

JOB INTERVIEWS AREN'T THAT SCARY

THE GUIDE



JOB INTERVIEWS FOR DUMMIES

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PREFACE

This e-book, *Job Interview Aren't That Scary: Job Interviews for Dummies*, is designed to help polytechnic students prepare for real-world job interviews with confidence. Many students struggle with how to present themselves, what to say, and how to respond to interviewers' questions. This guide provides simple, practical advice in clear English that's suitable for ESL learners. It supports classroom learning and can also be used for independent study.

The topics are organized to build knowledge step by step. You'll start by understanding the purpose of interviews, then learn how to prepare for one, including what to wear, what to bring, and how to research a company. You'll also practice answering common interview questions and learn what questions you can ask at the end of an interview. Lastly, the book includes a short quiz and writing task to reinforce what you've learned.

This e-book aims to build your confidence and communication skills so you're ready to respond appropriately in a job interview situation.



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WHAT IS A JOB INTERVIEW?

A job interview is a formal meeting between a candidate seeking employment and a potential employer. During this process, the employer evaluates the candidate's qualifications, skills, experience, and overall fit for the position. Similarly, the candidate has the opportunity to learn more about the company, the job role, and to showcase their abilities.

Job interviews can take various formats, such as one-on-one interviews, panel interviews, group interviews, phone interviews, or video interviews. The interview typically involves a series of questions aimed at assessing the candidate's suitability for the role.

It's crucial for both parties to prepare thoroughly for the interview to ensure a productive and informative exchange. The ultimate goal of a job interview is for the employer to find the best candidate for the job and for the candidate to secure the position that aligns with their career goals and aspirations.



Provides you with a face to face opportunity to set yourself apart from your competition and expand on the information the employer already knows about you from your resume.

JOB INTERVIEWS AREN'T SCARY

Job interviews are often viewed as intimidating and nerve-wracking experiences, but they don't have to be scary. With proper preparation and a positive mindset, job interviews can actually be exciting opportunities to showcase your skills and qualifications to potential employers.

One way to ease your nerves is to thoroughly research the company and the position you are applying for, so you can confidently discuss how your background aligns with their needs.

Practicing common interview questions with a friend or in front of a mirror can also help you feel more comfortable and articulate during the actual interview. Remember to dress professionally, arrive early, and bring extra copies of your resume and any other relevant documents. By approaching job interviews with confidence, preparation, and a positive attitude, you can transform what may seem scary into a valuable chance to make a great impression and land your dream job.

PREPARING FOR A JOB INTERVIEW

Start by researching the company and the position you are applying for to understand their values, goals, and requirements.

Practice common interview questions and prepare your answers, highlighting your skills and experiences that are relevant to the job.

Dress professionally, arrive on time, and bring extra copies of your resume and any other necessary documents.

Preparing for a job interview is crucial to increase your chances of success.

During the interview, maintain eye contact, listen actively, and ask insightful questions to show your interest and enthusiasm.

Follow up with a thank-you email expressing your gratitude for the opportunity to interview.

PURPOSES OF A JOB INTERVIEW

Job interviews serve several important purposes for both the employer and the candidate.



For the employer, a job interview allows them to assess the candidate's qualifications, skills, and experience in person. It provides an opportunity to delve deeper into the candidate's resume, ask specific questions, and evaluate how well they would fit within the company culture. Additionally, interviews help employers gauge the candidate's communication skills, problem-solving abilities, and overall demeanor.



On the other hand, for the candidate, a job interview is a chance to showcase their skills and experience, demonstrate their enthusiasm for the role, and make a positive impression on the hiring manager. It also allows candidates to learn more about the company, its values, and the working environment to determine if it aligns with their own career goals and aspirations. Furthermore, job interviews provide candidates with an opportunity to ask questions and clarify any doubts they may have about the role or the organization.

Overall, job interviews play a crucial role in the hiring process by enabling both the employer and the candidate to assess each other and determine if there is a good fit for the position. It is a two-way street where both parties have the opportunity to learn more about each other and make an informed decision about moving forward in the recruitment process.

FORMAT OF JOB INTERVIEW

A job interview format refers to the structure and type of interview process a candidate may encounter. Various formats are used depending on the role, industry, and employer preferences. Here are the common job interview formats:



Phone Interview:

- **Purpose:** Initial screening to assess qualifications and fit.
- **Format:** Typically a 15–30 minute conversation focused on basic qualifications, experience, and interest in the role.
- **Preparation:** Have your resume and job description in front of you; ensure a quiet environment.



Video Interview:

- **Purpose:** Similar to phone interviews but allows for visual assessment.
- **Format:** Conducted via platforms like Google Meet, Zoom, Skype, or Microsoft Teams. May include pre-recorded questions.
- **Preparation:** Test your technology, choose a professional background, and dress appropriately.



In-Person Interview:

- **Purpose:** Detailed assessment of candidate's suitability for the role.
- **Format:** Face-to-face meeting, usually lasting from 30 minutes to an hour or more. May involve multiple interviewers.
- **Preparation:** Bring copies of your resume, prepare answers to common questions, and dress professionally.



FORMAT OF JOB INTERVIEW



Panel Interview:

- **Purpose:** Assess candidate from multiple perspectives.
- **Format:** Candidate is interviewed by several interviewers simultaneously, each asking questions.
- **Preparation:** Research panel members if possible, practice managing group dynamics, and address each interviewer during responses.



