



HELPFUL INTERVIEW TIPS & HINTS

Preparing for an interview

For more information about
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Doc 1 Helpful Interview Tips & Hints
Doc 2 Creating a Successful Resume
Doc 3 Preparing for a Video Interview
Doc 4 Transferable Skills

PREPARING FOR AN INTERVIEW

Congratulations, we're so pleased to hear your job application has been successful and that you now have an interview with a potential employer. Preparation for an interview is often the key to success. The team at First Impressions are here to support you through searching, preparing and applying for jobs.

This document aims to provide you with tips, tricks and exercises to help prepare you for an interview with a potential employer.

If you would like any further assistance, please contact us and one of our friendly trainers will be in contact as soon as possible.

Thank you and good luck,

THE F.I.C.E TEAM





PHONE INTERVIEW HINTS & TIPS

Employers usually receive a large number of applications. Many candidates can look very similar on paper, so hiring managers often revert to phone interviews for preliminary screening. This process helps to narrow down the pool of talent prior to face to face interviews.

Here are some handy tips and hints to help you prepare yourself:

- Make sure your phone is charged, your phone has good reception and you have confirmed the scheduled time with the interviewer
- Make sure you are in a quiet environment that allows you to concentrate. Let friends and family know you are unavailable during the time of the interview.
- Eliminate distractions. Turn off the TV, sit down and have all your phone interview materials handy.
- Use proper etiquette. Answer the phone by introducing yourself, speak clearly, know who will be calling you and always smile. Smiling during your interview can promote a positive tone in your voice.
- Look over the job description and have an understanding of what the employer is looking for. Knowing the key job criteria can help you tailor your answers to various interview questions.

PREPARE ANSWERS FOR COMMON QUESTIONS

It's strongly recommended that you consider possible interview questions and prepare answers prior to your interview. Researching common interview questions can familiarise you with the types of questions the employer may ask.

Here are some examples of the questions you could be asked:

- Why should we hire you/ what makes you the right candidate?
- What interests you about his job?
- What are your biggest strengths and weaknesses?
- What experience do you have doing...? (usually related to the role)
- Tell me a bit about yourself
- Tell me about a time when...

QUESTIONS TO ASK DURING AN INTERVIEW

It is encouraged that you to ask the employer questions during your interview. Try to weave these questions in as the interview is progressing or after you have answered the questions. This will allow you to gain a strong understanding of the role, the company's culture and whether the position is right for you.

Here are some examples of the questions you could ask:

- Can you walk me through a typical day in the life of this role?
- What will be my biggest challenge in this role?
- How will my success be measured in this role?
- What have you enjoyed most about working here?
- Why did the previous person leave this role?
- What are the opportunities for growth within this role?

S.T.A.R METHOD

SITUATION, TASK, ACTION & RESULT

The S.T.A.R method is one of the most effective ways of responding to an interview question. This method will ensure you answer a question by outlining a situation you found yourself in, the task you were assigned, the action you took and the result that occurred.

When using the S.T.A.R method remember to ensure:

- Your responses are specific in nature. Do not tell the interview panel what you would do, instead tell them what you did do!
- The situation you choose to highlight was a positive one. You are selling yourself to the employer, so select examples with a successful result.

USING THE S.T.A.R METHOD

QUESTION

“Can you give me an example when you have worked well as part of a team?”

SITUATION

One Friday afternoon, at approximately 4pm, my manager rushed into the office and said that a delivery of stock was due any minute now. The delivery was scheduled for the following Friday, but the courier company had got the dates mixed up and therefore it was arriving a week earlier. This meant we had to drop everything and get ourselves prepared for the unexpected delivery.

TASK

The problem was, most of us were due to leave at 4:30pm that day, so there were not many people around to carry out the task of taking in the delivery, which usually takes at least an hour to unload and stock check.

ACTION

I immediately volunteered to stay behind late to help the company out in its time of need. I set about preparing for the delivery by getting together a small group of workers who I knew would help me achieve the task quickly and accurately. Then, I handed out jobs to the people in the group, which including handling the goods, checking them off as they came through the warehouse and also stocktaking. I briefed all of the team so that everyone knew their role within the task. Once the delivery arrived, we worked hard to achieve the end goal.

RESULT

Following the team’s hard work, we managed to get the delivery unloaded, stocked on the shelves and cross-checked, much to the gratification of our line manager. He thanked us all for volunteering to get the task completed quickly, safely and accurately.



CREATING A SUCCESSFUL RESUME

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CREATING A SUCCESSFUL RESUME

A resume can be defined as “a summary of your experience, education, achievements and skills” Here are some handy hints and tips, still not feeling confident doing a CV by yourself? Reach out to our FICE team who can support and guide you along the way.

