1. Remember the interview starts as soon as you leave the house

The interview starts long before you shake hands and sit down around the table. You never know who you might bump into as you get off your bus or train , or enter the company’s building – for all you know, your interviewer could be in the same coffee-bar queue as you. So make sure you project a friendly, confident, professional air from the moment you set off.

Doubtless you’ll have made sure you arrive early. Give yourself time to have a comfort break and make sure you’re hydrated. Make conversation with the receptionist, switch off your phone and take in your surroundings – you might notice something that will make a useful small-talk topic later. Don’t try and cram in any last-minute facts – you want to come across as calm and organised, not flustered and under-prepared.

**What not to do:**

‘I once heard someone standing outside our building, smoking furiously and complaining loudly on their phone about the early start time of their meeting and wondering aloud why they were even there. When I got to my next interview, I realised to my dismay the noisy moaner was my next candidate! Not a great start…’ 

2. Treat everyone you meet as your interviewer

Make sure that you’re polite and friendly to everyone you come across in the interview process. From greeting the receptionist, to the people you share a lift with, to walking through an open-plan office to reach your meeting-room… These are all touchpoints with your potential future employer, and co-workers will often share their impressions of visitors afterwards, so you want everyone who comes into contact with you to see you in as positive a light as possible.

**What not to do:**

‘I like to make a point of coming down to greet candidates in person. On one occasion, a candidate assumed I was an assistant, treated me in a very offhand way and rather rudely asked me to get them a drink. They got quite a shock when they saw I was heading up the interview panel! But what most disappointed me was the idea that it’s appropriate to treat staff of any level in such a way.’ 

3. Create a strong first impression

First impressions count, and non-verbal cues matter even more than verbal ones. So in those first few minutes, it’s all about smiling confidently, shaking hands firmly, making eye contact and generally looking as if you’re glad to be there and you want the job. Lean in slightly, widen your eyebrows slightly, and wait to be invited to sit down. In everything you do, project an attitude of energy, enthusiasm and interest.

Clothes-wise, try to match your dress style to that of the company you’re meeting. You should be able to get a good idea of the company’s typical dress code through its website and social media output, especially any content about its working culture, and your recruiter can advise you too. You want to project some personality and charisma, but you also want to come across as a good fit, so if in doubt always err on the formal side.

**What not to do:**

‘One candidate I interviewed asked for a glass of water while they waited. It was icy-cold and they must have spilled it just before we met, so my first impression was a very damp, chilly handshake. So always hold your drink in your left hand!’  

4. Be ready for the small talk

Getting the small talk right (or wrong) can have big consequences. It’s a way for people to build rapport and affinity, and start to generate that elusive, intangible quality of ‘chemistry’ that characterises all effective business relationships.

So as part of your interview preparation, it’s a good idea to think ahead to some likely topics that might come up, so as to help keep the conversation flowing smoothly. The key is to come up with topics where you have a shared interest, so that you’re able to both ask and answer credible questions.

For example, if you see a picture of your interviewer’s family, perhaps you could ask about them – and be ready with a family anecdote of your own. Or if you’re a sports fan and you spot signs that your interviewer is too, perhaps you could ask a suitable question that you’ve also got an interesting answer to (‘Do you ever get to the matches?’ ‘So who’s going to win the Cup this year?’ etc).

Think, too, about topical themes. For example, has your potential employer been in the news recently? Or could you ask about the potential impact on the company of a recent development, such as Brexit or falling share prices or a serious malware attack?  In each case, make sure you have an interesting thought of your own to contribute too.

**What not to do:**

‘One candidate I interviewed recently asked me a non-stop string of questions about my family, the job, the company, things in the news – all sorts of things. But he didn’t really have much to say himself and he didn’t really wait to hear my answer before asking the next question, so he just came across as rather anxious and scattered.’ 

5. Be on message from the outset

Politicians coached in handling the media are always advised to have a maximum of three key messages to get across, which they should stick to and repeat throughout any interview.

Similarly, it’s a good idea to have two or three key points that you want to make about what you have to offer and what you’re looking for – for example, ‘I’m ready for the challenge of managing a team’, ‘I combine compliance experience with technical expertise’, ‘in my career, I’ve developed an extensive digital transformation skillset’.

