

# Interview Tip Sheet

An interview is an opportunity to market who you are and what you have to offer to an employer. How can you prove that you are the most qualified candidate for the position?

## Exude Confidence

Dress well for the interview. Keep a positive body language by smiling and maintaining good posture and eye contact. Show you are listening by angling your body towards the interviewer and nodding. Avoid fidgeting or using filler words ("uh" or "um" or "like") as much as you can.



## Study for the Interview

Learn more about the company and the position you are interviewing for at least a day before your interview. Your research should answer why you would want to work for them and how your skills and experiences match up to what they are looking for.

## Preparation = Key to Success!

You can probably anticipate most of the questions that will be asked of you during the interview. Practice as many **common interview questions** as you can in a realistic environment. This will ensure that you have confidence in your answers when the real interview rolls around.



## Know the Job Posting well

It is good practice to know the definitions of industry-specific language and acronyms mentioned in the job posting before you interview. Even if you have not worked with it before, it leaves a good impression to show you have prepared enough to know what it is! Don't ask something that is obvious in the job posting.

## Use the STAR Method

Answer all behavioral questions in the **STAR** format: describe the **Situation** to set the scene and the **Tasks** needed to overcome the challenge. Then, explain the **Actions** you took, and quantify the **Results** of such actions, focusing on the positive outcomes.



## Demonstrate Aptitude AND Attitude

Behavioral-based questions will test not only how well you would tackle a challenge, but also how you would interact with your colleagues. Make sure to talk about your collaborative and leadership skills during the interview.

## Do ask questions

Prepare at least 3 questions to ask at the end of the interview. Ask what you are genuinely curious about, e.g. culture, the team you will be working with, or ask about one of their product/service/project that you are wondering the details of, what is the favourite part of the job for the manager, or what sort of challenges you can expect in the role. Having questions prepared demonstrates your genuine interest.



# Interview Preparation

## The Rundown

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### Start with the "Me-Search"

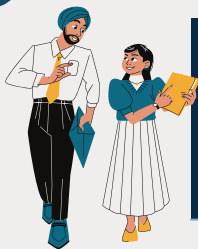
Know your resume well; ensure that you can back-up all statements made in your bullet points. Brainstorm:

- What are my **strongest skills and experiences** that are transferable to this position?
- What is my **comfort level** with interviews? How much do I need to practice in order to stay relaxed and confident? Which questions do I need to practice more?

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### Get to know the employer

Find a specific reason as to why you would want to work for this employer. To find some connections, be familiar with:



1. Their mission statement, vision, and achievements
2. Their products, services, and/or projects
3. The culture, values, and organizational structure
4. Recent changes from their website, social media, or the news

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### Dissect the Job Description

A job description will typically have a section describing: (a) the role's **main responsibilities**, (b) the **technical and professional qualifications required** of the ideal candidate, and (c) some **preferred skills and qualifications**. Match the tone of your interview answers to sell yourself as the ideal person for the job.



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### Prepare for Common Interview Questions

A comprehensive list of common **Interview Questions to Practice** is shared on D2L, including the following:

- Tell me about yourself.
- Why do you want to work for us?
- Why should we choose you over other candidates?
- What are your strengths and weaknesses?

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### Prepare for Behavioral and Situational Questions

**Behavioural questions** will ask you to provide specific evidence-based answers, while **situational questions** are hypothetical questions based on a scenario. You should try to reference past experiences if applicable, because past behaviour indicates future behaviour. Always use the **STAR Method** when answering these questions!



#### STAR Method: Situation + Task + Action + Results



- **Situation** - what was the context? What problem did you solve or encounter?
- **Task** - What was the specific goal? Why are you about to perform the next action?
- **Action** - What did you do? How did you do it?
- **Result** - What were the outcomes of you performing this duty? How can you quantify or describe how well you performed?

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### Practice, Practice, Practice!

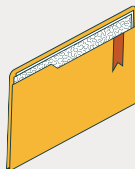
Research sample interview questions and brainstorm how you would answer them, highlighting success stories and the skills you have learned from each experience. Write your answers, read it out loud, or practice with a peer. Book a 1:1 Advising Appointment for Mock Interviews after crafting your responses.