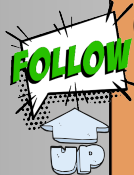
Group Interview:

- **Purpose:** Evaluate candidates' teamwork and interaction skills.
- **Format:** Multiple candidates are interviewed together, may involve group tasks or discussions.
- **Preparation:** Practice active listening, collaborative communication, and stay confident while respecting others.



Second/Follow-Up Interview:

- **Purpose:** Deeper assessment after initial screening.
- **Format:** May involve more in-depth questions, meetings with higher-level executives, or additional technical assessments.
- **Preparation:** Reflect on the first interview, prepare to discuss more detailed aspects of your experience and how you can contribute to the company.



Understanding these interview formats helps candidates prepare more effectively, tailor their preparation to the specific format, and perform confidently during the interview process.

PRE-INTERVIEW PREPARATION: COMPANY RESEARCH

When preparing for a job interview, researching the company is crucial to demonstrate your interest and understanding of the organization.

- 1** Start by visiting the company's official website to explore their mission, values, products or services, and recent news or press releases.
- 2** Look into the company's history, culture, and any awards or achievements they have received.
- 3** Additionally, check out their social media profiles to gain insights into their brand personality and engagement with customers.
- 4** Dig deeper into the company's industry position by reviewing annual reports, industry publications, and analyst reports.
- 5** Understand the company's competitors, market trends, and challenges they might be facing.
- 6** Consider how your skills and experience align with the company's goals and how you can contribute to their success.
- 7** Lastly, reach out to current or former employees on platforms like LinkedIn to gain insider perspectives and valuable insights that can help you stand out during the interview.



PRE-INTERVIEW PREPARATION: UNDERSTANDING THE JOB DESCRIPTIONS AND JOB REQUIREMENTS

Understanding the job description and requirements is crucial for successful job interview preparation. Here's a guide to help you analyze and comprehend these elements effectively:

Key Elements of a Job Description

Job Title:

- Indicates the level and type of position (e.g., Senior Software Engineer, Marketing Manager).



Company Overview:

- Provides insight into the company's mission, values, culture, and industry.

Role Summary:

- A brief description of the main purpose and scope of the job.

Key Responsibilities:

- Detailed list of tasks and duties you will be expected to perform.



Required Qualifications:

- Education, certifications, and specific qualifications needed for the role.

Experience:

- Number of years and type of experience required.



Skills:

- Specific technical, soft, and hard skills necessary for the job.

Competencies:

- Behavioral attributes and competencies important for success in the role (e.g., leadership, teamwork, communication).

Location:

- Job location, potential for remote work, and travel requirements.



Salary and Benefits:

- Information on compensation, benefits, and perks offered by the company.

PRE-INTERVIEW PREPARATION: UNDERSTANDING THE JOB DESCRIPTIONS AND JOB REQUIREMENTS

Practical Tips for Aligning Your Preparation

1. Tailor Your Resume and Cover Letter:

- Highlight relevant experience, skills, and accomplishments that align with the job description.

2. Prepare Relevant Examples:

- Use the **STAR** method (Situation, Task, Action, Result) to prepare examples that demonstrate your competencies and how they match the job requirements.

3. Update Your Online Profiles:

- Ensure your LinkedIn and other professional profiles reflect the skills and experience relevant to the job description.

4. Develop Questions for the Interviewer:

- Prepare insightful questions about the role, team, company culture, and career progression opportunities.

5. Practice Role-Specific Skills:

- If the job requires specific technical skills, practice them to ensure you can demonstrate your proficiency during the interview.



PRE-INTERVIEW PREPARATION: CREATING AND UPDATING RESUMES AND COVER LETTERS

Creating and updating resumes and cover letters are critical steps in the job application process. Here's a detailed guide to help you craft effective and updated documents that will make a strong impression on potential employers:

Creating and Updating Resumes

1. Choose the Right Format:

- **Chronological:** Lists work experience in reverse chronological order. Best for those with a consistent work history.
- **Functional:** Focuses on skills and experience rather than chronological work history. Ideal for career changers or those with gaps in employment.
- **Combination:** Blends chronological and functional formats. Good for those with strong skills and a solid work history.

2. Resume Structure:

- **Header:** Include your name, contact information (phone number, email address), and LinkedIn profile or professional website.
- **Summary/Objective:** A brief statement (2–3 sentences) summarizing your qualifications and career goals. Tailor it to each job application.
- **Experience:**
 - **Job Title, Company Name, Location:** Include dates of employment.
 - **Responsibilities and Achievements:** Use bullet points to describe key duties and accomplishments. Start with action verbs and quantify results (e.g., "Increased sales by 20% through targeted marketing campaigns").
- **Education:**
 - **Degree, Major, University Name, Location:** Include graduation date.
 - **Relevant coursework, honors, and extracurricular activities** (if applicable).

PRE-INTERVIEW PREPARATION: CREATING AND UPDATING RESUMES AND COVER LETTERS

- **Skills:**

- **Technical Skills:** List relevant software, tools, and technologies.
- **Soft Skills:** Highlight skills like communication, leadership, and problem-solving.

- **Certifications and Training:** Include any relevant certifications or professional development courses.

- **Optional Sections:** Add sections like "Volunteer Experience," "Languages," or "Publications" if relevant.

3. Tailor Your Resume:

- **Customize your resume for each job application.** Highlight the most relevant experience and skills based on the job description.