These are the three key points that you want your interviewer to remember about you. So try and work them in naturally whenever you can, even in the first few minutes. It’s also important to have a ready answer for some of the most common questions that come up early on – such as ‘Tell me why you want this job’ and ‘What’s your understanding of what this job involves?’

**What not to do:**

‘I always start by asking people to explain what our business does. This deceptively simple question floors lots of people – it’s amazing how many people struggle with it, perhaps because they’re attending several interviews in a row and haven’t made the time to do much research. But if you don’t come across as having a firm grasp of the company and why it’s hiring, the interviewer can only conclude that you’re not really that bothered about the job.’

**. Start by researching the company and your interviewers.** Understanding key information about the company you’re interviewing with can help you go into your interview with confidence. Using the company’s website, social media posts and recent press releases will provide a solid understanding of the company’s goals and how your background makes you a great fit. Review our [Complete Guide to Researching a Company](https://www.indeed.com/career-advice/finding-a-job/the-complete-guide-to-researching-a-company).

**2. Practice your answers to common interview questions.** Prepare your answer to the common question: “Tell me about yourself, and why are you interested in this role with our company?” The idea is to quickly communicate who you are and what value you will bring to the company and the role—it’s your personal elevator pitch. Review our guide to answering [Top Interview Questions](https://www.indeed.com/career-advice/interviewing/top-interview-questions-and-answers).

**Tip:** You should come prepared to discuss your salary expectations. If you’re unsure what salary is appropriate to ask for, visit [**Indeed's Salary Calculator**](https://www.indeed.com/career/salary-calculator) for a free, personalized pay range based on your location, industry and experience.

**Image description**

**3. Reread the job description.** You may want to print it out and begin underlining specific skills the employer is looking for. Think about examples from your past and current work that align with these requirements.

**4. Use the STAR method in answering questions.** Prepare to be asked about times in the past when you used a specific skill and use [the STAR method](https://www.indeed.com/career-advice/interviewing/how-to-prepare-for-a-behavioral-interview) to tell stories with a clear Situation, Task, Action and Result.

**5. Recruit a friend to practice answering questions.** Actually practicing your answers out loud is an incredibly effective way to prepare. Say them to yourself or ask a friend to help run through questions and answers. You’ll find you gain confidence as you get used to saying the words.

**6. Prepare a list of references.** Your interviewers might require you to submit a list of references before or after your interview. Having a [reference list](https://www.indeed.com/career-advice/resumes-cover-letters/resume-reference-list) prepared ahead of time can help you quickly complete this step to move forward in the hiring process.

**7. Be prepared with examples of your work.** During the interview, you will likely be asked about specific work you’ve completed in relation to the position. After reviewing the job description, think of work you’ve done in past jobs, clubs or volunteer positions that show you have experience and success doing the work they require.

**8. Prepare smart questions for your interviewers.** Interviews are a two-way street. Employers expect you to ask questions: they want to know that you’re thinking seriously about what it would be like to work there. Here are some questions you may want to consider asking your interviewers:

* Can you explain some of the day-to-day responsibilities this job entails?
* How would you describe the characteristics of someone who would succeed in this role?
* If I were in this position, how would my performance be measured? How often?
* What departments does this teamwork with regularly?
* How do these departments typically collaborate?
* What does that process look like?
* What are the challenges you’re currently facing in your role?

**Related:**[**Questions to Ask in an Interview**](https://www.indeed.com/career-advice/interviewing/questions-to-ask-in-an-interview)

After you’ve spent time preparing, you can be successful on interview day by practicing these tips:

**9. Plan your interview attire the night before.** If you’re speaking to a recruiter before the interview, you can ask them about the dress code in the workplace and choose your outfit accordingly. If you don’t have someone to ask, [research the company](https://www.indeed.com/career-advice/finding-a-job/the-complete-guide-to-researching-a-company) to learn what’s appropriate.

**10. Bring copies of your resume, a notebook and pen.** Take at least five copies of your printed resume on clean paper in case of multiple interviewers. Highlight specific accomplishments on your copy that you can easily refer to and discuss. Bring a pen and a small notebook. Prepare to take notes, but not on your smartphone or another electronic device. Write information down so that you can refer to these details in your follow-up thank-you notes. Maintain eye contact as much as possible. For more, visit [**What to Bring to the Interview**](https://www.indeed.com/career-advice/interviewing/what-to-bring-to-a-job-interview).