# In-Person Interviews

## Preparation Tips

### 1 Portfolio Preparation

Prepare and provide your interviewers with a folder containing your resume, cover letter, and any relevant projects and portfolios you would want to reference or showcase throughout the interview.



### 2 Interview Attire or Dress Code

Dress appropriately or as professional as you can without feeling uncomfortable; you do not always have to wear a suit, unless business formal is specified. The safest option would be to go with **business casual** attire (e.g. collared shirt, sweater, slacks, and close-toed shoes).

### 3 Be Punctual!

For in-person interviews, it is courteous to show up to your interview approximately **15 minutes** before the start time. It shows that you are a punctual person, and that you also respect the employer's time.



### 4 Body Language Matters

Greet the interviewer by waving or nodding, unless they go in for a 'pandemic handshake'. Keep your body language positive and open throughout the interview (i.e., avoid slouching, crossing your arms, fidgeting, or shaking your leg). Face the interviewer and lean in slightly. Remember to smile!

### 5

#### Brace for the Technical Evaluations

Ask if you need to prepare or send anything ahead of time, such as presentations, slide decks, or a copies of your previous projects or portfolios. Employers might want to run brief technical case studies, such as asking you to determine the minor differences between two drawings, coding, etc.



### 6

#### Research Your Interviewers

Get a sense of what your interviewers do and who they are. Make sure you know enough about the company or the team,. Refer to some of these details when answering questions to demonstrate your interest in working with them or their team.

### 7 Practice Your Responses

It will not be as easy to discreetly read off of your interview notes and cues, so make sure you know your responses to common interview questions. Prior to the interview, consider practicing them out loud so to not sound rehearsed.



Want to get personalized feedback on your Interview Skills? Click [here](#) to book a 1:1 Advising Appointment for Mock Interviews after crafting your responses.



Interview Tip Links



# Virtual Interviews

## Preparation Tips



### 1 Interview Attire or Dress Code

Dress appropriately or as professionally as you can without feeling uncomfortable. Remember that employers will only be able to see you from the waist up. The safest option would be to go with **business casual** attire (e.g. collared shirt, sweater, suit jacket).

### 2 Be Punctual!

For virtual interviews, it is advised to join the meeting at least 5 to 10 minutes in advance. It shows your interest, motivation, and punctuality, and allows time for any technical difficulties that you may encounter. Test your video and sound so you're ready to begin when the interviewer joins the call. While it may not be difficult, try not to use your phone while waiting for the interviewer to join so you look prepared when they first see you.



### 3 Prepare your Space

The day before your interview, prepare the space you will use. Ensure you're in a quiet, distraction-free, and well-lit room with a blank wall behind you. Test your interview space with Zoom or another video calling program to verify your background. If you don't have access to a blank wall, use a professional virtual background.

### 4 Brace for the Technical Evaluations

Ask if you need to prepare or send anything ahead of time, such as presentations, slide decks, or a copies of your previous projects or portfolios. Employers might want to run brief technical case studies, such as asking you to determine the minor differences between two drawings, coding, etc.



### 5 Research Your Interviewers

Get a sense of what your interviewers do and who they are. Make sure you know enough about the company or the team and keep the company website open during the interview. Refer to some of these details when answering questions to demonstrate your interest in working with them or their team.

### 6 Practice Your Responses

Make sure you know your responses to common interview questions. While you can have your notes and documents open, it's important to not read off your screen. Prior to the interview, consider practicing and recording yourself so to not sound rehearsed.



Want to get personalized feedback on your Interview Skills? [Book a 1:1 Advising Appointment](#) for Mock Interviews after crafting your responses.

Interview Tip Links



# Any Interview

## What to Do During Your Interview

### 1 Use Attentive Listening

You will want to listen carefully to the interviewer and make sure you answer the question your interviewer is asking. If you are unsure, you may ask for clarification.



### 2 Talk About You

Relate your skills, accomplishments, and objectives to the needs of the company. Utilize the STAR method (situation, task, action and result) to demonstrate your skills and qualities you bring to the organization. Relate how your skills and experience will make you an ideal candidate. Talk about how eager you are to learn even though you may not have some skills required. Your motivation, passion and drive will be remembered.

