

Working at TNO

TNO candidate information brochure

TNO innovation
for life

Preparing for your job interview at TNO.



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By applying you've shown your interest in contributing to groundbreaking applied research geared to tackling societal challenges in a support, engineering, research, management, commercial or consultancy role. We're looking forward to getting to know you. And to help you prepare, this is what you can expect from us, both in terms of working environment and the selection process.

Solutions that matter to you

At TNO we focus on innovative solutions for a host of different challenges that affect us all. Such as mobility, health care, defence, cyber security, the energy transition, circularity and a sustainable, resilient, and smarter industry. Whether you'll help create business opportunities, support our researchers, or work on research projects, it's your interests and vision that determine what you will be contributing to. To achieve meaningful and tangible results, you'll be connecting with customers, strategic partners and, of course, your colleagues, with whom you share a drive to contribute to society. [Meet your future colleagues here](#).

Tips for your interview

During your interview, you're likely to meet one of our [corporate recruiters](#), who introduce themselves on our website.

And below you'll find some useful pointers on how to connect with and enthuse our recruiters and your future colleagues and manager.

Onboarding And Developing Your Career

At TNO you can develop your career in many different directions. Would you like to specialise in your field of expertise or widen your scope and skillset? Carve out your career in R&D, IT, HR, management support, facility management, business development or consultancy? You will have a great deal of freedom shaping your career. In fact, we expect you to. Whatever the level of seniority of your role, we offer career and personal development programmes, and concomitant training. And our onboarding programme will help you get off to a flying start at TNO!

Your motivation

Your motivation for wanting to work at TNO is the fuel that keeps the engine running. Without it, there's no drive and no progress. Why do you want to work at TNO? A convincing answer will tell you whether this really is your dream job.

Your match with the role

What skills and attributes are you bringing to TNO that will help you make a difference in the role you're applying for? How do your talents, competencies and experience match the job description? And if you can't tick all the boxes, what aspects of the role do you find challenging and how can TNO help you overcome these? Because knowing yourself, the confidence to identify potential areas in which you'd like to grow, and the willingness to learn and evolve are equally important.

Your match with TNO

Knowing about TNO and subscribing to our mission are key to your own motivation. Why else would you be keen to work for us? [Tno.nl](https://www.tno.nl) is the best place to start learning about us, including [our mission and strategy](#), and the [TNO code](#). Knowing about us will help you prepare the questions you may have. Not just about the projects you will be involved in, but also about the people you'll work with, the working atmosphere, and what you expect from us as your employer, including career and personal development opportunities.

What to wear?

The dress code at TNO is best described as business casual. However, it's much more important that you feel comfortable, so don't wear clothes you don't feel comfortable in. If you have any doubts as to what to wear, please don't hesitate to contact your recruiter.

Be on time

Whether your interview is online or onsite, allow yourself plenty of time to join the meeting on time. You'll be more relaxed and first impressions do count. Which is also why we advise you to pay attention to your background during video calls. And if, despite your best efforts to be on time, you expect to be delayed? Just make sure you give us a call before the start of the meeting to let us know and discuss the options. We won't hold unforeseen delays in traffic and public transport against you.

Focus on the positive

You may have faced unpleasantness and challenges in previous jobs. Using STAR will help you focus on the lessons learned and how that will help you in your future role. And you could benefit from using examples of situations that you're proud of and experiences that drive you.

STAR technique in interviews

Your job interview will have a segment for questions about competencies and behaviour. And your hiring manager and recruiter may use the STAR technique to prompt story-like answers from you. This method benefits candidates as well. It helps you answer potentially difficult questions, enabling you to give concrete examples and provide the essential details.

Typically, competency-based questions relate to soft skills listed in the job description. Which is why we advise you to familiarise yourself with the required soft skills and think of past experiences that would support those skills. This is how you ready yourself:

- Recall recent situations that called on your competencies.
- Make sure you have multiple examples, so you don't need the same situation for different questions.
- Describe those situations in detail, following the STAR technique and be specific about your own role.
- Don't embellish your story, nor omit important parts.

If you've used STAR before, you can skip the following section. Read on, if you'd like to know more.

STAR is a method of answering questions in four steps:

- Situation: describe the situation.
- Task: what were your tasks and what was your goal?
- Action: what action did you take to achieve your goal?
- Result: conclude with the result of your action.

If you're asked about teamwork, you could describe a project you've worked on. Then you'll describe your role. What were you assigned to do? Next, you explain how you handled a difficult situation or resolved a problem. If this is about teamwork, showing how you involved the team is vital. This is the most important part of your answer, confirming your competency. And you'll conclude with the positive outcome of your actions and the lessons you learned.

The questions differ per role and required competencies. You may, for instance, be asked how you handled a disagreement with a client, or how you worked with multiple stakeholders overcoming their different interests. Or you may be asked about a time you failed, to demonstrate what lessons you learned.

Practice, but be yourself

Having some examples of previous experiences and knowing about TNO, the job, and the department will help settle your nerves. But an interview is not about memorising a lesson. You don't want to sound rehearsed. After all, you and we are searching for a match and your personality is key. So prepare, but be yourself!

Enjoy

Last but not least, don't forget to enjoy getting to know us. After all, you may be meeting your new colleagues for the very first time!

Benefits package and salary indication

Are we a match? Then we will have a final meeting in which we discuss the job offer, including terms of employment and your tailored benefits package. At TNO we value transparency, so in the interviews the recruiter may ask you for a salary indication, to make sure that your expectations are in line with what we can offer. It would, therefore, be helpful if you could think about a salary indication. Learn more about our [flexible benefits package](#)

Questions?

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact your recruiter or send your question to recruitment@tno.nl.