

Top 10 Tips on how to succeed at interview

Supplied by: Personal Career Management



In this highly competitive jobs market it's critical that you prepare well to ensure you differentiate yourself and perform to your best at interview.

1. **Do your research!**
2. This is one of most effective ways to improve your success rate at interview so ensure you have studied the following;
3. **Company information** - demonstrating your knowledge of the organisation is key, do look at company reports and the website but also check out their key products and services, their competitors and find out what challenges lie ahead for them in the future. If possible talk to people who work there and see what they can tell you.
4. **The job itself** - imagine you are the recruiter, putting yourself in their shoes and build an in depth understanding of what they are looking for. Ensure you know this inside out before the interview and that you'll be able to anticipate the questions they'll ask. Try to talk to the recruiter or the HR team beforehand.
5. **The interviewers** - check them out on LinkedIn and then consider the different perspectives they may have when answering their questions. Think about their job role within the company to how you might respond, e.g, are they coming from a technical or HR perspective?
6. **The selection process** - what is the structure of the interview? Will it be informal or more formal with competency based questions? Ring and check this out with them beforehand.

And remember ...what to take with you - your CV, the job spec, the questions you want to ask them, possibly your passport or another form of your ID.

7. **What are your key messages?**
8. **You want the job** - be very clear about the fact that you do want to work for them. Prepare your answer to "why do you want the job?".

First impressions - dress to impress, mirror the company dress code and take care with your personal grooming, smile, make eye contact and ensure a good firm hand shake when you first meet.

Vocal communication - ensure you sound energetic, positive and excited about the role!

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Visual communication - maximise your impact with this! Ensure positive body language, be upright and attentive at all times.

9. **Build your evidence**

Prove yourself - the interviewer will be looking for as much evidence from you as possible that you can do the job. Map out for yourself the key requirements of the role - skills, experience, personal qualities, knowledge, qualifications - then find specific examples from your career history which demonstrate that you have what they're looking for. If you feel there are any gaps in your background then consider if there is any way you can bridge these - via some online research, talking to other specialists in the field and so on...

Added value - you need to show the employer how you've added value in the past. What problems have you solved, what opportunities have you identified, have you taken any steps to help reduce costs or improve profit? Or have you improved quality, efficiency or developed relationships with customers? Employers are looking for star players, not a run of the mill candidate.

10. **Practice, practice, practice!**

The single thing you can do to significantly improve your success rate is to rehearse the answers to the questions you know you'll be asked:

What are your strengths?

What are your weaknesses?

What's your greatest achievement?

Why do you want to work for us?

Why do you want to leave your current role?

What are your career plans?

Find a trusted friend to practice your answers with and ask them for feedback - it will make a huge difference.

Good luck!

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