Top of the class

KNOW HOW
Job interviews

AS the jobs market gets tougher and tougher it's vital that if you do get an interview you make the right impression.

Straight-talking author Steve Miller offers his take on how to stand out.

"I have interviewed hundreds of people over the last ten years – and many of them I wouldn't have paid in washers," says Steve.

"Being able to shine is the name of the game but I have met so many interviewees who could have applied to be a cure for insomnia."

Follow Steve's five steps to SHINE and you will instantly impress the interviewer

START the interview by saying why you applied for the job. Explain that you have the skills and experience needed. Never say the new job will be a challenge – that is such a cliche.

HARD evidence is critical at the interview as it illustrates you can carry out the tasks of the job on

offer. Give as many examples as possible when you are asked questions. This can relate to both your employment and life experiences.

INSPIRATIONAL communication is needed otherwise the interviewer will nod off or wrap up the interview quickly. Ensure you have good body language (don't fidget, sit up straight and make eye contact) as this accounts for fifty five per cent of communication and also make sure you have an enthusiastic tone.

NEVER slate your previous employer as the interviewer will think you're a whiner. Be positive about your previous boss even if he or she was a bit of a rottweiler. Interviewers need to be confident that you will be a pleasure to manage.

END the interview by asking a couple of constructive questions such as how the department is structured or what will be your key goals in the first month. Don't ask about salary or holidays until you get the job offer.

● Steve Miller is author of Get off Your Arse And Grab That New Job (£14.99, Headline) **www.stevemillertraining.com**.

WHY HIGH-FLYERS ARE GOING BACK TO SCHOOL

BY TRICIA PHILLIPS
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MORE than 38,000 teachers need to be recruited in the next year to keep the nation's schools on course.

And in an attempt to attract applicants, whether they're students, captains of industry or career-swappers, cash incentives and easier entry to the profession are on offer.

"In uncertain times, teaching is a fulfilling and challenging career as well as a stable one," says Graham Holley, chief executive of the Training and Development Agency for Schools (TDA).

"It offers a unique mix of rewards, and enables career-changers, for instance, to use talents honed in their current job – from communication and leadership skills to team management."

WHERE ARE THE JOBS?

Of the 38,000 teachers needed across the country, 6,600 are for science, 5,320 for maths.

That's why golden hello payments of £5,000 are being paid to eligible secondary maths and science teachers.

Teachers of design and technology, IT, modern languages, English, RE and music can receive a golden hello of £2,500.

This payment, which is taxable, is made at the start of the second year of teaching.

HOW TO GET IN

Initial teacher training comes in all shapes and sizes, providing options to suit everyone – no matter what your qualifications, experience, preferences or personal circumstances.

All programmes lead to qualified teacher status (QTS), which you will need if you want to teach in state-maintained schools.

In most cases you will be studying for, or have, a degree but work experience is taken more and more into account.

1 School-leavers can train to be a teacher while studying for a degree. Courses generally take three or four years full-time or four to six years part-time and they can be completed at universities and colleges throughout the UK. Entry requirements vary according to the specific course but a minimum of two A-levels or equivalent is usually required.

2 Graduates can study for a postgraduate certificate in education (PGCE) which takes a year. They could also opt for school-centred initial teacher training (SCITT) designed for candidates who want to complete their training in a school environment and also lasts for one year. SCITT programmes are designed and delivered by groups of neighbouring schools and colleges.

3 Career-swappers including those who may have been made redundant or more mature applicants usually need to keep earning while training. The Graduate Teacher Programme (GTP) allows them to train and qualify as a teacher while working in a school. On the GTP you will be employed by a school, earn a salary and work towards qualified teacher status (QTS).

DOES IT HAVE TO TAKE SO LONG?

The TDA is currently designing a new fast-track scheme and further details are expected to be announced in the coming months. This pathway is targeted at career-changers with several years of professional experience, in areas such as financial services or hi-tech industries, especially in shortage subjects like science and maths.

IS THERE FUNDING?

Postgraduate trainees may be entitled to a tax-free bursary of £4,000-£9,000 depending on when they start training and what subject they train to teach. They may also be eligible for a student loan for maintenance and a maintenance grant.

STILL NOT SURE?

If you're uncertain whether you're ready to take up teaching then get some classroom experience.

Consider applying for a job as a teaching assistant who helps teachers with everyday work often overseeing small groups or individual children. Usually jobs are part-time and you can work towards a number of teaching assistant NVQ qualifications. A useful starting-point is to volunteer to help in a local school, perhaps for a few hours a week at first. Vacancies are posted through schools and local councils (try Local Government Careers **www.lgcareers.com**).

You could also try a three-day taster training course which includes a one-day school placement. This will help you decide whether to apply for initial teacher training (ITT).

Call the Teaching Information Line on 0845 6000 991.

NON-TEACHING JOBS

You don't need to be a teacher to fill vital positions in education centres up and down the country. Local councils usually post these jobs on Local Government Careers at **www.lgca reers.com**. Ask your local council too and the schools you're interested about any vacancies.

● CATERING supervisors and good old-fashioned dinner ladies do everything from making food to encouraging good table manners. Wages start from £6.15 an hour for casual assistants.

● NO school or university could function without admin staff. Duties may include accounts, staff issues and admissions.

● MAINTENANCE staff are also key with many schools still housed in old buildings.

SALARIES

A classroom teacher can earn from £20,500-£61,000, depending on experience. Headteachers can earn £40,000-£100,000 or more depending on skills, experience and location.

CONTACTS

● **Personal advice is available from the Teaching Information Line on 0845 6000 991 - 992 Also visit www.teach.gov.uk**

● **To find a degree course visit UCAS at www.ucas.com**

● **To apply for postgraduate teacher training courses visit the Graduate Teacher Training Registry at www.gttr.ac.uk**

● **Teach First, a charity which aims to bring excellent teachers into challenged secondary schools. www.teachfirst.org.uk**