

Hints and tips on good Interviews

Interviews are a two way process - they help an employer find out about you and decide if you are the right person for the job - and it's also an opportunity for you to find out about the company, who you would be working for and if the job is right for you

Preparing for an Interview

Always read through the Job Description and Person Specification and really try to understand what the job is about and the type of person the employer is looking for. Think about what experience and skills you have that would help you in the job.

Find out about the company — what its services/products are. Use the library, get onto the internet if possible and have a look at their website, ask them to send you company literature, talk to people who use their services or products.

Always prepare for the 'usual' questions you get asked in any interview. If you are well prepared for these it will help you feel more confident to deal with the ones you couldn't prepare for!
(There are some sample questions on the back of this sheet)

Do the practical things!

Check where the company is and how to get there. If possible, do a trial run to find out how long to allow for your journey.

Think about what you are going to wear, always aim to look smart and well presented in a suitable style for the job.

Try to get your family and friends to help by giving you a 'mock' interview.

Re-read your application - don't think you won't have to tell the interviewer what you have put in your application form. This is a fresh chance to tell them all over again why you're the best candidate.

Most people find being interviewed stressful, so do as much preparation as possible. It will help you feel more confident and in control of the situation.

Arrive in good time and let someone (usually a receptionist) know you have arrived.

Give a firm handshake if offered and say 'Good Morning' or 'Good Afternoon'.

Sit up straight in a relaxed position. Make eye contact but don't stare.

Be polite and try to appear confident.

Be positive and enthusiastic about the job. Don't answer questions with one word answers, use the opportunity to tell the employer about your skills and show you've taken time to prepare well. Don't say things which are untrue or insincere.

Thank the interviewer at the end and leave a good final impression.

After the Interview

Think about how it went. What questions did you answer well? How could you have answered some better? Did you manage to draw attention to relevant experience or skills? Did you know enough about the job and the company?

If you are not successful this time, use the experience to be even better at the next interview.

Apply for as many jobs as you possibly can so you can get more experience at interviews, and then when you find the job you really want - you'll be brilliant and ... successful!!

Some questions you may be asked.....

What skills can you bring to this role? Look at the person specification and job description which list the skills that the job requires. Think about what skills you have and then tell the interviewer you have them! Give examples of how you've used your skills - 'I can use a computer, I used it to prepare all my exam coursework'; 'I'm very good with children, I look after my neighbour's children in the holidays'; 'I'm very creative, I designed all the posters for a fundraising event'.

Tell me about yourself... A chance to tell the interviewer about 'You - the person' and show you have interests outside school and work. You should aim to highlight any useful links between your interests and job skills - easy if you're applying for a job in Accountancy and your hobby is mental arithmetic but even if your interests don't seem to have anything in common with the job, think about whether they involve things like working in a team, dedication, good organisational skills, responsibility.

Why do you want to work here? Mention the things you have learnt about them - perhaps they have a good reputation as an employer, or they're world leaders in their products - this shows you've taken the trouble to find things out.

Have you done this type of work before? Try to describe an experience you have which shows knowledge of the work and your ability to do it, even if it wasn't in a paid job. You could mention your work experience, your qualifications or a relevant hobby.

What are your strengths? This is an opportunity to list all your best qualities and skills, things like enthusiasm, reliability, ability to get on with people, seeing things through to the end, completing projects on time.



Why should we appoint you instead of someone else?
Prepare your answer for this one, if you're not sure why you should get the job, how can you expect the interviewer to



know?! Talk about relevant qualifications you have; any experience you've had of doing similar things; assure the interviewer you are hardworking and reliable and capable of doing all the tasks the job requires ... and more!

Why do you want this job? Well, why do you? Whether this is the job you have always dreamt of doing or it's just the first step on the path to the job of your dreams, try to show a genuine interest. Prepare your reasons why you really want this job and why you are the best person to do it!!

What have you done since you left school/your last job? Try to show that you have used the time positively. Talk about your job search, any voluntary work or training courses you've done, if you've looked after someone or repaired or built something.

Do you have any questions This is your opportunity to find out anything about the job you're not clear about and also to show the interviewer you are really interested in their job! You could ask if there will be any training, how many people you would be working with, when/how will they let you know their decision. If the interviewer has told you all you need to know about the job, you could simply say 'No thank you. You've described the job fully and I'm keen to start as soon as possible.'

If you haven't had the opportunity to tell the interviewer about all of your relevant skills and experience because they didn't ask the right question, there's usually a chance to say something at the end of an interview. You could say 'Thank you for interviewing me, I'd just like to say.....and then fill in the blanks (I'm really good at/interested in..... I've always wanted to work in..... I think I'd really enjoy working here')

Interview Dos and Don'ts

<i>Do</i>	<i>Don't</i>
Be Positive Sit up Straight and don't cross your arms	Interrupt - It upsets the train of thought
Listen Look interested	Fidget - Get yourself comfortable to begin with
Concentrate Make frequent eye contact	Let your mind wander - You may miss something important
Reply to the questions clearly and concisely	Be afraid to sell yourself You want this job and let them know it!
Be polite Remember to say please and thank you	Give opinions (unless specifically asked) - only evidence
Your research on an organization - and let them know that you have done your research	
Smile!	

For more helpful job application advice, contact

Future Focus: 01952 388988 or email connexions@telford.gov.uk

National Careers Service/Telford Job Box: 01952 382888 or email community.learning@telford.gov.uk