

Interview Tips



Before the interview



Fail to prepare, prepare to fail!

Planning and organising yourself for an interview is essential. It allows you to be calm and in control during the meeting.

- When offered the interview, try and find out what format it will take e.g. one to one, group assessment, panel interview etc.
- Check you have read the job description thoroughly and know exactly what the company requires for this role.
- Ensure you know the full name of the person interviewing you and their job title.
- Visit the company prior to the interview so you know exactly where it is, if there is parking and how long it will take you to get there. Plan your route and allow for any unexpected delays. Arrive for the interview 10 minutes early.
- Research the company. Look at their website, read their blogs, search for news articles, take a look at the latest developments in this industry, research their competitors and search on LinkedIn for the people interviewing you. It may come in handy to know about their career and interests.
- Get your CV and any other information you need to take with you ready the night before. Ensure you can explain any gaps in your CV.
- Depending on the role and industry, will depend on the how you dress for an interview. A smart suit is normal (for boys and girls) and expected, however, in a creative environment it may appear too formal. Smart, clean shoes are essential for making a good impression.

During the interview



There are no second chances at a first impression.

- Greet the interviewer(s) with a firm, strong handshake, smile and make eye contact. Wait to be offered a seat before sitting down.
- Do not interrupt the interviewer, listen carefully to the questions being asked and answer concisely and clearly. If you don't quite understand, ask them to repeat the question.
- Be aware of your body language. Sit up straight, maintain good eye contact. If there is more than one interviewer, take it in turns to look at each person. Don't fidget, speak clearly and confidently, don't waffle, smile and try to relax.
- Be positive throughout the interview, don't complain about anything. Be enthusiastic and express a keen interest in the role and the company.
- When answering questions, think of real examples you can use from previous experiences.

Some questions you may be asked

- What do you know about this company?
- Why do you want this job?
- Tell me about yourself.
- What are your interests?
- What are your key strengths?
- What is your weakness?
- How would your friends describe you?
- Where do you see yourself in five years?
- Can you give an example of when you worked effectively in a team?
- Give an example of when you worked well under pressure?
- Tell us about your proudest achievement.
- Describe a situation where you had to plan or organise something.



INTERVIEW TIPS CONTINUED



Some questions you may want to ask

You should always have some questions for your interviewer to show your interest in the position. Prepare a minimum of five questions in case some of them have been covered during the interview, you need to ask at least two.

- What is the plan for the business over the next five years?
- What challenges do you foresee and how do you plan to overcome these?
- Are there any training opportunities in the future?
- Is this a new role or is it replacing someone?
- Is there scope for progression and career development in the future? (If this is relevant).
- You may want to ask when you are likely to hear from them regarding this interview.

Don't ask:

- What is the salary?
- What is the holiday entitlement?
- What is your policy regarding days off sick?

All of this will be covered if and when you are offered the position.



After the interview

- Send an email to thank the interviewer(s) for their time stating that you are very keen on the role and impressed with the company.
- If you are offered the position, ensure you receive an offer letter before resigning from your current post (useful to remember later in life).

Dos and Don'ts

- Do take your time when answering the questions
- Do sell yourself
- Do be positive
- Do prepare some questions
- Do treat the interviewers with respect and give them your undivided attention
- Do keep your answers focused on what you can do for the employer, not what they can do for you.



- Don't be late
- Don't swear or use slang words
- Don't slouch in your seat or look uninterested
- Don't lie or give evasive answers
- Don't let your nerves show too much; a few nerves are normal but extreme nerves will affect your performance
- Don't be arrogant and assume you've got the job
- Don't discuss controversial topics such as religion or politics
- Don't read from notes or your CV, you should know all the details
- Don't criticise school or college
- Don't argue with the interviewer, no matter what
- Don't take a mobile phone into the interview.



If you follow the above guidelines, have the skills and grades required for the position and show genuine enthusiasm for the role, you stand a very good chance of securing a job offer.

Good luck!