4. Use Keywords:

- **Incorporate keywords from the job description to pass Applicant Tracking Systems (ATS).** Focus on specific skills, qualifications, and industry terms.

5. Proofread and Edit:

- **Ensure there are no typos, grammatical errors, or inconsistencies.** Consider using tools like Grammarly or asking someone else to review it.

6. Keep It Updated:

- **Regularly update your resume with new experiences, skills, and accomplishments.** Ensure it reflects your most recent and relevant qualifications.



PRE-INTERVIEW PREPARATION: CREATING AND UPDATING RESUMES AND COVER LETTERS



Creating and Updating Cover Letters

1. Cover Letter Structure:

- **Header:** Match the header with your resume for a cohesive look. Include your contact information, date, and the employer's contact information.
- **Salutation:** Address the letter to a specific person, usually the hiring manager. If you don't have a name, use a generic greeting like "Dear Hiring Manager."

2. Introduction:

- **Opening Paragraph:** State the position you are applying for and how you found the job listing. Briefly mention why you are interested in the role and the company.

3. Body:

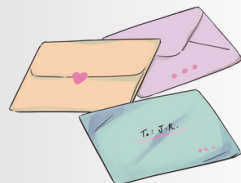
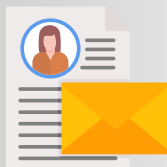
- **Second Paragraph:** Highlight your relevant experience and skills. Use specific examples to demonstrate how your background aligns with the job requirements.
- **Third Paragraph:** Explain why you are a good fit for the company. Discuss your understanding of the company's goals, values, or culture, and how you can contribute.

4. Conclusion:

- **Closing Paragraph:** Reiterate your enthusiasm for the role and the company. Mention your availability for an interview and thank the reader for their time and consideration.

5. Signature:

- Use a professional closing like "Sincerely" or "Best regards," followed by your name. If submitting electronically, you can include a scanned signature.



PRE-INTERVIEW PREPARATION: CREATING AND UPDATING RESUMES AND COVER LETTERS

Tips for Both Resumes and Cover Letters

1. Be Concise:

- **Keep your resume to one or two pages. Cover letters should be no longer than one page.**

2. Use Action Verbs:

- **Start bullet points and sentences with strong action verbs (e.g., "Developed," "Managed," "Led").**

3. Quantify Achievements:

- **Whenever possible, use numbers to quantify your accomplishments (e.g., "Increased efficiency by 15%", "Managed a budget of RM100,000").**

4. Highlight Relevant Experience:

- **Focus on the experience and skills most relevant to the job you are applying for.**

5. Maintain Professional Appearance:

- **Use a clean, professional layout and font (e.g., Arial, Calibri). Avoid overly fancy designs that may distract from the content.**

6. Show Enthusiasm:

- **Convey your genuine interest in the role and the company in your cover letter.**

7. Customize for Each Job:

- **Tailor each resume and cover letter to the specific job and company, highlighting the most relevant skills and experiences.**

PRE-INTERVIEW PREPARATION: SELF-ASSESSMENT

Pre-interview preparation is crucial for presenting yourself confidently and effectively. A comprehensive self-assessment helps you understand your strengths, weaknesses, skills, and experiences, and how they align with the job you're applying for. Here's a detailed guide on how to conduct a pre-interview self-assessment:

1. Evaluate your skills and qualifications
2. Review your experience and achievements
3. Assess your educational background
4. Analyze your strengths and weaknesses
5. Align with the job and company
6. Plan your career goals and aspirations
7. Prepare for common interview questions
8. Gather supporting materials such as resume, cover letter and portfolio.
9. Prepare questions for the interviewer.



PRE-INTERVIEW PREPARATION: PREPARE A PROFESSIONAL PORTFOLIO

Preparing a professional portfolio can be an excellent way to showcase your skills, accomplishments, and experience, particularly for creative or project-based roles.

1. Determine the Purpose of Your Portfolio
2. Select the right format
3. Gather your work samples
4. Organize your portfolio
5. Create detailed work samples and case studies
6. Design your portfolio
7. Create a digital portfolio
8. Include additional information
9. Review and update regularly
10. Prepare for presentation

portfolio



INTRODUCING YOURSELF IN AN INTERVIEW

When introducing yourself during a job interview, it's important to make a positive and lasting impression on the interviewer

Start by stating your name clearly and confidently.

You can then provide a brief overview of your professional background, highlighting key experiences and skills that are relevant to the position you are applying for.

It's also a good idea to mention your enthusiasm for the role and the company, showcasing your motivation and interest in the opportunity.

Remember to keep your introduction concise and focused, aiming to capture the interviewer's attention and set a strong foundation for the conversation to follow.

By presenting yourself in a confident and engaging manner, you can make a memorable first impression that sets you apart from other candidates.

HOW TO INTRODUCE YOURSELF PROFESSIONALLY

In a job interview, it's important that you leave a good impression with your potential boss the moment you introduce yourself. Here is a quick guide on how you can introduce yourself professionally.



Prepare

Do a little research about the company and what they do by visiting their website.



Be Polite

Treat everyone with kindness.

Answer questions

Answer relevant and follow-up questions your interviewer has for you.



Start with a handshake

Give your interviewer a firm handshake before proceeding with the interview process.



Consistently have manners

Regardless of how the interview went, be polite and smile. Bid the hiring manager a polite goodbye after and do not forget to extend your greeting to the receptionist.



