

Job Interview Guide

How To Prepare For a Job Interview?

Before the Interview...

Know About:

- Yourself: your qualities and experience that you bring to the role, and your career aspirations
- The role: request the position description in advance of the interview
- The company:
 - o Size/structure/divisions/locations
 - o Recruitment processes - be familiar with recruitment marketing materials and their LinkedIn /social media/website pages
 - o Products and services
 - o Clients and target markets
 - o Competitors
 - o Challenges
- The industry
- The interviewers (if possible)

Get prepared before the Interview:

Prepare and practice! Arrange at least one mock interview with an experienced interviewer (your programme leader / lecturer / career advisor), with questions anticipated for the role. The process of having to talk through your examples will uncover any areas you need further preparation.

Dress to impress:

The interview starts from the moment you walk into the building. You only have one chance to make a first impression!

- Prepare your entire outfit well in advance to allow for cleaning, adjustments etc.
- For most professional roles, a nice fitting business suit is appropriate. But do research/visit the company to get a sense of the dress code, and aim to dress a step more professionally/conservatively than what you observe.
- Keep all devices/phones out of sight and on silent (not vibrate)
- Ensure your breath is fresh ...

What to Bring:

- Copy of your CV and application
- Copy of your academic transcript
- Bring something to write with, and a notebook or clipboard to take notes on

Punctuality:

Plan your trip carefully to ensure you won't be unexpectedly delayed. Arrive at the building at least 10 minutes early, and use the facilities to ensure you are calm and looking fresh after your journey.

At the Interview - Typical Interview Structure...

Regardless of the format, a good structure on which to base your preparation is as follows:

Greeting the Receptionist: Introduce yourself to the receptionist no more than 5-10 minutes before the interview with a smile. Remember to be friendly: the receptionist may be asked for their impressions.

Rapport building: small talk, 'how was your morning?' etc. to help you feel comfortable and get started.

Tell us about yourself: a nice format to use for your response is to start with what you do now, give a snapshot of your background and follow with what you are looking toward in the future. Mention extracurricular hobbies if you feel them of interest. Take a minute or so for this response.

Why do you want the role: Employers have found that matching skills alone is not enough to predict a candidate's success in a role. They are looking for a 'whole person fit': to match candidate's values and motivators to the role too. Therefore it is critical to be ready to say:

- Why this role interests you?
- How does it fit with what you have in mind for your future?
- Why this industry?
- Why this company?
- Why did you study what you studied, and what do you enjoy about it?
- What are you interested in right now?

Questions about your resume: education, IT skills, work experience etc.

Strengths and Areas for Development questions: these are asked to get an idea of what you're good at, and also how you have learned to take control of things you need support with. Be honest and constructive.

Behavioural Questions: you will be asked for examples of how you demonstrated certain skills in a past work or college setting. Use the following tips to structure your answers.

Situation: outline the context of your story (30 seconds)

Task: what were you required to do (20 seconds)

Action/Approach: what actions did you take? (2-3 minutes)

- Use 'I' not 'we'
- Your action should comprise 60%-80% of your answer, in a step-by-step format
- This is a section that demonstrates the behaviours the interviewers are looking for.

Result: What was the impact of your action? (1 minute) How others involved reacted to your actions, recognized your contribution etc.

Role Overview: Discussion about the role and company. You may be given a copy of the role description.

Your Questions: Have 2-5 questions ready about things you haven't already been provided information on. Find out if the organization and position is a good match for you by asking questions like:

- What kind of training will I receive?
- What do you (the employer) like most about working for this company/organization?
- Will I have an opportunity to take on new responsibilities once I get comfortable in my position?

Close: the interviewer may tell you about the next steps. You can also express your enthusiasm for the role

After the Interview...

Be careful not to ask too many questions about salary and benefits. Some employers prefer to disclose this information in a subsequent interview or discussion.

Send a thank-you email to your interviewer(s). Address each interviewer individually by name. If you are uncertain or have forgotten their names, look online or phone to find out.