

Interview Preparation Guide

Securing an interview with a prospective employer demonstrates that your C.V. has effectively played its part. The interview represents an opportunity for you to add a personal touch to the information your C.V. has already successfully communicated. There is still likely to be many competitors hoping to secure the position so it's essential you can convince the employer you are the perfect fit for the role.

Below, there are a number of strategies you as a candidate can employ to perform well in the interview process of recruitment.

'Before anything else, preparation is the key to success'

It is vital that you do careful research into the role you are hoping to secure along with the organisation you hope to work in. Taking this time demonstrates professionalism, enthusiasm for the position as well as a genuine interest in working in the organisation. There are many tools at your disposal to carry out this crucial research such as: the company's website, online archived, articles and trade publications. Areas of the company you could focus on include; their core products and services, the opportunities and challenges currently facing them in their industry and current and future developments for the company. This information can be used in the interviewee questions section of the interview.

Another useful tip is to try and find out the name of your interviewer so that you can do some background research and offer further insightful questions.

Your dedicated, Solas consultant will help in whatever way possible to help you prepare for your interview.

Be punctual

As an interviewee, you should always aim to arrive at their interview location at least 15 minutes in advance and ideally, do a trial-run the day before so you can accurately plan your journey. If you arrive late to an interview, you automatically portray a negative impression so it's infinitely better to arrive early with time to compose yourself rather than late and stressed.

'First impressions are lasting impressions'

It has been proven that many interviewers make up their mind about an interviewee during the first 4 minutes, so it's vital to put your best foot forward.

Many candidates are unaware of the many different ways you communicate during an interview. Conversing is just one. Body language can play a huge part in how you appear to the interviewer. At an interview, you aim to portray a confident, capable candidate so be sure your body language reflects this from the beginning. Sit upright, with your feet straight on the floor and avoid any fidgety movements. A firm handshake at the start of an interview along with maintaining eye contact with the interviewer also portrays a confident manner as they are both linked to power and status.

Furthermore, you should dress to impress your interviewer. The normal attire for interviews is formal, business wear so unless otherwise stated dress accordingly. Being well presented indicates a conscientious individual who is serious about the process they are taking part in.

Be your confident self during the interview

There are a number of simple strategies to follow during the actual interview:

- Listen carefully to the interviewer's questions and ensure you respond to the actual question rather than answering one you may already have prepared
- Be prepared but still flexible enough to answer an unexpected question
- Don't give one word responses but ensure answers are as much to the point as possible i.e. avoid unnecessary waffle
- Communicate clearly and confidently
- Offer insightful questions at the closing of interview, making full use of the extensive research you will have completed prior
- Finish your interview with another firm handshake, concluding on a good impression

Finally, remember that you have been shortlisted for an interview because your C.V. has indicated to the employer you are a strong, possible candidate for the role, so, have confidence in yourself and your capabilities. The interview gives you the chance to bring the information in your C.V. to life and set yourself apart from your competitors.