**11. Plan your schedule so that you can arrive 10–15 minutes early.** Map out your route to the interview location so you can be sure to arrive on time. Consider doing a practice run. If you’re taking public transportation, identify a backup plan if there are delays or closures.

**Tip:** When you arrive early, use the extra minutes to observe workplace dynamics.

**12. Make a great first impression.** Don’t forget the little things—shine your shoes, make sure your nails are clean and tidy, and check your clothes for holes, stains, pet hair and loose threads. Display confident body language and a smile throughout.

**13. Treat everyone you encounter with respect.** This includes people on the road and in the parking lot, security personnel and front desk staff. Treat everyone you don’t know as though they’re the hiring manager. Even if they aren’t, your potential employer might ask for their feedback.

**14. Practice good manners and body language.** Practice confident, accessible body language from the moment you enter the building. Sit or stand tall with your shoulders back. Before the interview, take a deep breath and exhale slowly to manage feelings of anxiety and encourage self-confidence. The interviewer should extend their hand first to initiate a handshake. Stand, look the person in the eye and smile. A good handshake should be firm but not crush the other person’s fingers. For more, visit [**Everything You Need to Know About Job Interview Etiquette**](https://www.indeed.com/career-advice/interviewing/job-interview-etiquette).

**15. Win them over with your authenticity and positivity.** Being genuine during interview conversations can help employers easily relate to you. Showing positivity with a smile and upbeat body language can help keep the interview light and constructive.

**16. Respond truthfully to the questions asked.** While it can seem tempting to embellish on your skills and accomplishments, interviewers find honesty refreshing and respectable. Focus on your key strengths and why your background makes you uniquely qualified for the position.

**17. Tie your answers back to your skills and accomplishments.** With any question you answer, it is important that you tie your background to the job by providing examples of solutions and results you’ve achieved. Use every opportunity to address the requirements listed in the job description.

**18. Keep your answers concise and focused.** Your time with each interviewer is limited so be mindful of rambling. Practicing your answers beforehand can help keep you focused.

**19. Do not speak negatively about your previous employers.** Companies want to hire problem solvers who overcome tough situations. If you’re feeling discouraged about your current job, focus on talking about what you’ve gained from that experience and what you want to do next.

## Tips for after the interview

When the interview is over, give yourself the best chances of moving forward by doing the following:

**20. Ask about next steps.** After your interview, it is appropriate to ask either your interviewer, hiring manager or recruiter about what you should expect next. This will likely be a follow-up email with results from your interview, additional requirements like an assignment or reference list or another interview.

**21. Send a personalized thank you letter after the interview.** Ask for the business card of each person you speak with during the interview process so that you can follow up individually with a separate thank you email. If you interviewed in the morning, send your follow-up emails the same day. If you interviewed in the afternoon, the next morning is fine. Make certain that each email is distinct from the others, using the notes you took during the conversations.

**1. Research the industry and company.**An interviewer may ask how you perceive his company's position in its industry, who the firm's competitors are, what its competitive advantages are, and how it should best go forward. For this reason, avoid trying to thoroughly research a dozen different industries. Focus your job search on just a few industries instead.

**2. Clarify your "selling points" and the reasons you want the job.**Prepare to go into every interview with three to five key selling points in mind, such as what makes you the best candidate for the position. Have an example of each selling point prepared ("I have good communication skills. For example, I persuaded an entire group to ..."). And be prepared to tell the interviewer why you want that job – including what interests you about it, what rewards it offers that you find valuable, and what abilities it requires that you possess. If an interviewer doesn't think you're really, really interested in the job, he or she won't give you an offer – no matter how good you are!  
  
**3. Anticipate the interviewer's concerns and reservations.**There are always more candidates for positions than there are openings. So interviewers look for ways to screen people out. Put yourself in their shoes and ask yourself why they might not want to hire you (“I don't have this,” “I'm not that,” etc.). Then prepare your defense: “I know you may be thinking that I might not be the best fit for this position because [their reservation]. But you should know that [reason the interviewer shouldn't be overly concerned]."  
  