Here are some handy tips and hints to help you prepare yourself:

- Did you know that you have
 - 10 seconds to capture the reader's attention
 - 30 seconds to capture interest
 - 2 minutes total for them to make a decision on whether or not to offer you an interview
- You should be getting approx. 10% back in interviews based on resume application. So for every 20 resumes you submit you should expect at least 2 interviews. If this is not happening then you need to look at your resume and cover letter.
- The length of your CV should not exceed 3 pages
- Text should be presented in a standard font such as Arial or Calibri. Font size no bigger than 12. Name and Headings can be in font size 14.
- Make sure there are no spelling mistakes and unfinished sentences, always get a friend or family member to proof read.
- Don't not include any discriminatory information such as age, sexuality, religious beliefs etc.
- Leave your address off you CV, only put your suburb if applying for a local job
- Keep it concise and relevant, tailor your application and use key words that are list in the job advertisement
- You should only go back 10 years in your work history
- If you don't have a consistent work history, consider doing a skills based resume
- Your resume should include the following sections
 - Contact information
 - Career Objective or career profile
 - Skills & attributes
 - Experience summary
 - Education/ qualifications, work related licenses
 - Achievements
 - Availability
 - Referees



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VIDEO INTERVIEW HINTS AND TIPS

As with phone interviews, video interviews can be tricky, although at least with a video interview, the hiring manager can see you.

Videos are a great way to connect and can save both parties the hassle of travel

- Make sure your technology is up to date and working and batteries or equipment charged.
 - Ensure your internet connection is stable
 - Test your computers webcam
 - Check that your computers audio is working
 - Close any unnecessary web browsers and applications
 - Put your mobile phone on silent
- Take the time to make sure your surroundings are clean and tidy
- Position the camera so that you are looking up slightly and centred on the screen
- Do some practice video calls with family and friends, ask them for feedback about your appearance and eye contact
- Appearance is important and you should still dress the part as if you are in a face to face interview, research the company and tailor your outfit to suit.
- Maintain eye contact throughout interview and let the interviewer finish before giving your answers.
- Have your resume close , notes and questions ready and always remember to smile
- As with any job interview, you should conclude by thanking the interviewer for their time. Send a follow up thankyou email either that day or the next day, this may help to build a stronger rapport with your potential employer.



VIDEO INTERVIEW HINTS AND TIPS

The following tips are useful in the event things don't go according to plan.

If your video or audio stops working:

Before the interview, ask the interviewer for a phone number where you can reach them if you experience technical difficulties. If the video cuts out, call them and ask to continue by phone or reschedule.

If noise interrupts the conversation:

If noises (sirens, construction etc.) interrupt your video call, apologise for the interruption and ask for a few moments until the noise has subsided, you may also want to mute the microphone.

If someone enters the room unexpectedly:

If family members, housemates or pets enter the room while you are being interviewed, apologise and ask for a few moments, mute your microphone and turn off your camera to deal with the interruption

If you don't have the resources for a video interview, consider the following:

- Ask friends or family if you can borrow the equipment
- Renting equipment
- Explore where applicable using resources at the public library (when possible)

Remember, the team at First Impressions are here to help guide you through your job application process. If you have any questions please contact us.

GOOD LUCK!



**LOOKING TO CHANGE CAREER PATHS?
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SKILLS**

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TRANSFERABLE SKILLS

Having competitive job skills is an important part developing or furthering your career. There are many qualities that are universally desired by employers, regardless of their field. If you are unsure about the career path you would like to pursue, it is important to develop skills that can transfer from one industry to another. This allows you to explore your job options freely while still creating a strong resume.

What are transferable skills?

Transferable skills are various abilities, knowledge and behaviors that can apply to any type of work. These might include adaptability, organization, teamwork or other qualities employers seek in strong candidates. Transferable skills can be used to position your past experience when applying for a new job- especially if it's in a different industry. Since no two jobs are the same, employers seek out candidates with transferable skills as they show that the applicant is flexible and adaptable.

You may think that a lack of relevant, industry-specific experience will stop you from getting a job but this is not always the case. If you are changing careers, have recently graduated, or are looking for your first job, you'll be pleased to learn that employers are often looking for potential. It is vital, therefore, that you sell your potential by demonstrating the transferable skills that you have developed already.

Employers are usually looking for abilities and qualities that they recognise to be present in the most effective employees. These soft skills, such as being able to communicate effectively in a variety of situations, showing initiative, creativity and integrity, and having a good work attitude, are valuable across all industries.

Top 10 flexible career skills

1. Decision making
2. Multi - tasking
3. Problem solving
4. Collaboration
5. Communication
6. Professionalism
7. Integrity
8. Management
9. Initiative
10. Technology literacy

You might include transferable skills on your resume, cover letter and in interviews. Review the job description carefully to identify which of your transferable skills are most relevant to the position.

On your resume, there are several options when deciding where to include key transferable skills. You can list your skills in the following sections

1. Resume summary or objective
2. Employment history descriptions
3. Skills list

In your resume summary or objective, consider including your most valuable, relevant transferable skills, be sure to use the job description to decide which skills to put on your resume. These can be found under sections like 'job duties' or 'requirements' in the listed job.

For example, if you have strong communication skills, you might say:

"Project manager with 5 years' experience using strong communication skills to complete successful end-to-end projects with several teams"

For a strong skills in technology, you might say.

Professional and motivated individual who has worked across multiple IT platforms in my past role as a travel consultant. Competent in data entry and all Microsoft office suites, I bring a strong history of customer service and delivering results.

There are also plenty of examples and resources you can find online. The team at FICE are also available to assist you so please contact us if you need.

Thank you and good luck

