

How to be successful at job interviews

What to expect at an interview

- There are usually 2-3 people on an interview panel
- They take about 30-45 minutes
- Typical Interview structure includes
 - Introductions
 - Job information
 - Interview questions
 - Your questions
 - Wrap up
- If you are nervous, remember the interviewers will probably be nervous too!

Be prepared

- Find out all you can about the job and the company – read the job information and have a look at the company website, or talk to someone who works there. This shows you're interested in working there.
- Have some answers prepared in advance – there are a few commonly used interview questions, for example
 - Tell me about yourself/current job
 - What are your strengths and weaknesses
- Take a copy of your application/CV – it isn't an exam, you don't have to have it memorised
- Aim to arrive 10 minutes early (early is always better than late)



Dress the part

- Dress smartly – aim for a slightly smarter version of what people who work there wear
- Iron clothes, clean and polish shoes
- Keep make up and jewellery simple – less is more
- Be well groomed
- Lay clothes out the night before and make sure they fit

Answering Questions

Be an interview STAR and use the STAR technique to tell the interviewer about tasks or projects you have been involved in

S - What was the **situation**?

T - What was the **task**?

A - What **action** did you take?

R - What was the overall **result**?



Work examples are great, but if you haven't had a job, use experiences from school, hobbies, work experience or unpaid work

Example question – tell me about a time where you worked as part of a team, Good answer – I worked as part of a team of 4 on a project at school (situation). We had to create a poster on the Amazonian rainforest (task), my role was to do research so I looked up information online and in the library and discussed with the group which information to include (action). We ended up with a focused and informative poster and got praise for the rest of the class (result).

How to be successful at job interviews

Some extra tips

- Keep to the point – put across what you want to say, but don't waffle
- Tell the interview panel what **YOU** did, not what we did
- Stick to the truth and talk about things you have done – it's hard to remember a lie
- Ask for questions to be repeated or rephrased if you need to
- Silences are normal – if you've said all you want to say for a particular question, don't keep talking to fill a silence.

Leave an impression

- Ask questions if you want – good questions to ask are
 - What development opportunities are there here?
 - Tell me about the team I would work with.
 - What projects/tasks are coming up in the near future?
- Shake hands and always thank the interviewers for their time
- Ask when you will hear the outcome

What if you don't get the job?

- Don't be disheartened, everyone gets knocked back
- Ask for feedback on how your interview went and what you can do to improve next time
- Write down the questions you were asked after you leave and use these to prepare answers for your next interview – you will probably be asked similar questions
- Learn from the experience and you'll improve next time round



Good luck with your interview