**4. Prepare for common interview questions.**Every "how to interview" book has a list of a hundred or more "common interview questions." (You might wonder just how long those interviews are if there are that many common questions!) So how do you prepare? Pick any list and think about which questions you're most likely to encounter, given your age and status (about to graduate, looking for a summer internship). Then prepare your answers so you won't have to fumble for them during the actual interview.  
  
**5. Line up your questions for the interviewer.**Come to the interview with some intelligent questions for the interviewer that demonstrate your knowledge of the company as well as your serious intent. Interviewers always ask if you have any questions, and no matter what, you should have one or two ready. If you say, "No, not really," he or she may conclude that you're not all that interested in the job or the company. A good all-purpose question is, "If you could design the ideal candidate for this position from the ground up, what would he or she be like?"  
  
If you're having a series of interviews with the same company, you can use some of your prepared questions with each person you meet (for example, "What do you think is the best thing about working here?" and "What kind of person would you most like to see fill this position?") Then, try to think of one or two others during each interview itself.  
  
**6. Practice, practice, practice.**It's one thing to come prepared with a mental answer to a question like, "Why should we hire you?" It's another challenge entirely to say it out loud in a confident and convincing way. The first time you try it, you'll sound garbled and confused, no matter how clear your thoughts are in your own mind! Do it another 10 times, and you'll sound a lot smoother and more articulate.  
  
But you shouldn't do your practicing when you're "on stage" with a recruiter; rehearse before you go to the interview. The best way to rehearse? Get two friends and practice interviewing each other in a "round robin": one person acts as the observer and the "interviewee" gets feedback from both the observer and the "interviewer." Go for four or five rounds, switching roles as you go. Another idea (but definitely second-best) is to tape record your answer and then play it back to see where you need to improve. Whatever you do, make sure your practice consists of speaking aloud. Rehearsing your answer in your mind won't cut it.  
  
**7. Score a success in the first five minutes.**  
Some studies indicate that interviewers make up their minds about candidates in the first five minutes of the interview – and then spend the rest of the interview looking for things to confirm that decision! So what can you do in those five minutes to get through the gate? Come in with energy and enthusiasm, and express your appreciation for the interviewer's time. (Remember: She may be seeing a lot of other candidates that day and may be tired from the flight in. So bring in that energy!)  
  
Also, start off with a positive comment about the company – something like, "I've really been looking forward to this meeting [not "interview"]. I think [the company] is doing great work in [a particular field or project], and I'm really excited by the prospect of being able to contribute."  
  
**8. Get on the same side as the interviewer.**Many interviewers view job interviews as adversarial: Candidates are going to try to pry an offer out of the interviewer, and the interviewer's job is to hold onto it. Your job is to transform this "tug of war" into a relationship in which you're both on the same side. You could say something as simple as, "I'm happy to have the chance to learn more about your company and to let you learn more about me, so we can see if this is going to be a good match or not. I always think that the worst thing that can happen is to be hired into a job that's wrong for you – then nobody's happy!"  
  
**9. Be assertive and take responsibility for the interview.**Perhaps out of the effort to be polite, some usually assertive candidates become overly passive during job interviews. But politeness doesn't equal passivity. An interview is like any other conversation – it’s a dance in which you and a partner move together, both responding to the other. Don't make the mistake of just sitting there waiting for the interviewer to ask you about that Nobel Prize you won. It's your responsibility to make sure he walks away knowing your key selling points.  
  
**10. Be ready to handle illegal and inappropriate questions.**Interview questions about your race, age, gender, religion, marital status, and sexual orientation are inappropriate and in many areas illegal. Nevertheless, you may get one or more of them. If you do, you have a couple of options. You can simply answer with a question ("I'm not sure how that's relevant to my application"), or you can try to answer "the question behind the question": "I don't know whether I'll decide to have children in the near future, but if you're wondering if I'll be leaving my job for an extended period of time, I can say that I'm very committed to my career and frankly can't imagine giving it up."  
  
