

Your CV has worked, and you have been offered an interview. Congratulations! Here are some useful tips to help you stand out.

Before the interview

- Interviews can be nerve-wracking experiences. The best way to beat the nerves is to be prepared.
- Research the role, the company and the people who are interviewing you [yes, it's fine to ask for details on who will be interviewing you – this can help you prepare]. The more you understand about the job and the company, the more you will understand what they are looking for and by asking good questions you are more likely to stand out as someone really interested in the role.
- Practise answering interview questions. A Google search will provide you with the types of questions you can expect in a standard interview.
- Ask your family and friends about both your positive qualities [your strengths] and things you may need to work on. Their answers may make you aware of qualities you didn't realise you had.
- Prepare examples that highlight the qualities you say you have. Back up your qualities with evidence.

Below are some useful examples: Think about times when you:

- were faced with a challenge and how you overcame it
- went the extra mile to achieve something
- showed excellent customer service
- showed initiative
- worked well in a team
- showed good leadership

It's a good idea to choose stories that may apply to more than one quality you want to demonstrate.

- Practise keeping your answers relevant and to the point. The **STAR*** technique can be helpful when answering questions. Be careful of telling stories that may make you upset or bring back bad memories, which may impact on your mood during the interview.

*** Note: STAR =**

- S** - **Situation** [an example where you used the skill].
- T** - **Task** [the task/s that you had in that situation].
- A** - **Action** [the action you took].
- R** - **Result** [the outcome].

- Turn up early, but not too early! Aim to arrive 10 minutes before the interview. Make sure you find the location of the interview well before your due time and, if you have time on your hands, go for a walk around the block. You don't want to arrive stressed from rushing around.
- If something does happen and you are going to be late for the interview, make sure you get in contact with the interviewers and let them know. Do everything you can to get there!
- Take a copy of your CV with you.
- Dress smartly, but appropriately for the type of job you are being interviewed for. If in doubt, overdress. It shows you are taking it seriously. If you normally wear a cap, remove it before walking into the building.
- Get rid of your chewing gum before the interview.





During the interview

- Make sure your phone is turned off before you head into the interview. Don't even leave it on vibrate as this is distracting to you and the interviewers. Keep your phone out of sight so you are not distracted by any messages.
- Look your interviewers in the eye when you shake their hand and keep focused on them during the interview. No window-gazing as this can give them the message that you aren't very interested in the job.
- You may be interviewed by a panel of people. If there is more than one person interviewing you, make sure you look at each of them during the interview and include all of them in your answers.
- Be honest but choose your stories appropriately. Stories about evenings out with your friends are generally not appropriate in a work interview situation.
- Always be aware of the language you use in an interview.
- Stick to the question and do not ramble! If you forget the question mid-answer, ask the interviewer the question again. They prefer that to having to listen to a story that goes on and on with no relevance.
- Don't rush to answer questions. Take your time to think things through before answering. If you do not understand a question, it's fine to ask the interviewer for clarification or for more information. It is better to do this than completely misunderstand the question.

- You may want to repeat the question back to the interviewer to give yourself more time or say 'that's a really good question' while you are thinking about your response.
- Be prepared to name your referees (the people who will provide verbal references for you) at the end of the interview. (Make sure your referees know you have chosen them and that they know the type of positions you are applying for).
- Have some questions prepared for the end of the interview. This shows you are really interested in the role and the organisation. However, make sure you don't ask obvious questions that you could have easily found the answers to on the company's website.
- At the end of the interview, it is ok to ask when you might hear back about the role and what the next steps in the process are.

After the interview

- Don't overthink how everything went. You will never know what the interviewer really thinks of you, so there is little point worrying about how you went or what you said. Give it your best shot and then move on!
- After the interview, you may want to send a thank you email to the interviewers as a follow up.
- Some job processes take a couple of weeks. If you don't hear anything immediately, don't panic.
- Be gracious if you do not get the job. Always thank the person declining you for the opportunity and be polite. They are more likely to think well of you if another opportunity comes up. Feel free to ask for feedback.

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