Tell the interviewer that it is a pleasure to meet them, smile, and be sure to make eye contact



Keep your introduction short and concise



Focus on qualifications



Be prepared for follow-up questions



Remember that manners matter

INTERVIEW ETIQUETTE

BEFORE THE INTERVIEW

Research and Preparation:

- **Example:** "Before my interview, I thoroughly researched the company's history, products, and recent news. I also reviewed the job description to align my skills and experiences with the role requirements."

Punctuality:

- **Example:** "I arrived at the interview location 15–30 minutes early to account for any unforeseen delays. I used the extra time to compose myself and review my notes."

Professional Attire:

- **Example:** "I dressed in formal business attire, ensuring my clothing was clean, pressed, and appropriate for the company's culture."



DURING THE INTERVIEW

First Impressions and Greeting:

- **Example:** "I greeted the interviewer with a firm handshake, made eye contact, and smiled to convey confidence and respect."

Active Listening:

- **Example:** "During the interview, I actively listened to the interviewer's questions, nodding to indicate understanding and maintaining good posture to show engagement."

Effective Communication:

- **Example:** "I answered questions clearly and concisely, providing specific examples from my previous work experiences to demonstrate my skills and qualifications."

Asking Thoughtful Questions:

- **Example:** "I asked insightful questions about the company's future goals and the team dynamics to demonstrate my genuine interest in the position and company culture."



Professionalism and Courtesy:

- **Example:** "Throughout the interview, I maintained a professional demeanor, showing respect for the interviewer's time by avoiding interruptions and unnecessary distractions."

INTERVIEW ETIQUETTE

AFTER THE INTERVIEW

Thank-You Note:

- **Example:** "Within 24 hours of the interview, I sent a personalized thank-you email to the interviewer, expressing my appreciation for the opportunity and reiterating my enthusiasm for the position."

Follow-Up:

- **Example:** "After a week of not hearing back, I sent a polite follow-up email to inquire about the status of my application and express continued interest in the role."

ADDITIONAL TIPS

Cell Phone Etiquette:

- **Example:** "I ensured my cell phone was turned off or set to silent mode during the interview to avoid any distractions or interruptions."

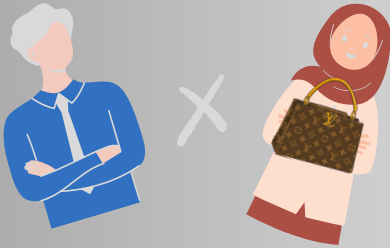
Respecting Interviewer's Space:

- **Example:** "I did not place my belongings on the interviewer's desk and maintained a respectful distance during the interview."

These examples illustrate how to demonstrate proper interview etiquette before, during, and after the interview process. Adhering to these practices can help you make a positive impression and showcase your professionalism to potential employers.

BODY LANGUAGE HACKS

Don't cross your arms or clutch a bag in front of you.



Do keep your arms casually to your side and show your palms.



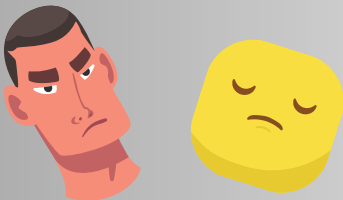
Don't slump over or show poor posture.



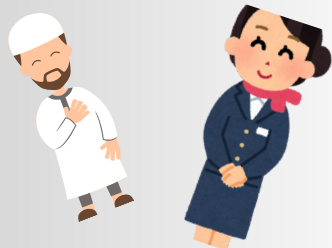
Do stand up straight and roll back your shoulders to slightly open your chest.



Don't frown or look uninviting.



Do share a welcoming smile.



JOB INTERVIEW OUTFITS



Dressing appropriately for a job interview is crucial as it forms a significant part of the first impression you make on a potential employer. The key is to dress professionally and to align your outfit with the company culture.



For a corporate environment, opt for a well-fitted suit or a conservative dress with neutral colors. Make sure your clothes are clean, pressed, and free of wrinkles. Accessories should be minimal and conservative.



In a more casual work setting, you can choose smart casual attire such as tailored pants with a blouse or a collared shirt.



It's important to pay attention to grooming as well. Keep your hair neat, nails trimmed, and avoid overpowering scents. Ultimately, dressing appropriately not only demonstrates respect for the company and the interview process but also boosts your confidence, allowing your skills and qualifications to shine through.

DRESSING APPROPRIATELY



First impression



Convey professionalism, confidence and respect for the opportunity



Shows that you are serious and you have made the effort to present yourself well



Demonstrates that you understand and respect the company's culture and values. It indicates that you can adapt to different environments and that you are aware of the expectations in a professional setting.



Boosts your confidence during the interview, helping you to feel more composed and focused on showcasing your qualifications and skills. It sets a positive tone for the interaction and can leave a lasting impression on the interviewer.

JOB INTERVIEW OUTFITS

Choosing the right outfit for a job interview is crucial as it directly influences the first impression you make on your potential employer. Here are some general guidelines and considerations for selecting an appropriate job interview outfit:

General Guidelines:

1. Research the Company Culture:

- **Formal vs. Casual:** Determine whether the company culture leans towards formal business attire or is more casual. This can usually be assessed through the company's website, social media presence, or by asking employees.

2. Dress One Step Above the Company Norm:

- **Conservative Approach:** If unsure, it's generally better to dress conservatively in formal business attire. You can adjust based on what you observe during your research.

3. Ensure Cleanliness and Neatness:

- **Well-Maintained Attire:** Ensure your clothing is clean, pressed, and free of wrinkles or stains. Pay attention to details like loose threads or missing buttons.

