

A woman with long dark hair, wearing a patterned blazer, is smiling and looking towards the left. The background is a blurred office environment with windows and blinds.

24-7
STAFFING

Preparing for an interview

You only get to make one first impression, so preparing to give the best account of yourself at interview starts way before you walk into the interview room.

Here is our guide to maximising your chances of landing your next job.

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Do your research

Research the company by checking out their website, social media posts and doing an internet search.

Find out all you can about what they do, their products or services, market position, who they work with, company history and anything else that will help you demonstrate understanding of the company you potentially want to work for.




QUICK TIPS

Dive deeper into the company's culture by understanding its core values.

Demonstrating a genuine connection to the company's values during the interview can significantly enhance your chances of being perceived as a strong cultural fit.

Read and re-read the job description.

Make sure you know all you can about the role you have applied for so you can show off the skills and attributes you possess that are important to the role.



What will you say?

Knowing before you attend an interview how you will respond to some of the key questions you are likely to be asked will not only ensure your interview is smooth and you give the best answers you can, but will also fill you with confidence that you are much less likely to trip up or have a complete blank moment and not be able to answer.



QUICK TIPS

Use the common questions at the end of this guide to think about the best examples you can give, prepare and learn your answers.

It's also important to prepare yourself for questions you might want to ask the interviewer yourself.

Engaging and asking thoughtful questions during an interview is a great way to showcase your genuine interest in the role and company. Here are some examples:

- ▶ *What is it you like about working at this company?*
- ▶ *What do you think is your company culture?*
- ▶ *What opportunities are there for training and progression?*
- ▶ *What does a typical day look like?*



What to take

Depending on the type of role you have applied for you may need to prepare evidence or work to demonstrate your education, training, skills and competencies.

Read the interview instructions for specific requirements which could include:

✔ **RIGHT TO WORK DOCUMENTS**

This can include a proof of identity document, proof of your national insurance number and proof of address as per UK government guidelines.

✔ **TRAINING & CERTIFICATES**

Practical work-based assessments such as a driving assessment, machine operation, use of IT software programs or written assessments.

Have any role specific licences with you, glasses or work aids you may need.

✔ **YOUR PORTFOLIO**

Evidence Portfolios of creative or design work, testimonials or achievements.

✔ **PREPARED PRESENTATIONS**

Prepared presentations requiring specific information, make sure you rehearse your presentation and have it in the requested format such as a PowerPoint on a USB stick.



Personal appearance



First impressions start with how you look so looking smart is really important.

Regardless of the type of role you are applying for, dressing smart demonstrates high personal standards and respect for the person interviewing you.

So, iron that shirt, polish those shoes and spend time on personal grooming, and you will feel and look confident when you walk into that interview room.



Looking good is one thing, but your appearance goes beyond a suit and tie.

Make sure to conduct yourself in a professional manner. We've had candidates who have taken phone calls during interviews or have let their tongue slip.

You probably don't need to be told that swearing in a job interview is highly inappropriate, but make sure you rein yourself in if you are a potty-mouth.

Getting there on time

Being on time for your interview will impact on your first impression and how stressed you are.

Plan your journey so you get there on time, stress free and not in need of a change of clothes!

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- *How are you getting there?*
 - *How long will it take?*
 - *Are there any roadworks or expected delays that will affect your journey time?*
 - *If you're driving, where will you park, will you need change for the meter or download a parking app?*

- *Buy public transport tickets in advance and know what routes, platform or stop you need, will you change trains/buses on route, what stop do you need to get off at?*
 - *Will you need to walk? If so, what is the weather forecast? Will you need a coat, brolly or deodorant if it's hot?*
-



QUICK TIPS

Double check the interview details.

It's not unheard of to misread the time or location of an interview. Make sure to double check to avoid disaster!



Common interview questions

Here are some common questions you might be asked in your interview. Feel free to print this off and write your answers down to help you prepare.

What do you know about the company?

What elements of the role appeal the most / least?

What do you feel are your personal strengths in terms of this role?



Give me an example of where you delivered great service that you're proud of. What was so special about what you did?

- *How did this experience influence future service?*

Tell me about a time when you had to learn a new system or a new function. How did you familiarise yourself with how it worked?

Tell me about a disappointment or challenge you have experienced at work, or when something didn't go to plan.

- *How did this make you feel?*
- *How did you respond?*
- *Is there anything you wish you had done differently?*
- *What have you learned from this experience?*

Talk me through an example of how you have handled a disagreement or dispute (either with a customer or colleague).

- *What was the situation?*
- *How did you handle it?*
- *What was the outcome?*
- *What have you learnt from the situation?*



What communications skills do you think are important for the role?

Are there times when you need to bend the rules to get the job done?

How do you prioritise your workload?

Tell me about a time when you went the extra mile to support a colleague.



What are your greatest strengths?

What are your weaknesses?

What do you consider your best skills?

What skills would you like to improve?



What do you consider your greatest achievement?

What are your ambitions?

How does this role fit into your ambitions?

And that's it! Thank you for taking the time to read our guide, and we hope it can help prepare you to ace your job interview.

If you have any further questions, please get in touch with our friendly team!

A man and a woman in business attire are sitting at a desk in an office, looking at a laptop. The man is on the left, wearing a light blue shirt and a dark tie, and the woman is on the right, wearing a white shirt. They are both smiling and appear to be in a collaborative work environment. The background is slightly blurred, showing office equipment and a desk with a cup of coffee, a glass of water, and some papers.

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