Interviewing With Confidence

Navigating interviews and assessments

What we'll cover...

1. **The modern hiring journey**
   Where interviews and assessments now sit in the process
2. **The classics, refreshed**
   Do's & don'ts, body language, and the STAR method
3. **Online assessments**
   SJTs, reasoning tests and gamified assessments
4. **Video interviews**
   Live vs. one-way - and how to nail both
5. **AI in the process**
   How it's used on both sides of the table
6. **Over to you**
   Quick practice + your questions

The modern hiring journey

Most graduate & placement processes now run through four stages - and most students fall out at stage 2 or 3, not the final interview.

1

Application & CV

ATS screening, CV & cover letter

→

2

Online assessment

SJT, reasoning, gamified tests

→

3

Video interview

Live call or one-way recorded

→

4

Assessment centre / final

Group exercise, panel interview

We will now focus on stages 2 and 3 - the two stages that decide whether you ever get in front of a real panel.

What do you think? Good vs. Bad behaviours

Before we reveal the list - shout out a few things you'd put in each column.

Good

Bad

What do you think? Good vs. Bad behaviours

Good

- Eye contact (camera or interviewer)
- Active listening
- Sticking to the question asked
- Showing your personality
- Being prepared - questions ready
- Dressing appropriately

Bad

- Not being engaged
- One-sentence answers
- Swearing or being too familiar
- Not researching the role/company
- Arriving late - or joining a call late
- Not testing your tech beforehand

Your body talks

55% Body language

38% Tone of voice

7% The words you use

of the overall message comes from HOW you say something, not what you say.

Think about your:

- Posture and how you sit or stand
- Eye contact
- Facial expressions
- Gestures and use of space in the room

It's all about your personal brand and people's perception. The interview is from the moment you walk in (or log on) to the moment you leave.

On video, the interviewer sees far less of you - so every signal you do give off is magnified.

The STAR method

When answering a competency question, structure your answer like this:

S

Situation

Set the scene - where, when, who was involved

T

Task

What were you responsible for or trying to achieve?

A

Action

What did YOU specifically do? (not "we")

R

Result

What happened? Use numbers or outcomes if you can

On camera: keep the whole answer to roughly 60 - 90 seconds. Interviewers (and AI scoring tools) reward clear structure, not length.

Before you speak to anyone, there's a test

Most graduate & placement schemes now screen candidates with online assessments before any interview.

Situational Judgement Tests

SJT

Workplace scenarios - you pick the most (and least) effective response. Testing judgement, not "right answers".

Numerical & Verbal Reasoning

N/V

Interpreting data, charts and passages of text quickly and accurately, usually against the clock.

Gamified Assessments

GAME

Short games (e.g. Pymetrics/Harver, Arctic Shores) measuring traits like risk appetite, attention and memory.

Publisher Platforms

SHL

Common providers include SHL, Cappfinity and Harver - you'll often see the same providers across employers.

How to prepare - and what not to worry about

Do this

- Use free practice tests before the real one - the format is the hard part, not the content
- Do it somewhere quiet, on a stable connection, well before the deadline
- Read every instruction - timing and scoring rules vary by test
- For SJTs: answer as your genuine, professional self, not who you think they want

Good to know

- Gamified tests measure consistency and traits, not a "high score" - there's no way to cram for them
- Most platforms let you retake practice versions, but not the real assessment
- Employers use these to shortlist fairly at scale - treat it as seriously as an interview

Two very different kinds of “video interview”

This is where students tell us they feel least confident - and where most drop-out happens.

1 Live video interview

- A real interviewer, live, usually on Teams or Zoom
- Works just like an in-person interview - conversation, follow-ups, back-and-forth
- You can react to tone, pace yourself off them

2 One-way video interview

- No interviewer present - you record answers to preset questions (e.g. HireVue, Modern Hire)
- Usually a time window (48-72hrs) to complete, and a time limit per answer
- Often one re-record allowed - but no live reaction from anyone
- Now the norm: most students have already done at least one

Get the technical setup right, first

Camera

At eye level (stack books/a stand under a laptop). Look at the LENS when speaking, not the screen.

Lighting

Face a window or lamp. Never sit with a bright window behind you — you'll appear as a silhouette.

Background

Plain and tidy. A blank wall or simple bookshelf works well — avoid clutter or busy patterns.

Sound & signal

Wired connection if possible. Test your mic and camera 15 minutes before you start.

Dress

Dress fully, not just top-half — you may need to stand, and it affects how you feel too.

Environment

Phone on silent, door closed, housemates warned. Have water within reach, off camera.

Once you're recording: delivery tips

For every video interview

- Treat it exactly like an in-person interview - same prep, same energy, same outfit
- Sit up, smile, use natural hand gestures within frame
- Use STAR to keep answers tight and well structured
- A short pause before answering is fine - it reads as thoughtful, not slow

Specifically for one-way interviews

- Use the practice/re-record if it's offered - but don't chase a “perfect” take endlessly
- Don't over-script - read notes, don't read a script word for word; it shows
- Keep energy up even without a live audience reacting to you
- Watch the time limit on screen and pace yourself to land the Result

Employers are using AI too

Most large graduate employers now use AI to help **screen and score** online assessments and video interview answers before a human reviews them.

1

Structured scoring

AI tools often score answers against specific competencies (like STAR elements), not general “vibe”.

2

Consistency at scale

Used mainly for high-volume first rounds, so every candidate is assessed against the same criteria.

3

Still human-reviewed

AI typically shortlists or flags - a person still makes final decisions, especially from mid-stage onward.

Using AI yourself: prepare with it, don't perform with it

Sensible use

- Research the company, role and interviewer beforehand
- Generate practice questions to rehearse against
- Get feedback on a draft STAR answer before you record it
- Practise summarising your answer down to time

Risky territory

- Using AI live, in real time, to generate your answers
- Reading AI-written answers off a second screen
- Detection is now common - unnatural pauses, eye movement and tone are flagged
- Many employers will disqualify on the spot - it's rarely worth the risk

Extra tips, worth repeating

- Research your interviewer(s) and the business beforehand
- Prepare a few good questions to ask them
- Keep calm - and don't be afraid to ask for a question to be repeated
- Think before you speak; a short pause beats a rushed answer
- Don't be afraid to sell yourself - modesty doesn't come across well
- Keep it relevant and stay self-aware of how you're coming across
- Send a short, genuine thank-you note or email afterwards

It's over to you

Think of a specific example you could use to describe:

- **Teamwork or collaboration**
- **Perseverance or resilience**
- **Organisation**
- **What makes you stand out**

? Also prepare 2-3 good follow-up questions to ask your interviewers - it shows genuine interest, not just readiness

REC **Try this before your next interview:** record yourself on your phone answering one STAR question, then watch it back with the sound off. What does your body language say?

The fundamentals haven't changed. The format has.

1

Preparation still wins

Research, STAR examples, and good questions to ask - unchanged since day one

2

Practise the new formats

Try a free SJT, a gamified test, and record yourself on camera before the real thing

3

Be authentic, on and off camera

Genuine answers outperform scripted or AI-generated ones - with humans and with AI scoring

Good luck - and thank you