



Preparing for your interview

It is impossible to know what an interviewer is going to ask you, but it is possible to be prepared and ready yourself for the challenge. An interview is your opportunity to sell your skills and personality to a potential employer and for them to see how you interact in a professional environment.

Traditional interview structure

Speak to your recruiter or the person who set up the interview and ask them what to expect, the format and who you will be meeting. They will want you to be as prepared as possible.

General format

- Introductions – who you are and who they are?
- CV run through and competency questions
- An overview of the company and the position
- Questions from you

Before the interview

Be well rested and give yourself plenty of time to prepare. Find out as much as you can on the company, the role and look at the interviewers LinkedIn. Research using Google, LinkedIn, the company website, social media and industry publications. Look for recent news articles, project wins and any press releases for up-to-date information on the business and investigate any publications the hiring manager may have produced or contributed to. There may be plenty of industry commonality you can share or mutual connections that you have both worked with previously. It will help gain trust and credibility.

Know your CV and your professional background as it is the first thing you will be asked about. Have it in front of you for reference. You'll need a pen and paper with prepared questions, ready to take notes.

Common Interview Questions

When being asked questions during the interview, listen and digest before you answer. Take a breath and speak clearly with a good volume. There is no need to rush through and don't over think it. Below are some examples to help with your planning.

- Why are you looking for a new job? Why do you want to leave your current company?
 - Don't be negative about your current employer, mention your draw to a new challenge, motivation to progress, develop, new projects or why the company itself / this role really appeals to you.
- Why are you interested in the role?
 - Refer to the job description and pick out specific points that interest you.
- What made you apply?
 - It is ok to say you were approached by a recruiter and the opportunity really caught your eye due to the company and the role.
- Tell me about your CV



- This should be prepared, just a few minutes overview of your last couple of positions and recent professional background.
- Why do you want to work for our company?
 - Research online, look at what awards they have won, project wins and what they are shouting about on their website and social media platforms.

Competency-based questions

You should be asked competency based questions, these are designed to draw out specific experience or how you approach problems within a professional capacity. The most important way to answer is to be demonstrative i.e., refer to a particular time and give that as an example.

Examples

- Describe a situation where you have had to deal with a difficult client or colleague?
- Tell us about a time when you were a member of a team and what was your role?
- What has been a recent challenge and how did you overcome it?
- When was the last time you missed a deadline?

Questions for the interviewer

At the end of the interview, you will be asked if you have any questions. Come prepared with a handful of questions around culture, the team, progression, or anything that is important to you.

Examples

- Could you talk me through a typical day or week within the role?
- How would you describe the company culture?
- What does progression look like?
- What is your favourite part of working for the company?
- Do you support any charities?

Money

Although money may not be the main motivator to move it will still come up and be part of the process. Nobody feels comfortable when talking about it – everybody worries whether they have sold themselves short or been priced out. Assess the situation and discuss salary only if you feel comfortable. However, we would recommend having a conversation with your recruiter before the interview. They would have represented your expectations to the client so it shouldn't come up. Just be consistent throughout if asked, the interview is there to assess your technical expertise, not your negotiation skills.

Once the interview is over, thank them for their time and feel free to ask what the next steps are. Do not ask for instant feedback as the interviewer will need time to reflect. Call your recruiter and share your thoughts and feelings. They will have a call booked with the client, who will want to know your opinions to help them to decide on the next steps.

Making time to prepare is the key to a successful interview, good luck and just be yourself!