

A ROTARY GUIDE

PREPARING FOR AN INTERVIEW

www.mockinterviews.org.uk



More than 100 tips from Rotary to help you prepare for an interview.

1. **THE PRESENTATION OF YOUR APPLICATION and C.V.**

Have you checked for spelling mistakes and grammatical errors? Is it free of corrections and smudges? Is it neat and easy to read? Avoid using coloured inks or fancy scripts. Have you been asked to use your own handwriting? Have you been asked to write in block capitals?

2. **THE CONTENT OF YOUR APPLICATION AND C.V.**

Have you supplied enough information? Is the information correct? Is it relevant? Don't exaggerate or tell lies, you will be found out! Has someone checked it with you?

3. **WHEN YOU ARRIVE AT THE INTERVIEW**

First impressions are very important. Be confident and smile. Make eye contact with the interviewer. Introduce yourself by name. Expect to shake the interviewer's hand. Do so firmly and confidently. Don't sit down until invited to do so. Sit in a relaxed way, but do not slouch or lean on the table. Try to control any nervousness. Make a special effort to appear alert and interested.

4. **THE WAY YOU DRESS**

Think about what you will wear to the interview. Most interviewers will expect you to be smartly dressed. Casual or sloppy dress will not impress. Interviewers will be older than you and less impressed by the latest fashion. You may wish to remove any body piercing jewellery.

5. **YOUR APPEARANCE AND PERSONAL CLEANLINESS**

Pay attention to your personal appearance and cleanliness. Do you look clean and tidy? Are your hands and nails clean? Is your hair combed or brushed? Should you have your hair cut before the interview? If you are wearing a tie, is it done up and straight? Buttons intended to be buttoned-up should be buttoned-up. Shoes should be clean and socks pulled up. If you have a cold, make sure you have a handkerchief.

6. **YOUR CONFIDENCE**

Be confident, but don't be over-confident or false. Speak clearly and act positively. Smile and show you are alert and interested. Make an effort to enjoy the interview. It is natural to be nervous, but try to appear calm.

7. **BE ATTENTIVE AND CONCENTRATE**

Concentrate on the question being asked. Listen carefully to the question. If you don't hear the full question, ask for it to be repeated. Do not allow your mind to wander. Avoid distractions.

8. **UNDERSTANDING THE QUESTIONS**

If you don't fully understand a question, ask for clarification. The interviewer may have been vague on purpose, just to test you.

9. **WHEN ANSWERING QUESTIONS**

Think before you answer the question. Answer the questions positively and confidently. Don't waffle. Don't start to answer before the question is finished. Don't anticipate the question, you may get it wrong.

10. **SPEAK CLEARLY**

Speak clearly and loud enough to be properly heard. Don't mumble. Don't waffle or use very long sentences. If you have lost track of the question, ask for it to be repeated.

11. **GIVE USEFUL INFORMATION**

Make sure your answers are relevant. Don't waffle. Avoid giving negative answers which will show you in a bad light. Make positive statements about yourself. Try not to be critical of other people.

12. **MAINTAIN EYE CONTACT**

Maintain good eye contact with the interviewer. Eye contact shows that you are interested and have good listening skills.

13. **YOUR COMPOSURE**

Try to appear relaxed and comfortable, but stay alert. Try to control any nervousness. Do not fidget. Be aware of your nervous habits, they can be off-putting to the interviewer.

14. YOUR HOBBIES & INTERESTS

You are likely to be asked about your hobbies and interests. Which hobbies and interests will you talk about? Talk with confidence about your interests. Be enthusiastic. Say what you have created or achieved. Demonstrate that you can be patient and determined. Don't appear obsessive. Talk about more than one interest.

15. TALKING ABOUT SPORTS AND FITNESS

Interviewers may want to know about any sports or fitness activities. These can be used to show you are fit and healthy. Interviewers may want to know how competitive you are.

16. TEAMWORK, WORKING WITH OTHERS

What experience have you had working with others? Do you prefer to work alone or with others? What other examples can you give of working closely with others? What positions of responsibility have you held?

17. LEADERSHIP AND ORGANISATIONAL SKILLS

Some careers require leadership skills and organisational ability. If you have ever led a team, or helped to lead a team, say so. Are you a good organiser? What have you organised? This information should be in your CV, but mention it during the interview.

18. YOUR COMPUTER SKILLS.

What computer skills do you have? How important will computer skills be in your chosen career? Interviewers will not be interested in your computer games skills.

19. YOUR ENTHUSIASM

Show enthusiasm when talking about your hobbies and interests.

20. THE REASONS FOR YOUR CAREER/COURSE CHOICE

If you have chosen a particular career or course, what are your reasons? What personal qualities are important for that career?

21. YOUR CAREER/COURSE KNOWLEDGE

What do you know about your career/course choice and the work it involves? What steps have you taken to get relevant information? How would you expect your career to develop over time? How can you convince the interviewer you are serious about this career/course?

22. THE SUBJECTS AND GRADES YOU NEED

What subjects and grades do you need for your chosen career? Have you, or will you, achieve the necessary grades? What further studies will be required in the future?

23. ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENTS

Having explained what examination results you need, what will you say to the interviewer to show that you are capable of achieving the necessary qualifications.

24. RELEVANT WORK EXPERIENCE

What work experience have you had? What part-time work or job placements have you had? Even if your work experience is not linked with your chosen career, mention it.

25. CAREER ALTERNATIVES

What alternative careers have you considered? What will happen if you don't get good enough grades?

26. YOUR EXPECTATIONS

How will you convince the interviewer that your career choice is realistic and achievable?

OTHER THINGS YOU SHOULD MENTION

If there are important things you would like to say but haven't had the chance to do so, take the opportunity to say these things at the end of the interview. Make sure that you mention all of your strong points during the interview.

ON THE DAY

Double check in advance the date and time of the interview. Find out exactly where the interview is to be held. Allow plenty of time to get there. Don't be late. Take any certificates and records of achievement with you. Don't take alcohol or drugs to calm your nerves. Get a good night's sleep the night before. Talk to other people about their interview experiences.

Good Luck with your Interviews

This guide has been prepared by Rotarians as part of the "Rotary Mock Interview Experience" project. For more information about preparing for interviews, mock interviews and Rotary, visit the website.

www.mockinterviews.org.uk