4. Comfort and Confidence:

- **Fit:** Choose clothing that fits well and makes you feel comfortable. Avoid overly tight or loose clothing.
- **Confidence:** Your outfit should make you feel confident and ready to present yourself professionally.



JOB INTERVIEW OUTFITS

Recommended Outfit for Men:

- **Suit:** A two-piece suit in a neutral color like navy blue, charcoal gray, or black is typically appropriate. Opt for a single-breasted suit with a matching jacket and trousers.
- **Shirt:** A long-sleeved dress shirt in a solid color or subtle pattern (like stripes or checks) that complements your suit.
- **Tie:** A conservative tie in a solid color or simple pattern that coordinates with your suit and shirt.
- **Shoes:** Classic leather shoes in black or brown. Ensure they are polished and in good condition.
- **Accessories:** A belt that matches your shoes, minimal jewelry (watch, wedding ring), and a professional briefcase or portfolio to carry your documents.



Recommended Outfit for Women:

- **Suit:** A tailored two-piece suit with a matching blazer and skirt or trousers. Neutral colors such as navy, charcoal gray, or black are appropriate.
- **Blouse:** A conservative blouse or button-down shirt in a solid color or subtle pattern. Avoid low-cut tops or flashy patterns.
- **Skirt:** If wearing a skirt, ensure it is knee-length or slightly above, paired with neutral-colored stockings.
- **Trousers:** If opting for trousers, choose a well-fitted pair that complements your suit jacket.
- **Shoes:** Closed-toe heels or flats in a neutral color such as black or nude. Ensure they are clean and polished.
- **Accessories:** Simple and minimalistic jewelry, such as stud earrings and a wristwatch. A professional handbag or briefcase to carry your essentials.

JOB INTERVIEW OUTFITS

Additional Tips:

- **Grooming:** Pay attention to grooming, including neat hair, trimmed nails, and subtle makeup (if applicable).
- **Avoid Strong Fragrances:** Skip heavy perfumes or colognes to avoid overwhelming the interviewer.
- **Weather Considerations:** Consider the weather and dress appropriately while still maintaining a professional appearance.

Example Outfit:

For Men:

- **Suit:** Navy blue two-piece suit
- **Shirt:** Crisp white dress shirt
- **Tie:** Solid color or subtle pattern tie in coordinating colors
- **Shoes:** Black leather oxford shoes
- **Accessories:** Black leather belt, watch, and a professional briefcase



For Women:

- **Suit:** Charcoal gray tailored suit with a matching blazer and trousers
- **Blouse:** Light blue button-down blouse
- **Shoes:** Closed-toe black heels
- **Accessories:** Simple stud earrings, wristwatch, and a professional handbag

By following these guidelines and examples, you can ensure that your job interview outfit is professional, appropriate, and reflects your readiness for the role. Adjustments can be made based on the specific company culture and industry norms, ensuring you make a positive and lasting impression.



The Interview Dress Code

Clean shaven or
closely trimmed beard

White or light
coloured shirt

Unobtrusive tie

Tailored, single-
breasted suit

Belt

Dark plain socks

Black leather shoes

Soft and subtle
makeup

Neat and tidy
hairstyle

High-neck
shirt or blouse

Simple
jewellery

Smart mid-length skirt
or dress or trousers

Dark or neutral
tights

Dark, low-heeled
shoes

EARN EXTRA POINTS FOR



Glasses



Corporate Colours



Fresh Breath



Polished Shoes

LOSE POINTS FOR



Body Piercings



Stains



Sports Shoes



Smelling Bad



Tattoos on display

designed by

CareerAddict

careeraddict.com/interview-dress-codes

DO'S AND DON'TS

Interview outfits

DO

Business casual

This interview look would be appropriate for these industries: IT, startups, teaching, entry-level government positions, environmental engineering, aerospace (non-management), architecture, health-care/life-sciences research, social media, advertising/PR and retail.



Detail adds interest but doesn't distract

Sweater and pants fit well

Casual, yet polished

Pants are appropriate length for heels

Business professional

This more formal interview look works for these industries: health-care management and sales, hospital administration, biotechnology, banking, personal financial services, academic administration, hospitality, pharmaceutical sales and aerospace management.



Blouse color, collar style go well with the suit

Minimal jewelry

Jacket not too short, not too long

Tip: Check yourself in the mirror before leaving the house

Could wear heels rather than flats to increase formality

DON'T



Necklace too large

Tip: Avoid any bright or patterned clothing that may be distracting

Too tight

Cotton capris: too casual

Too informal; this would be a better outfit for shopping at Pike Place Market (with different shoes)

Meet the experts

Local career experts Lisa Quast, CEO of Career Woman, Inc., and Josh Warborg, district president of Robert Half International, provided critiques of these outfits.

"Appropriate attire depends on the industry and company in which you will be interviewing, the geographic location and time of year."



