

CV SURGERY

How To Succeed in an Interview



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INTERVIEW TIPS & TECHNIQUES

So, you've clearly impressed with your CV and been called to an interview – congratulations!

The next step can often seem the scariest, but following The Diana Award's guidance, tips and techniques can help you to perform well on the day and crush that interview!

Interviews can come in a variety of formats, including competence, telephone, panel, group and technical interviews. Find out as much as you can about the interview format and whether you're required to prepare, present or bring anything in on the day. If the recruiter hasn't told you what kind of interview you'll be having, contact them to find out.



**CHOOSE A JOB YOU LOVE
AND YOU WILL NEVER
HAVE TO WORK A DAY IN
YOUR LIFE.**

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PRACTICE & PREPARATION IS KEY

Formulate answers to common interview questions (there are exhaustive lists online). Anticipate the interview and questions that could arise. Rehearse and practice answers to important interview questions.

MOCK INTERVIEWS

This will prepare you for all eventualities and will help calm the nerves. Don't be caught unawares by a trick question or attempt to wing it by thinking on your feet; the quality of your answers will suffer. Smooth delivery shows knowledge of a subject matter and will impress your interviewers.

If you have access to your university's careers service, see if you can book a mock interview, and if not, link up with an honest friend who you trust to give good feedback.

Top Tip!

Say it out loud! Get used to hearing yourself express your answers.

DO YOUR RESEARCH

- Research the company and the interviewers.
- Know the company, the industry and competitors.
- Mention press releases and quote statistics.
- Savvy online research can turn up some valuable information. Google, the company website and LinkedIn are a good start. Online resources and videos also provide a wealth of information to help with preparation.



WHAT DO I TAKE WITH ME?

1 YOUR CV

Although some interviewers bring a copy with them, having your own to hand out on request will show you're prepared. Aim to bring enough copies to accommodate for each interviewer. Make sure you know your CV inside out!

2 NOTEBOOK AND PENS

This shows you've thought ahead and there might be some information you want to jot down, whether it's important names, phone numbers, or key details about the role.

3 QUESTIONS!

When the hirer asks if you have any questions, use this as an opportunity to demonstrate how well you communicate and how well you'll fit in with the company. Examples: Are there opportunities to progress within the role/company? What do you enjoy about your job?

TOP 5 INTERVIEW MISTAKES:

1. Arriving unprepared
2. Dressing inappropriately
3. Talking too much/not enough
4. Criticising previous employees or colleagues
5. Failing to ask questions



CONQUER YOUR NERVES

Setting aside your nerves is easier said than done but learning to conquer job interview jitters is important if you want to give the impression of confidence. Try to relax and show your natural personality; the employer will get a much better feel of how you'll fit into their team. Take comfort from the fact that if you're being interviewed the recruiter is already impressed with what you have to offer, and they'll be rooting for you to do well.

Enthusiasm and a positive attitude also go a long way. Throughout the interview, evidence and reiterate your motivation for the role and the company. Be polite to everyone you come into contact with as you never know who might be on the selection panel.

Feel the fear! The majority of candidates will get nervous before and interview – this is totally normal – there's a lot riding on it after all! But this is a good thing, it shows that something important is about to happen. Try to channel nervousness by remembering your interviewer may be more nervous than you. No one will be marked down for being nervous in an interview and you're more likely to make a bad impression by appearing overly-confident or superior.



BODY LANGUAGE

Introduce yourself with a smile and a handshake that matches the firmness of the hirer's. Greet other members of the interview panel and follow the interviewer's lead to sit down or head elsewhere. It can take between 5 and 30 seconds for someone to form an opinion of you, so make sure yours is a solid one!

Show assertiveness by sitting up straight and leaning slightly forward in your chair. Maintain eye contact without making things awkward. Look at each interviewer if it's a panel but address your answer primarily to the asker.

Keep your posture open at all times e.g. crossed arms suggest a closed, defensive position.

Nod your head from time to time to show your understand or agree with points your interviewer is making.

Hand gestures play an important role in communication, helping you emphasise or reinforce key points and words. Try to keep your actions smooth, measured and natural. Don't overdo or force hand gestures!



FINAL POINTERS

BELIEVE IN YOURSELF, YOU KNOW MORE THAN YOU THINK YOU DO

CALM DOWN TECHNIQUES:

In the waiting room forget about cramming notes about the job description, it's too late for that and you'll just stress yourself. Instead, think happy thoughts!

If all else fails ...breathe. So many of us forget to do this when nerves takeover. Breathe out the negative and breathe in the positive.

GET SOME ENDORPHINS:

Whether it's going for a run, hitting the gym, heading to the pool or practising some yoga, getting your heart pumping will release endorphins that will help to relax you before the interview.

While this may seem like an insurmountable amount of information to take in and remember, it is also important not to overthink things. Prepare ahead of time, present yourself with confidence, and you can't go wrong.

And don't forget – this isn't the only job in the world. If you don't make it to the next stage, there really are plenty more out there that might even be a better fit. Practise makes perfect, and you'll land your dream job in the end.

GOOD LUCK!



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