



great interview guide

The face-to-face interview is probably the most important part of the job selection process. It's your chance to present yourself – your skills, experience, personal qualities and strengths – as a great candidate for the role. It's also an opportunity to find out more about the organisation and role, and help you decide if it's right for you.

Before the interview

- Research the role. Ask for the job description or person specification to identify the qualities of the ideal candidate. If the job was advertised, try to work out from the advertisement what the requirements are likely to be.
- Prepare for the interview. Competency based interviewing techniques are commonly used today. These use previous behaviours to illustrate particular competencies or skill sets.
- Competency based questions will typically be prefaced by "Give me an example of..." or "Tell me about a time..." These examples are then probed further with questions such as how, why and what was the achievement or outcome?
- Prior to your interview, refer to the position description and think about the questions you may be asked. Practice your answers.
- Research the organisation using the internet and your own networks.
- Interviews can vary tremendously, with some being just a casual discussion with the hiring manager, while in others you may face a formal panel of interviewers. Make sure you know the interview scenario that you are going to face.
- Research the interview – who is interviewing or on the panel? What will the format of the interview be? Do you need to take anything, such as work samples, with you? Will you have to undertake assessments?
- Make a list of any questions you want to ask.
- Choose smart and appropriate clothing. You need to feel comfortable and whatever you wear should be professional, neat and tidy.
- Double check where the interview is, who you're meeting and at what time. There is nothing worse than assuming it's at the client's office only to be caught out and show up at the wrong place.

First impressions

- Arrive ten minutes prior to the scheduled interview time – never arrive late.
- Use the time to read any literature on the organisation and have a last look at the information you have on the role.
- Relax – breathe deeply.
- Always shake hands with the interviewer/panel members.

During the Interview

- Relax - try to calm any nerves and enjoy the process.
- Follow the interviewer's direction about where to be seated, sit upright and look alert.
- Look them in the eye when listening to, and answering their questions. Know when to talk and when to listen.
- Listen carefully to what you are being asked or told.
- Be friendly and allow your humour to show, without getting carried away.
- Show you are prepared for the interview by referring to what you have found out about the role and the organisation.
- Pause and think before you answer.
- Ask for clarification if you don't understand a question.
- Expand your answer with examples rather than just saying "yes" or "no", and always distinguish clearly what part you played vs the collective "we".
- Sell yourself - be confident and positive about your skills and achievements.
- Avoid criticising previous employers or colleagues - this may be seen as an indicator of poor performance or a lack of ability.
- Ask relevant questions. For example, to ensure you have a clear understanding of the job requirements you could ask, "What do you expect the successful candidate to achieve in the first 6 and 12 months?"
- Thank the interviewer/panel for their time at the end of the interview.
- Make sure you know what's expected to happen next - whether there will be further interviews, when you can expect a decision, etc.

Key points on answering questions

- Avoid straight yes/no answers when you can.
- Listen carefully to the question.
- Take time to think before answering.
- Speak clearly and stick to the point.
- Avoid rambling or being vague.
- Check if you have given the interviewer enough information e.g. "Would you like to know a bit more about that?"
- Ask for clarification if you don't understand a question.
- Give examples to back up your claims where you can.
- Be positive about your skills and achievements.

after your interview

Call your **people&co.** consultant to let them know how the interview went and what your level of interest in the role is. This is an important feedback loop and an opportunity to identify and fill in any gaps in information you or the interviewer might have.