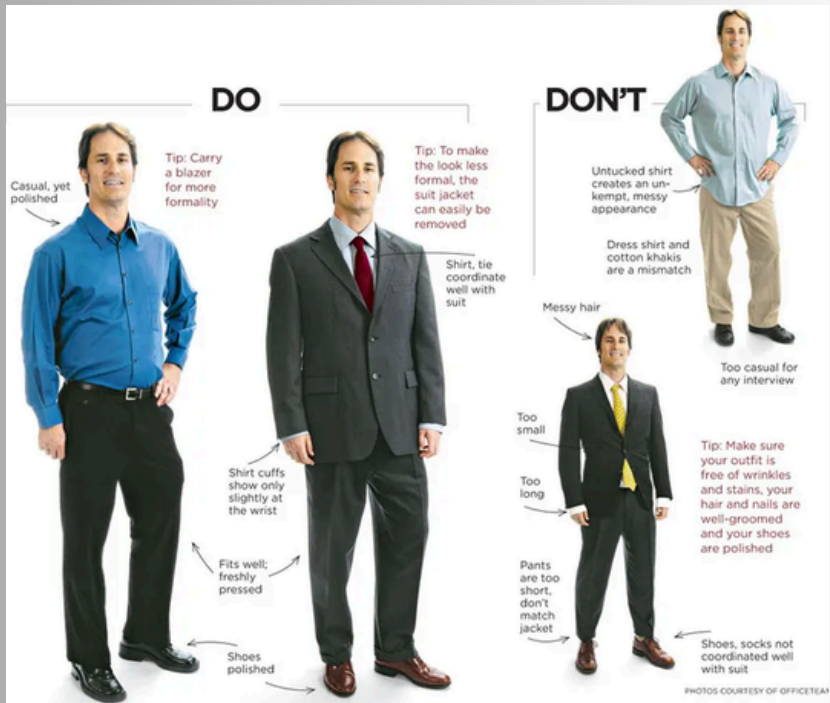
Quast

"Suits in conservative colors, such as black, gray or navy, paired with light, solid-colored shirts are a safe choice."



Warborg

PHOTOS COURTESY OF OFFICETEAM



PAY ATTENTION TO...



COMMON INTERVIEW QUESTIONS



1. Tell me about yourself

Tip: Your interviewers will likely start out with a question about yourself and your background to get to know you. Start out by giving them an overview of your current position or activities, then provide the most important and relevant highlights from your background that make you most qualified for the role.



2. How would you describe yourself?

Tip: When an interviewer asks you to talk about yourself, they're looking for information about how your qualities and characteristics align with the skills they believe are required to succeed in the role. If possible, include quantifiable results to demonstrate how you use your best attributes to drive success.



3. Why do you want to work here?

Tip: Interviewers often ask this question as a way to determine whether or not you took the time to research the company and to learn why you see yourself as a good fit. The best way to prepare for this question is to do your homework and learn about the products, services, mission, history and culture of this workplace. In your answer, mention the aspects of the company that appeals to you and align with your career goals. Explain why you're looking for these things in an employer.



4. What interests you about this role?

Tip: Like the previous question, hiring managers often include this question to make sure you understand the role and give you an opportunity to highlight your relevant skills. In addition to thoroughly reading the job description, it can be helpful to compare the role requirements against your skills and experience. Choose a few things you particularly enjoy or excel at and focus on those in your answer.



5. What motivates you?

Tip: Employers ask this question to gauge your level of self-awareness and ensure your sources of motivation align with the role. To answer, be as specific as possible, provide real-life examples and tie your answer back to the job role.



6. Why are you leaving your current job?

Tip: There are many reasons for leaving a job. Prepare a thoughtful answer that will give your interviewer confidence that you're being deliberate about this job change. Instead of focusing on the negative aspects of your current or previous role, focus on the future and what you hope to gain in your next position.



7. What are your greatest strengths?

Tip: This question allows you to talk about both your technical and soft skills. To answer, share qualities and personal attributes and then relate them back to the role for which you're interviewing.



8. What are your greatest weaknesses?

Tip: It can feel awkward to discuss your weaknesses in an environment where you're expected to focus on your accomplishments. However, when answered correctly, sharing your weaknesses can show that you are self-aware and want to continuously get better at your job —traits that are extremely attractive to many employers. Remember to start with the weakness and then discuss the measures you've taken to improve. This way, you're finishing your answer on a positive note.



9. Where do you see yourself in five years?

Tip: Understanding how you imagine your life in the future can help employers understand whether the trajectory of the role and company fits in with your personal development goals. To answer, provide general ideas about the skills you want to develop, the types of roles you would like to be in and things you would like to have accomplished.



10. What is your salary range expectation?

Tip: Interviewers ask this question to make sure your expectations are in line with the amount they've budgeted for the role. If you give a salary range exceedingly lower or higher than the market value of the position, it gives the impression that you don't know your worth. Research the typical compensation range for the role. Be sure to let the hiring manager know if you're flexible with your rate.



11. Do you have any questions?

Tip: This might be one of the most important questions asked during the interview process because it allows you to explore any subject that hasn't been addressed and shows the interviewer you're excited about the role. By this point, you'll likely have already covered most of the basics about the position and the company, so take time to ask the interviewer questions about their own experiences with the company and gain tips on how you can succeed if hired.



THE S.T.A.R FORMAT

The STAR format is a widely used technique in job interviews to help candidates structure their responses effectively. STAR stands for Situation, Task, Action, and Result. Here's how you can use this format to answer interview questions:

- 1. Situation:** Start by providing context for the situation you are going to talk about. Describe the background or setting to help the interviewer understand the scenario.
- 2. Task:** Explain the specific task or goal that needed to be accomplished in that situation. Be clear about what was expected of you or what the challenge was.
- 3. Action:** Detail the actions you took to address the task or situation. Focus on what you did, how you did it, and why you chose that particular course of action.
- 4. Result:** Finally, share the outcome of your actions. Describe the impact of your efforts, whether it was a success or a learning experience, and any measurable results or achievements.

