concern about you, make their concern a strong point in your application and interview.

Interviewing

- 1. Research the school – look for the explicit and implicit in their website, documents, etc. – Do a drive by if possible. Talk with people who know the school but remember it is only their perception.
- 2. Don't be an expert on their school – incorporate what you know – be interested but don't be over judgmental.
- 3. Think about each panel member – what are their needs? What will each be looking for?
- 4. Prepare for the interview.
- 5. Predict what might be the most important criteria the panel is looking for.
- 6. Use a question response structure.
- 7. Identify the key messages you want to share.
- 8. Develop mental or written scripts – but keep them flexible.
- 9. Use powerful examples that illustrate your leadership – ensure school priorities are addressed.
- 10. Use active language – demonstrate confidence and enthusiasm.
- 11. You are in a competition! Consider your competitive advantage and highlight it as often as possible.
- 12. Consider what concerns the panel may have about you – address them as strengths.
- 13. Avoid using technology or presentations – they focus the panel on 'things' and distract them from you
- 14. Use handouts cautiously; make them visual rather than text; you don't want people reading while you are talking.
- 15. Leave them with the impression you are a strategic leader, people focused, collaborator who sees themselves as part of a public school system.