



Your guide to interviews

Passing an interview is a necessary step on the way to getting that job. Read our guide to help you.

WHAT'S THE POINT OF INTERVIEWS?

The interview may be the only time the employer gets to talk to you before offering you a job. They'll want to talk about your experience, skills and expectations to decide how well they think you'll do in the job and whether you're a good fit for the organisation.

You will want to convince them that you are the best person for the job but also to find out what it would be like to work there and if this is the right company for you.

INTERVIEW TYPES

Interviews are pretty much always part of the selection process, but they're not always traditional one-to-one interviews. You might be interviewed over the phone, by a panel of people or be asked to take assessment tests.

Your HR GO consultant will always tell you what you can expect on the day including:

- What is likely to happen in the interview
- How many interviews & interviewers you'll have
- The name and job titles of your interviewers
- Who else you are likely to meet and when
- If there will be any psychometric assessments and if so which type
- If you're expected to deliver any presentations

INTERVIEW PREPARATION

Find out as much as you can about the company beforehand so that you appear well-informed and enthusiastic about the possibility of working there.

Anticipate likely questions

Making a list of questions you are likely to be asked and preparing suitable replies should help to make you more confident – even if the exact question doesn't come up.

There are standard questions which you are likely to be asked in one way or another based on your CV – questions about work, the job you're being interviewed for and your life outside work.

It is also a good idea to prepare some questions to ask the interviewer to show that you are interested in the job and progression in the role.

Examples might be:

- How did this job vacancy come about?
- How do they see the role developing?
- What are the challenges facing the team/department/organisation?
- What would they expect you to achieve in the first three months after appointment?

Check arrangements for the day

It's important to confirm where you'll be going and when. Try and investigate the place first if you can. You'll feel more confident if you know:

- Which building the interview will be held in
- Parking facilities or train times
- Dress code and working atmosphere

EXPERT PREPARATION TIPS

- Get a good night's rest before each interview
- Be on time or arrive early. Arriving late suggests you may always be late for work
- Take a mobile in case of unexpected delays – but switch it off when you get there
- Pay attention to how you look – your clothes and personal grooming make an impression
- Limit hand luggage to a briefcase/portfolio
- Read company press releases, brochures and notice boards for up-to-date information

IMPROVING YOUR TECHNIQUE

First impressions count. Fortunately, appearing confident is a skill you can learn and practice.

- Start with a firm handshake, use a positive voice and be aware of your body language.
- Speak clearly and distinctively and make sure that your voice sounds warm, especially if the job involves communication skills.
- Be enthusiastic about the job and the prospect of working for them.
- Smile and use hand movements & facial expressions to emphasise your enthusiasm and to support what you are saying.
- Keep enough eye contact to establish sincerity.

Tell them why you should get the job

- Use convincing examples to show what you've achieved in previous organisations and what you could contribute to this one
- Talk positively about results and benefits, profitability and productivity
- Get your point across in a factual & sincere way

Remember that most interviewers don't set out to catch you out. It's their job to ask challenging, probing questions so they get to know you better.

Things to focus on:

- Listening attentively to questions and thinking about your reply before you speak (even if you have rehearsed it)
- Answering questions with more than a simple 'yes' or 'no'
- Asking for clarification if you don't understand a question - asking them to explain or rephrase a question shows good communication skills
- Using the interview to ask questions which show your research into the job, the company and the market it operates in

Things to avoid:

- Never criticise your previous employer or colleagues – it's unprofessional
- Don't attempt to negotiate your salary/terms of employment until you have been offered the job
- Resist the temptation to pressurise your interviewer for a decision

AT THE END OF THE INTERVIEW

Before you leave the interview, shake hands and thank them for the chance to learn more about the job and the organisation.

Immediately after:

Contact your HR GO consultant by phone or email to let them know how things went. They will be able to tell you what happens next and when you are likely to hear more news.

WHEN THE RESULT IS KNOWN

If you're successful in the interview your HR GO consultant will let you know and help you through the next steps of negotiating salary and terms, including a start date.

If you're unsuccessful don't be too down-hearted or take it too personally. Faced with a choice between yourself and another candidate with the same skills, qualifications and experience, someone else could have been a slightly better fit.

Instead take the opportunity to get as much feedback as possible and put all the learning to good use in your next interview.

www.hrgo.co.uk/careers-advice