By using the STAR format, you can provide structured and detailed responses that showcase your skills and experiences in a clear and concise manner during your job interview.



PRACTICE FOR INTERVIEW

Practicing before attending a job interview is crucial for several reasons.



Firstly, it helps you become more familiar with common interview questions and develop thoughtful responses. This preparation can boost your confidence and reduce nervousness during the actual interview, allowing you to present yourself in the best possible light.

Secondly, practicing can help you refine your communication skills, body language, and overall presentation. By rehearsing your answers and practicing with a friend or mentor, you can receive valuable feedback on areas that may need improvement.

Lastly, practicing before a job interview demonstrates your commitment and dedication to the position. Employers appreciate candidates who have taken the time to prepare and are more likely to view them as serious contenders for the role.



FOLLOW UP



Following up after a job interview is a crucial step in the hiring process that can help you stand out from other candidates.

Sending a thank-you email or letter to your interviewer is a professional way to express your gratitude for the opportunity to interview and reiterate your interest in the position.

Make sure to personalize your message by mentioning specific details from the interview that resonated with you or highlighting your qualifications that align with the job requirements.

In your follow-up message, you can also take the opportunity to address any additional information or questions that may have come up during the interview. This is a chance to further showcase your enthusiasm for the role and demonstrate your proactive communication skills.

Remember to keep your tone professional, concise, and respectful, and don't forget to proofread your message before sending it. A well-crafted follow-up can leave a positive impression on the hiring manager and increase your chances of landing the job.

BRING RELEVANT DOCUMENTS

So you're a fresh graduate stepping into the workforce for the very first time and you've managed to bag yourself an interview – congratulations! You are ready to take on the world, one job interview at a time!

While interviews can be a nerve-wracking experience, it's all about being prepared – the more prepared you are, the more flawless the execution!

OFFICIAL ACADEMIC TRANSCRIPTS AND CERTIFICATES



Whether you're going for your very first or twelfth interview, companies may want to have a look at your official academic transcripts, certificates and supporting documents (e.g., awards, co-curricular certificates). This is to ensure that you have the relevant qualifications for the job you are applying to. Documents you should bring along include:

- Official SPM results and transcript
- Official pre-university transcript and certificate
- Official university transcript
- Official degree certification

Additionally, your co-curricular certificates and awards may also help you secure the job – it reinforces some of the skills you have reiterated to your interviewer, such as leadership and being a team-player.

Your resume

Even though you would have already enclosed a copy of your resume during your job application, it pays to bring 1–2 copies to the interview. Depending on the company you are interviewing with, you may go through the interview process with more than one person. Not every interviewer will have a copy of your resume on hand, so it doesn't hurt to have spare copies for your interviewers' convenience.



DON'T FORGET...



If you graduated from the creative fields such as design, advertising, journalism, architecture or video production, you may be required to showcase some of your abilities and talents to your potential employers.

While it's true that you lack professional work experience, university assignments and projects can also serve as testament to your budding skills. So, bring along samples of your work that you can present to your interviewers.

Your identification card (IC)

Double check if you have this with you before you leave the house. Although you should be carrying your IC with you at all times, there is still a possibility leaving this behind if you decide to take a different bag to your interview. You will need your IC as you may be required to register at the building lobby or provide proof of identity. You don't want to fail an interview just because you never made it through the front door!

Passport-sized photos

There are some instances where the company is already keen on hiring you (yes, it's possible!), and the interview process is only a formality. So, you may want to carry several copies of your passport-sized photos in case you are offered the job on the spot and require it for HR purposes.

A notebook and a pen

Going into an interview prepared with these items may impress your interviewer. While you may only need the pen to fill out employee detail forms, having a notebook and a pen ready in front of you during the interview shows that you are prepared to take notes should the need arise. This shows that you are detail-oriented and that you are really interested in the job.



NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION

Non-verbal communication plays a significant role during job interviews.

Your body language, facial expressions, posture, and gestures can convey a lot about your confidence, professionalism, and interest in the position. It's essential to make a positive impression through non-verbal cues to complement your verbal responses.

Maintaining good eye contact shows that you are attentive and engaged.

A firm handshake at the beginning and end of the interview demonstrates confidence. Sitting up straight portrays interest and alertness, while nodding your head and smiling appropriately can show agreement and enthusiasm.

Avoiding fidgeting or crossing your arms can help you appear more open and approachable. Remember that non-verbal cues can speak volumes, so be mindful of how you present yourself during the interview.

In summary, non-verbal communication is a powerful tool that can influence how you are perceived during a job interview.

By paying attention to your body language, gestures, and facial expressions, you can enhance your communication skills and make a positive impact on the interviewer.

Avoid These Top Non-Verbal Blunders



Failure to Maintain
Eye Contact



Lack of Smile



Bad Posture



Scared/Nervous
Facial Expressions



Playing with Hair



Too Many Hand
Gestures



Weak Handshake



Fidgeting Too
Much

NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION

COMMON NONVERBAL MISTAKES MADE DURING JOB INTERVIEWS

67%



Fail to make eye contact

47%



Have little knowledge of the company

38%



Don't smile

33%



Have bad posture

33%



Fidget too much

26%



Have a weak handshake

21%



Play with their hair or touch their face

21%



Cross their arms over their chest

9%



Use too many hand gestures



In a survey of more than 2,000 hiring managers, 33% claimed to know whether or not they would hire someone within 90 seconds.

