

How to Prepare for a Job Interview

You earned your certification, completed your training, or gained valuable experience — now it's time to land the right opportunity. Whether you're applying for your first role in allied health or looking to advance your career, preparation can make all the difference.

Interviews can feel intimidating, but confidence grows when you know what to expect and how to prepare. Use these tips to help you stand out, feel more prepared, and make a strong impression.

1. Research the Company

Before your interview, spend time learning about the employer, their mission, and the role itself. Healthcare employers can vary greatly in culture and expectations, from hospitals and private practices to long-term care facilities and specialty clinics.

Review:

- The company website
- Social media pages
- Recent news or updates
- Online employee reviews
- The job description

Understanding the organization ahead of time helps you tailor your answers and shows genuine interest in the position.

2. Update and Customize Your Resume

Avoid sending the same resume to every employer. Review the job posting carefully and highlight the skills and experience that best match the position.

A few quick resume tips:

- Use keywords from the job description when appropriate
- Keep formatting clean and easy to read
- Double-check spelling and grammar
- Focus on certifications, clinical experience, transferable skills, and accomplishments
- Include volunteer work, externships, or relevant coursework if you're new to the field

Also remember that employers may look at your online presence. Make sure your public social media accounts reflect professionalism.

3. Be Ready to Discuss Your Experience

Anything listed on your resume may come up during the interview. Be prepared to explain:

- Employment gaps
- Career changes
- Short-term positions
- Clinical experiences or certifications
- Strengths and areas you're working to improve

Honest, confident answers are more important than having a "perfect" background.

4. Practice Common Interview Questions

Preparing answers ahead of time can help reduce nerves and improve confidence. Practice answering questions out loud so your responses feel natural and organized.

Common interview questions include:

- Tell me about yourself.
- Why are you interested in this position?
- What are your strengths?
- Describe a challenge you faced and how you handled it.
- How do you handle stress or fast-paced environments?
- Tell me about a time you worked as part of a team.
- Why are you leaving your current position?

When possible, use specific examples from work, school, clinicals, or volunteer experience.

5. Prepare Questions to Ask the Interviewer

Remember: interviews go both ways. Asking thoughtful questions shows professionalism and helps you determine whether the role is a good fit.

Consider asking:

- What does a typical day look like in this role?
- What qualities make someone successful here?
- What does training or onboarding look like?
- How would you describe the team culture?
- What opportunities are available for growth or continuing education?

Avoid asking about salary or time off too early unless the interviewer brings it up first.

6. Dress Professionally

Choose professional attire that helps you feel confident and polished. Even if employees wear scrubs or casual clothing on the job, interviews usually call for business or business-casual attire.

A few guidelines:

- Wear clean, wrinkle-free clothing
- Keep accessories and fragrances minimal
- Choose comfortable, professional shoes
- Make sure your appearance feels neat and appropriate for the workplace

When in doubt, it's better to be slightly overdressed than underdressed.

7. Prepare Ahead of Time

Avoid last-minute stress by getting organized the night before.

Bring:

- Extra copies of your resume
- A list of references
- Certifications or identification if requested
- A notepad and pen
- Water and breath mints
- Directions and parking information

If your interview is virtual:

- Test your internet connection
- Check your camera and microphone
- Choose a quiet, well-lit location
- Log in a few minutes early

8. Get Enough Rest

A good night's sleep can improve focus, mood, and communication. Try to get adequate rest before your interview and eat a balanced meal beforehand.

It's also a good idea to stay hydrated and avoid too much caffeine if it tends to increase anxiety.

9. Arrive Early

Plan your route in advance and allow extra time for traffic, parking, or unexpected delays.

Aim to:

- Arrive 10–15 minutes early for in-person interviews
- Log in 5–10 minutes early for virtual interviews

Being punctual shows professionalism and gives you a few moments to settle in before the interview begins.

10. Stay Calm and Be Yourself

It's completely normal to feel nervous before an interview. Take a few deep breaths, slow down, and remember that the interviewer wants you to succeed too.

Focus on:

- Listening carefully
- Speaking clearly and confidently
- Showing enthusiasm for the opportunity
- Being authentic and professional

You don't need to have every answer perfectly memorized. Employers are often looking for candidates who are reliable, positive, willing to learn, and able to communicate well.

Final Thoughts

Interview skills improve with practice. Every interview is an opportunity to learn, grow, and build confidence.

Preparation, professionalism, and authenticity can go a long way toward helping you stand out and land the right position.

Good luck — you've already taken an important step by preparing ahead of time.