

LESSON 5: PREPARING FOR AN INTERVIEW (SESSION 1)

STEPS TO PREPARE FOR AN INTERVIEW

Being prepared is your key to success in an interview.

1. Know the job

Find out as much as you can about the job you are applying for and what it involves.

Demonstrating this knowledge shows that you have a good understanding of what the job requirements are, and that you are confident you can perform the job.

Carefully read over the job advertisement. Look for keywords, and the key duties of the job. Think about how you can use these keywords in your responses in the interview, and how you might respond if asked about your related experience to the job's key duties. If the job has a Position Description, you can request a copy to gain a detailed understanding of the job.

2. Know the company

Learn about the company that you're applying to.

Basic knowledge about the company will demonstrate to the employer that you have done your homework! Read their website, or Google them to learn about their products or services, target market and strategy.

3. Know your application

Take some time to review your resume and cover letter.

The employer may ask questions about your education and work history. Be ready to discuss these items in further detail, especially if you can highlight experiences that are closely related to the job.

4. Prepare your responses

Prepare your answers to commonly asked interview questions. You can write the answers down, or practise answering them with a friend or family member.

Sell yourself and your abilities. Be prepared to show the employer how they can benefit from hiring you, and that you're enthusiastic about getting the job.

Think back to your research from steps 1-3 above,



remembering your key words from the job description and your best experiences that relate to the job.

Prepare questions to ask the employer at the end of the interview. This is a chance to find out more about the job, and show your interest.

5. Prepare your journey there

Know where you are going and always arrive early.

Arrive at least 10 minute before your interview time. If it's not a familiar location take some time to map out your journey. You might consider taking a trip there on a day before the interview.

6. Prepare your appearance

Dress for success! Your appearance should reflect your eagerness for the job. Select your outfit the day before. Clean and neat clothes, shoes and hair are important to show your respect for the employer.

The formality of your clothes will depend on the industry you're interviewing for (more on page 45).

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PREPARE RESPONSES

Being prepared shows the employer that you're organised, enthusiastic and capable. And the more prepared you are, the more confident you will feel in yourself.

1. Review and compare your resume with your selected job advertisement.



2. Think about some questions that might be asked

Imagine some questions an interviewer might ask based on the key words in the chosen job ad, and the key information included in your resume.

For example, if the job asks for customer service skills, you might be asked:

- What do you think good customer service looks like?
- Provide an example of when you have delivered good customer service.

3. Consider how you could respond to these questions you have listed

What do you think good customer service looks like?

Example: "a friendly interaction, where the customer feels welcome and gets their service in an efficient and easy way"

Provide an example of when you have delivered good customer service.

Tell a story of when you have served a customer and it went well, or you received positive feedback from the customer or the management.

If you don't have work experience, a response could include an example from any time you have demonstrated strong people skills. Whether it was during team projects at school, with community groups, sports teams or volunteering.

POTENTIAL QUESTION	ANSWER IDEAS - TRY TO USE EXAMPLES

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INTERVIEW PERFORMANCE TIPS

1. Think about your answers

Don't be afraid to pause and reflect on what you want to say. If you don't understand the question, it's ok to ask them to repeat it.

Or if you can't think of an answer straight away, take a moment to think, and consider paraphrasing the question as you're thinking. There's no need to rush.

2. Maintain eye contact

Maintain eye contact with your interviewers where possible, especially when answering the questions.

3. Smile

A smile can go a long way to show that you're excited for the job, and that you're a friendly person (a nice person that they will want around!)

4. Speak clearly

Take your time and express your words clearly. Try and keep your responses concise. Once you have made your point, don't chatter on further.