### 3 Use Clear Language

Use clear and direct language when answering or asking a question. Avoid using filler words such as “um” or “like” as much as you could. Make your point succinct and demonstrate how confident you are in your abilities to communicate and do well at this job.



### 4 Be Aware of your Body Language

Maintain eye contact with your interviewer(s). If there are multiple interviewers, remember to engage with all of them. Do not fidget or become distracted. Maintain an open and squared body posture that will convey confidence and engagement.



### 5 Stay Professional

Do not answer questions that speak negatively to your past experiences. Keep professional in how you talk about past and current experience and always explain how you were able to overcome a challenge. Bad mouthing will not reflect well. Do not curse and do not ask about pay or time off. Do not talk about personal matters not relevant to the discussion.

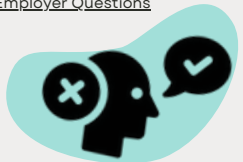


### 6 Ask Questions

Make sure you ask questions or for any clarification if needed. Asking questions will show how engaged you are as well as demonstrate your knowledge and understanding of the role. However, don't ask anything that can be easily found i.e. already stated in the job posting or on the company website. Click here for questions to ask employers: [Employer Questions](#)

### 7 Do Not Lie

Make sure you are knowledgeable about your resume and do not make up an experience or lie about the skills you possess. Anything written on your résumé could be discussed at an interview and a fabrication about your work or education record could damage your reputation in the long run.



### 8 End on a Good Note

It is important to give interview answers with confidence and truthfulness. Always thank your interviewer after the interview is done. If you end on a positive note, it might increase your chances against the other candidates. You may also check in to finally clarify any unclear points and show that you're confident to clarify anything. For example, “Is there anything I could clarify or further explain to make me a stronger candidate for this position?”



# After the Interview

## How to Wrap it Up

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### Self Reflect

Self-reflection is key to understanding how you can improve for next time! Take notes of each question after the interview and assess how you did for each one and how you felt. Did you answer it well or could you have elaborated your ideas?

Also, use the Interview Evaluation Form to self-assess.

Non-Verbal Communication	Needs Improvement	Good	Excellent	N/A
Used positive body language (demeanour/smile)				
Conveyed self-confidence, enthusiasm, interest				
Demonstrated appropriate appearance/attire				
Had an upright posture				
Maintained a good level of eye contact				

Verbal Communication	Needs Improvement	Good	Excellent	N/A
Avoided using filler words (um, like, you know)				
Used proper grammar and avoided slang terms				
Articulated relevant experience, skills and accomplishments clearly				
Communicated future career goals				
Expressed ideas clearly				

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### Organize your Interviews

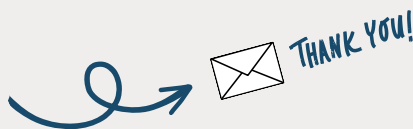
Keep track of all your interviews in an Excel sheet or similar. This will help you refer back to companies you've interviewed for and how the interview went. Information to include in the Excel sheet: date, company name/contact, interviewer information, was there a follow-up interview, self-reflection (how did you do). This step is completely customizable to your needs and experiences.

FEAS Co-op Interview Log					
Date	Company Information	Interview Information	Virtual or in-person?	Follow-up interview?	Self-reflection
7/10/2022	Siemens Energy	Name - Email - Number	Virtual	No	Need to develop a better answer for "tell me about yourself". Otherwise, great conversation and answers. Need to work on not saying "um".
8/17/2022	Boeing	Name - Email - Number	In-person	Waiting to hear	Need to study notes better before the interview. Portfolio could be better organized. Asked a lot of technical questions I wasn't prepared for.

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### Follow-Up

It's important to follow up with the interviewer within 48 hours of your interview. Send a "thank you" email reiterating your skills and any important talking points from the interview. Be sure to express your interest in the job and acknowledge/show appreciation for their time.



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### Contact your References

Including your reference list in a resume used to be the norm however, it's no longer necessary! Your interviewer/employer will only ask for references when they need them after the interview process, so make sure you have them ready. Prepare a list with the names and contact information of your references. Before you give the list to anyone, let your references know they might be contacted and tell a little bit about the job. The more they know about the job and why you're a good fit, the better they'll be able to talk about you and your experiences.

