

RESEARCH

The first thing to do is visit the company's website and social channels. Research its history, mission, and financials. Don't forget to find out if it's been in the news lately, this will ensure you come across as informed and up-to-date with topical issues. If it's a Plc, the investor relations page is a great way to get some insight into a company, what they have going on and what's important/topical for them. If not a Plc, an internet search can tell you most of what you need to know.

LEARN

Might sound silly but really learn what's on your own CV, don't assume you know it. That way you can talk naturally and fluently about your employment history and achievements. Importantly, the interviewer also wants to know how you have felt about your employment history and achievements – you should be proud of these things and delivering that message by letting your personality come into the conversation can be a great way for the hiring manager to get some further insight into who you are and how you work.





PRACTICE

Practicing out loud can negate you from giving long-winded answers on the day and help you to communicate your thoughts clearly and succinctly. Every job interview will vary, so you can't prepare for all potential questions and some may catch you off guard, but you can prepare for how you want to deliver your answers/examples. Study the job description and this will help you to determine the key skills and behaviours required – invariably, it will be these themes the hiring manager wishes to cover.

PREPARE YOUR QUESTIONS

Interviewers tend to be impressed by candidates with an enthusiastic attitude and those who have gone the extra mile to prepare. Ask insightful questions that underline your interest in the role and the company – this is also a great way of highlighting your research and your awareness of the environment in which said role/employer is in. Ask questions that reveal a motivation to add value to the company and that convey you're seriously considering the opportunity.

BE SPECIFIC

What is it about this particular role, at this stage of your career, with this company in that sector, that appeals to you? Whilst there are many similarities and themes across distinct types of interviews, every job and company has its nuances so try to avoid having stock answers. Spend some time mapping out how your skills, experience, aspirations, and ambition match what the hiring company is looking for the role outputs and new hire to deliver.

PREPARING FOR VIDEO INTERVIEWS



PREPARE YOUR SPACE

Declutter your background, put your phone on 'Do Not Disturb' and set up appropriate lighting. Choose a location with no distractions - hang a sign on the door asking deliverers not to ring the doorbell.



TECHNICAL CHECKS

Video interviews require extra preparation as you need to ensure all the technology is working. Review your tech setup, ensure you understand the software being utilised for the interview, and that your internet connection is strong.



HARDWARE

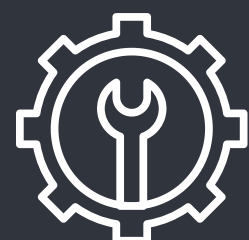


Using a laptop/webcam/tablet for the interview is preferable, however if you need to use a mobile phone prop it up or use a holder so you can sit with good posture. Avoid holding your device and ensure your face is in the center of the picture.



COMMUNICATION

Interviewers might need more time to take in your answers over video, so make it easy for them by talking clearly and at an appropriate pace. Over video or telephone, you lose some of your armory when compared to an in-person meeting, for instance body language and eye-contact. This puts an even greater emphasis on what you actually say, so ensure you are proactively contributing to the conversation. Part of the reason for the interview itself is to build rapport, you are not simply participating in answering questions.



THE DAY OF THE INTERVIEW

ATTIRE

How you present yourself will, rightly or wrongly, help hiring managers form an opinion of you. Therefore, being presentable and carrying yourself in the right manner can really aid your chances. Present yourself in line with what you've been able to glean about the company culture. Whilst workplace attire is generally more relaxed than it used to be, be mindful some employers may prefer you to be 'suited and booted.' Be sure to dress from head to toe, don't assume you'll only be seen from the waist up if on a video interview, you never know when you may need to get up!

BE ON TIME

If you are doing an in-person interview, research your route the night before, ensuring you build in plenty of time in case of delays. Arrive suitably in advance but not too early and make yourself known at reception. Whilst waiting, compose yourself. You should treat video interviews the same as an in-person interview, joining the interview a little bit early.



OPENING AND DURING THE INTERVIEW

CREATE A STRONG FIRST IMPRESSION

Be professional and personable from the start, including those you meet when you first arrive at the premises. Ideally shake hands if you are comfortable doing so and remaining standing until prompted to sit down. As mentioned above, your body language plays a huge part in an interview so do what you can to be actively engaged and receptive.

SHOW OFF YOUR INTERPERSONAL SKILLS

Make eye contact, do your best to build rapport and, where appropriate, smile. Use non-verbal cues such as nodding to show that you are listening actively to what your interviewer is saying. Throughout the interview project an attitude of energy, enthusiasm, and interest.



ANSWERING QUESTIONS

Listen attentively to questions and think about your reply before you speak. Don't understand a question? Ask them to explain or rephrase it, don't guess! Make sure you're listening to the questions and tailoring your answers, responding to questions with full answers, steering the conversation towards the key points you want to make when appropriate.

INTERVIEW TIPS

01

Try to stay calm and composed if you're being put under pressure. Buy yourself some time by asking for the question to be repeated or to come back to it later.

02

Be authentic. If you exaggerate your skills or experience, you could be exposed in the conversation. In scenarios or areas where you have lesser experience, highlight both your eagerness and ability to learn – previous examples of the latter can really assist this point.

03

Be enthusiastic about the job, the prospect of working for the company and why it's a good fit for both parties – and tell them that!

04

Let the interviewer lead the tone of the interview and mirror this. For instance, if for part of the meeting the interviewer is not behaving or speaking informally, you shouldn't either.

05

Be mindful of how long the interview is scheduled to last and the resulting effect on how long your answers should be. Unless specifically told to do so, in most interviews no answer should be more than a few minutes long.

06

If offered a drink of water, only say yes if there is somewhere to lay the glass down otherwise you might be holding it the entire time.

CLOSING THE INTERVIEW

The final stages of an interview are crucial because they'll have a lasting impression on the interviewer. Most interviews will close with the interviewer asking if you have any questions.

Having well thought-out questions can help set you apart from other candidates, as well as both convey your interest and highlight your research. You may need to tweak or swap the questions you ask, depending on how the interview has gone or what you discussed.

2 or 3 questions at the end is ideal, although as above, be mindful of the scheduled time – if you are still speaking when the scheduled end time is reached, ask the interviewer how they are for time.

Stay polite and professional. There may be some more rapport or relationship building ‘small talk’ towards the end of the conversation – this is another fantastic way to let your personality into the conversation. At the end, thank them for the chance to learn more about the job and the organisation. Aim to wrap things up by telling them that you are keen on the role/opportunity.

COMMON INTERVIEW MISTAKES

- Talking too much and giving irrelevant detail. As above, be mindful of how long your answers are. If you’re unsure if you’ve given the right amount of detail, ask the interviewers if they would like you to clarify or elaborate on anything.
- Waffling. If you’ve lost the thread of your answer, go back to the start, or take a moment to compose yourself and tell the interviewer you’re doing so.
- Never interrupt the interviewer.
- Be careful how you describe previous employers or colleagues and reasons for leaving – you want to avoid being disrespectful or distasteful. Even if you’re saying something in a light-hearted way, you’re never sure how that might be interpreted.
- Don’t ask your interviewer how you’ve done at the end.
- Don’t try and negotiate your salary/terms of employment. These things can be saved for when you have a job offer.

