

Preparing for an interview

You have decided it is time to find a new job, maybe circumstances have forced the decision on you. Whatever the reason, you have put together a CV and you have secured an interview. The chances are you will not be the only candidate being interviewed. You need to shine; you need to nail it.

Just Recruitment has been sending people for interviews for over 35 years, we have tried to condense those years of experience into these handy tips.

First you need to beat the butterflies!

Everyone is a little nervous at the prospect of attending an interview. It's normal but you can deal with it, you can read some simple tips [here](#), but the secret is to be well prepared. Remember, if you fail to prepare you need to prepare for failure.

Make sure you look the part.

You only get one chance to make a first impression, so you need to get it right. Research has shown that interviewers are swayed by that first impression and that 93% of it comes from the visual image that's presented. It is better to be overdressed for an interview than to be the only casually dressed person in the room. Putting on your Sunday best will tell the interviewer that you have made an effort, that you are showing them respect. Our website has a [useful guide to interview dressing](#).

Do your homework.

What do you know about the company that you have applied to? What about the people you are going to meet? Make sure that you look at the company's website and LinkedIn profile, Google them to see if they have appeared in the news and check what they are Tweeting about. Check your interviewers out on Facebook and LinkedIn, remember that they have almost certainly looked at your profile. If you have not already done it, review your social media profiles. Just Recruitment has written some advice on [how to be social media savvy](#).

Engage with the process.

An interview is not just an opportunity for a prospective employer to ask you questions. It's a two way conversation, don't be afraid to ask questions; you need to make sure that this is the right move for you. If you are interested in the role ask what the next steps are and let the interviewer know that you



“One important key to success is self-confidence. An important key to self-confidence is preparation.”

Arthur Ashe

are interested. If you are offered the job in the interview and you definitely want it then accept it on the spot. If you need time to consider an offer then be tactful in asking for the time and give a definite date when you will get back to them.

Remember the basics

- Switch off your mobile before entering the interview.
- Have some pre-prepared questions but do not concentrate on money or benefits.
- Do not lie about or exaggerate your experience.
- Do not be negative about previous employers.

Thank the interviewer for the time spent with you.



Every interview is different and it is impossible to predict the exact questions that you could be asked. The questions below are typical of the type of thing you may be asked.

Why did you join your current employer?

Why do you want to leave your current employer?

Why would you like to work for our company?

Where do you see yourself in five years?

Highlight your main achievements. Give details and specific examples.

How does the role being discussed differ from your current role?

What have been the key learning points in your career?

What are your major weaknesses and what are your strengths?

What are your interests outside of work?

You might be asked a curved ball question such as,

“If you were a colour which would it be?”

While these questions are tough they are not going to decide the outcome of the interview. With a question like this you can take a few moments to gather your thoughts. Think of an attribute that applies to you, and then associate it with a colour.

“I’d be blue because I keep cool under pressure.”

“I’d be green because I encourage people to go forward.”



Your interview checklist

1. Make sure that you know where you are going, what time you have to arrive and who you are meeting.
2. Arrive early, it is better to be sat in reception than arrive late. If you are unavoidably delayed, let your agency or the company know as soon as possible.
3. Check how you look in a mirror; you might have left home looking a picture but commuting can be dishevelled.
4. Give a positive handshake and make eye contact.
5. Wait until you are invited to sit down.
6. Stress your strengths and be willing to evidence them.
7. Make sure you know your CV inside out. It looks poor if you need to keep reading your own CV.
8. Let the interviewer know, by your behaviour and enthusiasm, that you are interested in the role. Even if this is not the job for you; if you make a good impression there may be other roles.
9. Always answer questions truthfully.
10. Thank the interviewer for the time they have spent with you.



“Opportunities don’t often come along. So when they do, you have to grab them.”

Audrey Hepburn