5. Be aware of posture

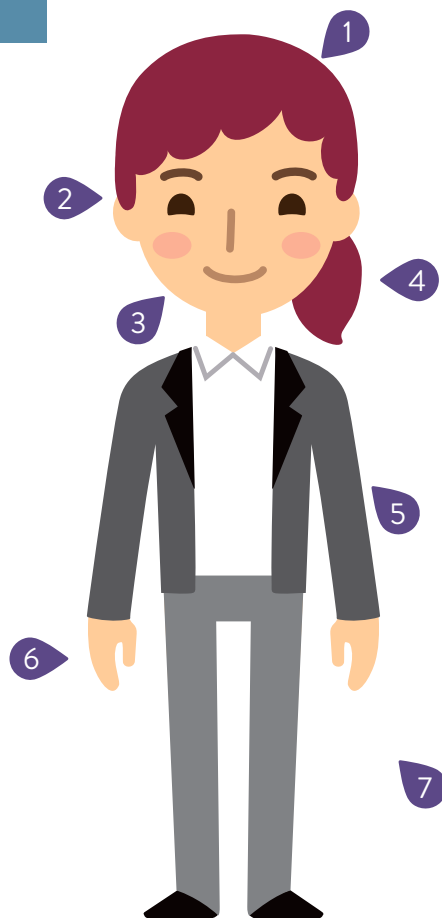
Have good posture; upright and relaxed. Avoid slouching.

6. Avoid fidgeting

Fidgeting can make you appear distracted, nervous or disinterested. Try and keep your hand still in your lap or on the table.

7. Be positive

All of these factors can help to show that you have a positive attitude towards the company, and the position you're applying for.



WHAT TO WEAR

Consider the industry you're applying to when selecting your wardrobe for the interview.

For example: fashion retail could be a stylish item from that particular store, construction could be neat work wear with closed shoes.

Some common expectations for interview appearance include:

- Clothes should be clean, ironed and free of stains and loose threads
- Hair and facial hair should be clean and neat
- No shorts: wear pants or skirt
- Tops with collars, blazers, jackets and more formal tops are a more suitable option rather than t-shirts
- Closed toe shoes, especially for trade roles
- No hats or headphones
- Depending on the industry, remove piercings/ cover tattoos
- No chewing gum
- Avoid strong fragrances
- Avoid sheer and revealing clothing

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COMMONLY ASKED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Tell us a bit about yourself?

This question may be used to assess your personality, communication skills and ability to think on your feet. Describe your qualifications, range of skills in school subjects, interests outside of school etc.

Example: “I consider myself to be honest, reliable and trustworthy. Early childhood development is a vocation that I am very passionate about and have studied previously. I think it would be very rewarding to work in this profession”.

2. Why did you choose to apply for this job?

This is where your knowledge of the company will come in handy. Describe why you think your skills and experience makes you suitable for the position.

Example: “Transport and logistics is an industry that provides a range of opportunities to learn and develop. I feel I have what it takes to complement the team and ensure the vision of the organisation is upheld.”

3. How has school prepared you for working at our company? And what skills and knowledge do you have that relate to this area?

Here is your opportunity to talk about the skills you’ve developed in school. Think about particular experiences – go beyond the classroom.

Example: “I know this job requires a lot of teamwork and communication with my fellow employees. At school, I work with my peers and teachers everyday. In fact, I just completed a physics project that required me to collaborate with five of my classmates. We worked together on the project every week for a month, presented our findings to the class and received an A. This demonstrates my capacity to contribute as a team member to your company.



4. What are your goals?

This question is to gauge your ambition and career planning. It may be easier to talk about your short term and medium goals rather than long term. If you are undertaking any study, or training, this is a good time to talk about why you’re doing that training, and what career(s) you’re eventually aiming for.

5. What do you believe are your key strengths and weaknesses?

Prepare responses that give specific examples of your strengths at a previous position that will support your application. View weakness as a lack of experience and not ability. Here is an opportunity to promote your strengths and or use a personal weakness and show the steps that you have taken to overcome it.

Example: “Strength - I have strong organisational skills, I am always prepared at school when we have deadlines. Weakness - I sometimes get nervous doing public speaking to large groups. This is something I have been improving on during school presentations, and I find my best approach to avoid being nervous is to be well prepared on the day and familiar with the content.”

Other questions to consider:

1. Why did you choose this career path?
2. What attracts you to apply for this position and why?
3. Why should we offer you the job over other applicants?