

## Nailing the interview

Every interview is different—but there are some **very common things** you can prepare for. Read on for tips on how to nail your interview.

### At the interview



#### The first question often asked is: “Tell me about yourself”

This is your moment. Don't wing it. Think of it as your **30–60 second intro** (your “elevator pitch”).

A simple structure might be to talk about:

- ▶ Who you are
- ▶ What you've done
- ▶ What you're interested in
- ▶ What you value you bring

#### Example

*“I've recently finished studying [subject] and I'm really keen to start my career in [industry]. During my studies, I especially enjoyed [area], and I've also worked part-time in [job], where I developed skills like [skills]. I'm reliable, used to balancing commitments, and I enjoy working in a team.”*

#### Behavioural questions (the ones that sometimes catch you out)

In a structured interview, you'll likely get asked questions that you have to give an example as an answer. For example:

- ▶ *“Tell me about a time you worked under pressure”*
- ▶ *“Give an example of when you've worked in a team”*

Here are some tips on how to answer these questions:

#### Use the S.T.A.R method

S/T (Situation or Task) → Action → Result

How it works:

- ▶ **Situation/Task** → What was happening?
- ▶ **Action** → What did YOU do?
- ▶ **Result** → What was the outcome?

Interviewers want a **real and specific example**, not a guess or a hypothetical answer.

#### Avoid these mistakes

Don't say:

- ▶ “That always happens, I usually...”
- ▶ “I **would** do...”

Make sure your example is in past tense eg 'I called the customer', or I discussed the issue with my manager and then I talked to the customer again to let them know what action I would take.

#### “Why do you want this job?”

This is where people sometimes give the wrong impression to a potential employer. You should be able to give a compelling reason that shows genuine interest in the role and the organisation.

#### Bad Answer:

*“I've applied for heaps of jobs and this is the only one I got an interview for”*

#### Good Answer:

- ▶ Shows interest
- ▶ Mentions the company
- ▶ Connects to your goals

### For Example:

*"I'm really interested in this role because it aligns with what I studied and I like that your company focuses on [something specific]. I'm keen to learn and grow in this kind of environment."*

### "What are you looking for?"

Even if you don't have it all figured out, at least a general direction in mind instils confidence.

### Example:

*"I'm looking for an entry-level role that builds on my academic knowledge and where I can learn the basics really well, contribute to the team, and develop my skills over time."*

### If you're a school leaver

Talk about:

- ▶ Subjects you enjoyed
- ▶ What you're good at
- ▶ Your willingness to learn

### If you just want "any job"

Don't say that directly! Instead try:

*"I'm open to different opportunities and I'm really keen to learn, contribute, and build experience. I bring a positive attitude and I'm quick to pick things up."*

## Questions you should ask the interviewer

When they say: "Do you have any questions?" Always say YES. This demonstrates a strong interest in the role and the organisation.

### Good questions:

- ▶ What's the team like?
- ▶ Why is the role available?
- ▶ What does a typical day look like?
- ▶ How would you describe the culture here?
- ▶ What are the next steps?

Bonus Question:

*"What do you enjoy about working here?"*  
This can offer insights into their style and a bit more about what's great about the company.

## Ending the interview strong

Before you leave:

- ▶ Thank them for their time
- ▶ Show interest in the role
- ▶ Ask about timing for a decision to be made or next steps

### Example:

*"Thanks so much for your time - I really enjoyed learning more about the role and I'd love to be considered. What is the timeframe in which I could expect a decision?"*

## After the interview



Being memorable at this point is a real asset. Send a quick thank you message within 24 hours.

### Example:

*Hi [Name],*

*Thank you for taking the time to meet with me today. I really enjoyed learning more about the role and your team. I'm very interested in the opportunity and would love to be considered. Please let me know if you need anything further from me.*

*Thanks again,  
[Your Name]*

## Following up

If they gave a timeline and you haven't heard back by then, it's okay to follow up politely.

Don't wait to be ghosted. Take control of your own destiny.

### Nailing your interview checklist:

- ✓ Turn up prepared (don't wing it)
- ✓ Use real examples to demonstrate your skills
- ✓ Show interest in the interviewer, the organisation and the role
- ✓ Ask questions
- ✓ Follow up