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Mastering the job interview

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Let's get started.

Congratulations! Your CV has made it through the initial selection, and now it's time for the next step: the job interview.

Often seen as a daunting yet essential part of the hiring process, interviews give potential employers a chance to learn more about you beyond your CV and assess how well you might fit into their team.

So, how can you ensure you shine and stand out from the crowd during your interview?

1

Research the company and the role

Demonstrating a lack of knowledge about the company can signal disinterest, so be proactive and do your homework. Dive into the company's website, absorb their literature, and study the job description thoroughly.

- **Awards and Achievements:** Has the company recently won any accolades?
- **News and Events:** Review their news section and social media for updates on recent achievements or upcoming events
- **Understand the Challenges:** Go beyond memorising facts; assess the company's challenges and consider how your skills can help address them.

Remember, knowledge is power. Use it to your advantage, and don't just repeat facts — showcase your understanding of the business challenges and emphasize the unique skills you bring to the table!

2

Review your CV

Your CV is the key document that secured you the interview.

It's likely the only information your potential employer has about you, so be familiar with every detail.

Anticipate questions about your experiences and decisions, such as why you chose to volunteer, took a year off, or selected certain subjects.

Be prepared to discuss any lower grades and explain your journey confidently.





3 Embrace Natural Communication

Avoid the trap of memorising answers word-for-word. This often leads to a stiff and unnatural interview.

Instead, focus on key buzz phrases or keywords you want to emphasise. This approach keeps your conversation dynamic and authentic while ensuring that you convey your main points.

4

Practice for confidence

While you can't predict every question, rehearsing basic interview scenarios can help you feel more in control.

Conduct mock interviews with a friend to refine your delivery. Pay attention to how you present yourself, including your posture, handshake, and eye contact.

Addressing potential challenges in advance, like handling pauses or tricky questions, can make the actual interview run more smoothly.

5

Plan your journey

It may sound simple, but logistical errors are common among interviewees.

Confirm the interview location, whether you're driving, using public transport, or walking. Research parking or transport options, and plan to arrive early.

Being prompt demonstrates professionalism and gives you time to settle your nerves.





6 Dress to Impress

While it might seem obvious, dressing professionally can significantly impact your interview success. For men, a suit and tie can convey professionalism and respect. For women, when in doubt, choose attire that's more formal rather than casual.

7 Be punctual

Aim to arrive at the interview location at least 10 minutes early. This gives you time to compose yourself.

If you're unavoidably delayed, communicate promptly with your interviewer to keep them informed.

8 Make a strong first impression

Your initial moments can set the tone for the entire interview. To leave a positive impression, focus on positive body language and establish a professional demeanour.



QUICK TIPS

- ✓ Offer a firm, warm handshake
- ✓ Maintain consistent eye contact
- ✓ Use formal terms of address unless invited to use first names
- ✓ Stand and sit with good posture, avoiding slumping or fidgeting
- ✓ Smile, and express enthusiasm and genuine interest
- ✓ Speak clearly and deliberately, giving thoughtful responses to questions
- ✓ Avoid crossing your arms, which can seem defensive
- ✓ Engage actively by asking thoughtful questions about the role and company



9 Key interview questions

Interviews are designed to delve deeper into making questions the focal point. To prepare effectively, consider these common questions you might encounter.

Interviews will often throw unexpected curveballs, including industry or company specific inquiries. It's beneficial to practice answering core questions so you'll have relevant responses ready.

Personal Insight

- ✓ What are your strengths and weaknesses?
- ✓ How have you worked to overcome your weaknesses?
- ✓ What is your greatest achievement?
- ✓ Where do you see yourself in five years?

Value Proposition

- ✓ Why should we hire you?
- ✓ What qualities do you bring to this role?
- ✓ What relevant skills do you have for this position?
- ✓ How does your experience prepare you for this role?

Motivation

- ✓ Why do you want this job role?
- ✓ Why are you interested in this industry?
- ✓ Why do you want to work for our organisation?
- ✓ What do you know about our company?

Behavioural

Tell me about a time when you have..

- ✓ Worked successfully as a team?
- ✓ Shown initiative in a challenging situation?
- ✓ Demonstrated leadership skills
- ✓ Achieved a significant goal?



10 Closing the interview

The conclusion of your interview is just as crucial as those initial moments.

Avoid slipping out unnoticed; instead, leave a lasting impression.

- ✓ **Convey your enthusiasm and inquire about the next steps. Use positive language to express your confidence (eg. "I look forward to discussing the next steps of my application," rather than asking a tentative question like, "Should I wait for your call?")**
- ✓ **Don't hesitate to ask if your accomplishments align with the position's requirements. This gives you one last opportunity to highlight how your skills meet the employer's needs.**
- ✓ **Always thank the interviewer for their time, and end with a strong handshake. Consider sending a follow-up email to give thanks and express your interest.**

Remember to download a copy of our CV template!