

Preparing for an Interview

When it comes to an interview, you can never be too prepared.

Thorough research & effective preparation is absolutely essential to guarantee interview success.

Getting started

First things first, you need to know what to prepare for. Aside from giving you an insight into the role and organisation, good interview preparation will also give you confidence.

Key things to cover:

- Research the company
- Read the job and person specification thoroughly
- Find out what the interview format will be
- Know your CV
- Practice answers to commonly asked questions
- Prepare questions to ask the interviewer

Research the company

Interviewers expect candidates to have a good understanding of what their organisation does – find out how big the company is, who their customers are, and who their main competitors are – as well as any recent developments or plans

within the company. Find out who your interviewer will be and try finding them on the company website and LinkedIn.

Read the job description

When it comes to interview preparation, the job description is your best friend.

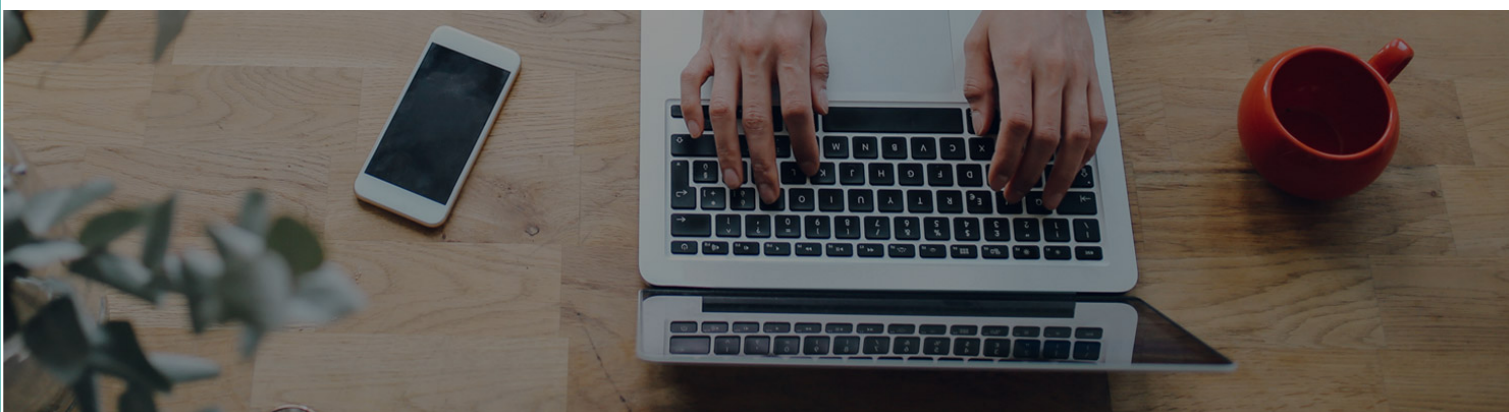
Not only will a thorough examination of the duties and person specification help you to understand more about what the role entails – it will also help you to recognise exactly what the employer is looking for. Then, you can tailor your answers accordingly – coming up with examples that prove you're the best candidate for the role.

Figure out the format

Interviews can take a number of forms – from telephone interviews to one-on-one and group interviews, to position-specific tests, role plays, and psychometric questionnaires. Each one will require a different type of preparation. Often, this will be explained when you're invited to the interview, but there's no harm in asking for more information if needed.

Know your CV

Make sure you know your CV inside out before the interview, so that you can answer any questions around dates, career history and qualifications without hesitation.



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Practice answers to commonly asked questions

See our guide to commonly asked questions and practice your answers. Make sure that you have specific examples at the ready. Factual information is always best. Rehearse out loud or ask a friend / your Optima Consultant to do a practice interview with you.

Prepare questions to ask the interviewer

There is nothing worse than getting to the end of the interview and going blank when asked if there is anything else you'd like to know. Make sure that you have 3 questions prepared to ask, so that if 1 or 2 are answered during the interview, you'll still have 1 on standby.

The day before the interview;

Although you should have the bulk of your preparation done by now – there will still be last minute things to do;

- Pick your outfit and try it on
- Make sure that you have the address and check where the nearest car park is
- Do a trial run to check the journey time
- Put important information into a folder (e.g. your CV, portfolio, certificates, or any other examples of your work and/or qualifications and your passport or driving license)
- Read and review the research you've done

Sorting out all of the above in advance will mean less stress on the day of the interview.

The day of the interview

By now, you should feel prepared.

All that's left to do is get there on time, and put your preparation to good use.

Plan to arrive at least 10 minutes before your scheduled interview time – and if you're going to be late for any reason, make sure you telephone your Consultant at Optima, who can notify the company on your behalf.

Your Consultant at Optima is available at any time to provide you with additional advice and coaching before your interview.

