

## 10 Top Interview Tips for Success!

1. Research the Company

2. Study the job descriptions, required skills, qualities and experience

3. Answer questions using the STAR method

4. Practice your answers to common interview questions

5. Ask a friend to help you practice

6. Be on time and professional as soon as you arrive.

7. Plan your interview clothes and items the night before

8. Prepare smart questions for the interviewers

9. Bring a copy of your CV/application, a notebook and pen

10. Follow up after your interview.

### 1. Research the Company

A company's website, blog, and social media are great ways to learn about a company. Look at their 'about us' or 'company mission' pages. You are looking for something that you find interesting and information that you could mention in an interview that demonstrates that you have an interest in the company and that also shows them that you have researched them.

### 2. Study the Job Description

Use the job description to find out what skills and qualities the organisation is looking for. Then match these to your own skills and qualities and start to prepare examples of how you can demonstrate them.

### 3. Answer questions using the STAR method

Many interviewees miss out key elements of information when they are giving examples of past experience. The STAR method makes sure we talk through examples from beginning to end. (See next page)

### 4. Practice your answers

Thinking about these examples and answers before the interview is much easier than thinking on the spot and allows you to give logical, informative but concise examples.

### 5. Ask a friend for help

Practising your answers out loud makes a HUGE difference, you will be able to practice your tone and pace. (Speak to an adviser if you would like to try a mock interview)

### 6. Be on time and alert

Arrive at your interview at least 10 minutes early to ensure that you get there on time. Consider the best method of transportation to take and ask for a ride from a parent or a friend if necessary. Your interview starts as soon as you have arrived,

anyone in reception/anyone you see could report back to your interviewer. Sit up straight and pay attention to your surroundings.

### 7. Plan your interview clothes

Make sure that you have appropriate interview clothes. Try them on, iron them if needed, polish your shoes and make sure everything is ready the night before, rather than leaving it to the last minute. This will ensure if you have any issues, you have time to fix them.

### 8. Be prepared with questions

At the end of the interview, you will be asked if you have any questions, showing you are prepared with these will demonstrate your interest in the position. You can ask things like; what size team will I be working in? what do you like about working here? will there be opportunity for career progression? what would a standard day look like? When do you intend to contact the successful candidate?

Do NOT discuss salary at this stage and be careful NOT to ask questions that have already been answered. You only need to ask one or two questions. It is good to have these written down, that way if everything has already been explained, you can say 'I had a few questions, but you've already explained everything, thank you!'

### 9. Bring a copy of your CV, notebook and pen

Take a couple of copies of your CV, sometimes something goes wrong and the interviewer doesn't have one. A notebook and pen can always be useful and can show how organised you are. You may also want to have some examples written in your notebook in case you need a little reminder. However, do not read directly from it and remember Do NOT take unnecessary items with you to an interview as extra bags etc. can look messy.

### 10. Follow up after your interview

Following your interview, if you have the email address of who interviewed you, you may want to send a follow-up email (usually within 24 hours) thanking the

interviewer for their time and letting them know you're available if they have any additional questions.

**Always remember to reach**

**for the STAR!**

**S – Situation:** detail the background, provide context. When, where did it happen?

**T – Task:** describe the challenge and expectations. What needed to be done and why?

**A – Action:** what specifically did YOU do (not your team), how did you do it?

**R – Result:** explain the outcome: accomplishments, recognition, savings etc.

## Are you making the right first impression?

The majority of employers make judgements on what they see, then on how we act and finally on what we say.

## For more information on how to prepare for an interview watch:

[How to prepare for an interview - BBC Bitesize](#)

### Appearance

- Dress smart and ensure your clothes are clean
- Ensure clothes are professional rather than trendy
- Don't forget to clean your shoes
- Ensure you are comfortable with how you look – a different hairstyle or a tie that's too tight can be distracting

### Personal Grooming

- Do not overdo it with fragrance – a subtle spritz is best
- Ensure nails are clean – hands are full of expression and will be looked at
- Keep make up light and unobtrusive
- If you have tattoos or facial piercing's, find out what the rules of the organisation are and whether or not you would be required to cover them
- If you vape or smoke, it is beneficial to have a mint and wash your hands afterwards

### Attitude

- Be aware that you may fidget when you are nervous and/or wave your hands a lot when speaking
- Don't chew gum
- Make eye contact to show interest

### Language Habits

- The way you speak will be remembered just as much as what you say
- Don't use slang or swear

- Don't rush what you are saying, be clear and concise

## How to Succeed in a Virtual Interview

### What is a virtual interview?

A virtual interview is an interview that takes place remotely, sometimes over the phone, but often using technology like video conferencing.

Virtual interviews are often conducted in much the same way as face-to-face interviews. It does require some special considerations and adjustments due to the limited ability to read body language and facial expressions.

### Test your technology beforehand

A virtual interview requires tools like a camera and microphone on your computer, a software program (such as Microsoft Teams or Zoom) and a reliable internet connection. At least a day before your virtual interview, check all of your technology to ensure it works and can be used to communicate effectively. That means having a functional computer, downloading any necessary software and ensuring the connection is strong enough to sustain streaming video.

Ensure your camera is placed so that your face is in the middle of your screen (not too much blank space above or below your head). Try to place your computer on a table or desk instead of your lap or couch. Make sure that the lighting levels are good, not too bright or dark and that there are not distracting reflections. It is better if the light source (window or lamp) is in front of you not behind.

In the 10 to 15 minutes before your interview, check your internet connection and sign into the video or phone meeting the HR representative or recruitment manager has provided. Turn on the sound and video to ensure everything is in working order in time for your conversation.

### **Wear smart clothes**

In a virtual interview, you should dress the same as you would in a face-to-face interview, smart and professional but comfortable.

### **Limit distractions**

The best place to have an interview in your home is a quiet location with few distractions. Choose a room that is clean and professional-looking so the interviewer can focus their attention on you and not what is around you. If you don't have a dedicated office space, you can also use a bedroom or guest bedroom, your kitchen table or even cleared-out closet space. If possible, keep any pets out of the room you are using to avoid distractions.

### **Use professional body language**

If you have a phone interview, you may want to consider standing up to improve your own posture and confidence whilst talking.

In most interviews, you shake hands with your potential employer at the beginning and the end of the discussion. Instead, find other ways to greet and exude enthusiasm, like smiling and using good eye contact.

### **Example Interview Questions**

Top 10 Interview Questions from Indeed:

1. Tell me about yourself
2. How would you describe yourself?
3. What makes you unique?
4. Why do you want to work here?
5. What interests you about this role?
6. What motivates you?

7. What are you passionate about?
8. Why are you leaving your current job?
9. What are your greatest strengths?
10. What are your greatest weaknesses?

For more information on how to answer these questions please visit:

<https://uk.indeed.com/career-advice/interviewing/what-is-mock-interview>

**But most of all, relax and be yourself. Just because the situation is formal, doesn't mean you can't be cheerful. Most people are so nervous, showing your smiley side could be the easy solutions to stand out amongst the crowd.**

