



# Preparing for an interview

Getting invited to an interview means you've passed the first test: your application must have made a good impression. Now you need to prepare yourself for the interview to make sure you are successful and get the job.

## Before the interview

### Research the company

If you are invited to an interview you should spend some time researching the company as this will give you confidence should you be asked a question on what the company does. It will also allow you to ask the employer questions.

You could contact the company to ask for an information pack or you could look at their website. It's helpful to find out the following things about the employer:

- What they do, make or sell?
- Who are their customers?
- What sort of organisation are they?
- What is the job likely to involve?
- How can you best fit your skills to match the job?

### Plan for the interview

Find out what the interview will involve to make sure you're prepared.

If you have a disability, all employers must make reasonable adjustments for you to have an interview. If you need the employer to make particular arrangements (for example, to help you get into the building), contact them before your interview to make sure they can make these arrangements.

Find out how many people will be interviewing you and their positions in the company. This will help you prepare for the kinds of questions they may ask.

Finding out how long the interview is likely to last will give you an idea of how detailed the interview will be. You should also find out if you will have to take a test or make a presentation.

### Plan your journey

Consider travelling to the company the day before the interview to check how long the journey will take. If necessary, ask the employer for directions, bus routes or details of where you can park your car. You should plan another way of getting there in case something unexpected happens (such as an accident blocking the road, or if your train is cancelled).

### Creating the right image

Deciding what to wear for the interview will depend on what sort of work you will be doing. Decide what to wear and get your clothes ready the day before. You don't have to buy a new outfit. Aim for a neat, clean and tidy appearance, if you look good it will help you feel good.

### **Gather together the information you'll need at the interview**

- Remember to take a copy of your CV or application form to refer to.
- Prepare notes or cue cards to help if you think you might need a prompt during the interview.
- Take items the employer has asked you to bring along - for example: references, certificates or your driving licence.
- Reread the job advert to refresh your memory and to make sure you haven't missed anything.

### **Prepare for the questions you might be asked**

You may be asked to discuss examples of your previous work and achievements. The examples you give should expand on or be different from those on your original application form. Before the interview, list the skills and experience needed for the job and think what you have done that you could use as an example for each one.

There is a separate factsheet available with some example interview questions, if you need them.

### **On the day**

Give yourself plenty of time to get ready and make sure you've got all the relevant paperwork with you. If you are delayed, contact the employer as soon as possible to explain, apologise and arrange another appointment.

You should aim to arrive about ten minutes before the interview time.

It's important to make a good first impression. You will make an impression in the first few minutes.

### **Interview tips**

- Enter the room confidently
- Shake hands firmly and introduce yourself
- Smile
- Be polite and friendly
- Check that it's ok to use your notes during the interview
- Try to maintain eye contact with the person you are talking to
- Look interested, and ask questions as well as answering
- Answer questions as fully as you can, avoid just saying "yes" and "no"
- Tell the truth
- Ask if you don't understand a question
- Speak clearly
- Sell yourself – get your good points across and be positive