STATISTICS SHOW THAT FIRST IMPRESSIONS ARE DETERMINED BY:

55%



The way you dress, act, and walk through the door

38%



The quality of your voice, grammar, and confidence

7%



The words you choose to say

THINGS THAT HAVE AN IMPACT ON FIRST IMPRESSIONS

70%

of employers claim they don't want applicants to be **overly fashionable or trendy**

65%

of hiring managers say clothes can be the **deciding factor** between two similar candidates

BRIGHTLY-COLORED CLOTHING IS BAD



APPROPRIATE QUESTIONS TO BE ASKED DURING JOB INTERVIEW

Asking appropriate questions to the interviewer shows that you're interested in them as a person—and that's a great way to show your utmost interest and eagerness to work in the company along and showcase your knowledge.

1. Ask about the job itself

- a. What are the most immediate projects that need to be addressed?
- b. Can you show me examples of projects I'd be working on?

2. Ask about training and professional development

- a. How will I be trained?
- b. What training programs are available to your employees?

3. Ask about your performance

- a. What are the most important things you'd like to see someone accomplish in the first 30, 60, and 90 days on the job?
- b. What metrics or goals will my performance be evaluated against?

4. Ask about the company

- a. What can you tell me about your new products or plans for growth?
- b. What are the current goals that the company is focused on, and how does this team work to support hitting those goals?

5. Ask about the team

- a. Can you tell me about the team I'll be working with?
- b. Who will I work with most closely?
- c. Who will I report to directly?

6. Ask about the culture

- a. What's the company and team culture like?
- b. How would you describe the work environment here

7. Ask about the next step

- a. What are the next steps in the interview process?
- b. Is there anything else I can provide you with that would be helpful?

✓ Good Questions to Ask in Your Job Interview



"How much travel is expected?"



"Would you like a list of references?"

"How does one advance in the company?"



✗ Questions You Shouldn't ask in Your Job Interview



"What does this company do?"
(Do your research ahead of time!)



"Can I take these days off?"

?!

"So, did I get the job?"
(Don't be impatient.)

 the balance

6 Smart Questions to Ask the Interviewer

What skills does the ideal candidate for this position have?



What are the immediate challenges a recruit faces in this job?

How is performance measures in this job?



What do you like most about working for this company?

Can you describe a typical day for this position?



What are the company's biggest challenges currently?

TIPS

DO'S

1

DO YOUR HOMEWORK

Company knowledge shows a potential employer that you are interested in working for them.

2

BE HONEST

Being caught lying about something destroys even the best first impression.

3

BE CONFIDENT

Present yourself in a confident manner to be the best interviewee possible.

4

BE ON TIME

Arriving on time tells the hiring manager you're serious about your work.

5

BRING COPIES OF ANY RELEVANT PAPERS

You'll look more prepared and professional.

6

DRESS PROPERLY

Try to know where you are going to interview beforehand and dress accordingly.



DON'TS

1

DON'T DRESS CASUALLY

Casual dress suggests a casual attitude about the job. Don't let your clothes be a distraction.

2

DON'T SHOW NEGATIVITY

Do not lean back, or display disinterest through your body language.

3

DON'T BE LATE

Arriving late can create the impression that you might be an irresponsible employee.

4

DON'T FORGET TO GIVE A FIRM HANDSHAKE

A firm handshake shows the interviewer that you are confident, enthusiastic and positive.

5

DON'T ASK ABOUT SALARY UP FRONT

If you plan to take the job no matter what, wait until they bring up salary.

6

DON'T ARGUE WITH OR CORRECT THE INTERVIEWER

Behave in a tactical way while answering stress questions. It can be a test of how you will retain your composure under fire.



CHECKLIST

10 Things to bring on a Job Interview



Documents

Carry copies of your education certificates and proofs of employment. You might need to attach it to the forms. Or the interviewers just might want to see it.



Work Samples

Your work shows out your capabilities and skills live, compared to you talking about it and verbally trying to explain it because nothing speaks louder than your work in an interview.

Pen



Interviewing managers hate candidates who are irresponsible enough to forget to bring their own pen. And make sure the pen works fine and smooth. You don't want to be struggling and coaxing a pen to work when you need it.



Resume & Passport Size Photo

You are going for an interview, not for a tea party. You need to carry clean and tidy copies of your updated resumes. Add in copies of your passport size photographs, some companies do ask you to paste them on the application form.



Cell Phone

Keep your cell phone with you at all times this way you can stay in touch and handle emergency situations while your interviewers can inform you of any delays or problems. You can also call up the office asking for help to find the place.



Interview Details

Carefully take down the details the name of the interviewing manager, address, time and any directions or guidelines you might have been given like whom to ask for upon arrival.



Wallet

When you are going for an interview & losing your wallet at your home it can create an embarrassing moment for you when you need for money and you won't find it, so keep it with you always.



Reference Letter

It is always good to carry at least three good reference letters or letters of recommendations. You can support yourself on that when relevant questions are asked during the course of the interview.



Grooming Tools

Appearances speak a lot, and no matter what who says, it does matter. In fact, it makes your first impression. So always carry your grooming tools like mirror, comb and a mini-make up kit in your bag.



Food

Keep a protein bar, or a quick light peanut butter sandwich or something light to fill you up quickly. Because you may not be the only candidate the panel is interviewing on the day. The managers got held up in some meeting, or they are running late.



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