**11. Make your selling points clear.**If a tree falls in the forest and no one is there to hear it, did it make a sound? More important, if you communicate your selling points during a job interview and the interviewer doesn't get it, did you score? On this question, the answer is clear: No! So don't bury your selling points in long-winded stories. Instead, tell the interviewer what your selling point is first, then give the example.  
  
**12. Think positive.**No one likes a complainer, so don't dwell on negative experiences during an interview. Even if the interviewer asks you point blank, "What courses have you liked least?" or "What did you like least about that previous job?" don't answer the question. Or more specifically, don't answer it as it's been asked. Instead, say something like, "Well, actually I've found something about all of my classes that I've liked. For example, although I found [class] to be very tough, I liked the fact that [positive point about the class]" or "I liked [a previous job] quite a bit, although now I know that I really want to [new job]."  
  
**13. Close on a positive note.**If a salesman came to you and demonstrated his product, then thanked you for your time and walked out the door, what did he do wrong? He didn't ask you to buy it! If you get to the end of an interview and think you'd really like that job, ask for it! Tell the interviewer that you'd really, really like the job – that you were excited about it before the interview and are even more excited now, and that you're convinced you'd like to work there. If there are two equally good candidates at the end of the search – you and someone else – the interviewer will think you're more likely to accept the offer, and thus may be more inclined to make an offer to you.  
  
Even better, take what you've learned about yourself from your MyPath career assessment and use it to explain why you think this is the job for you: "I've done some careful career self-assessment, and I know that I'm most interested in [one or two of your most important career interest themes], and – correct me if I'm wrong – it seems that this position would allow me to express those interests. I also know that I'm most motivated by [two or three of your most important motivators from your MyPath assessment], and I have the sense that if I do well, I could get those rewards in this position.  
  
Finally, I know that my strongest abilities are [two or three of your strongest abilities from your MyPath assessment], and I see those as being the abilities you most need for this position." If you follow this tip, you'll be (a) asking for the job, (b) explaining why you think it's a good match, (c) displaying your thoughtfulness and maturity, and (d) further disarming the tug-of-war dynamic that interviewers anticipate. You'll be making the strongest possible "close" – and that's worth a lot!  
  
**14. Bring a copy of your resume to every interview.**Have a copy of your resume with you when you go to every interview. If the interviewer has misplaced his or her copy, you'll save a lot of time (and embarrassment on the interviewer's part) if you can just pull your extra copy out and hand it over.  
  
**15. Don't worry about sounding "canned".**Some people are concerned that if they rehearse their answers, they'll sound "canned" (or overly polished or glib) during the interview. Don't worry. If you're well prepared, you'll sound smooth and articulate, not canned. And if you're not so well prepared, the anxiety of the situation will eliminate any "canned" quality.  
  
**16. Make the most of the "Tell me about yourself" question.**Many interviewers begin interviews with this question. So how should you respond? You can go into a story about where you were born, what your parents do, how many brothers and sisters and dogs and cats you have, and that's okay. But would you rather have the interviewer writing down what kind of dog you have – or why the company should hire you?  
  
Consider responding to this question with something like: "Well, obviously I could tell you about lots of things, and if I'm missing what you want, please let me know. But the three things I think are most important for you to know about me are [your selling points]. I can expand on those a little if you'd like." Interviewers will always say, "Sure, go ahead." Then you say, "Well, regarding the first point, [give your example]. And when I was working for [company], I [example of another selling point]." Etc. This strategy enables you to focus the first 10-15 minutes of the interview on all of your key selling points. The "Tell me about yourself" question is a golden opportunity. Don't miss it!  
  
**17. Speak the right body language.**Dress appropriately, make eye contact, give a firm handshake, have good posture, speak clearly, and don't wear perfume or cologne! Sometimes interview locations are small rooms that may lack good air circulation. You want the interviewer paying attention to your job qualifications -- not passing out because you've come in wearing Chanel No. 5 and the candidate before you was doused with Brut, and the two have mixed to form a poisonous gas that results in you not getting an offer!  
  
**18. Be ready for "behavior-based" interviews".**One of the most common interview styles today is to ask people to describe experiences they have had that demonstrate behaviors that the company thinks are important for a particular position. You might be asked to talk about a time when you made an unpopular decision, displayed a high level of persistence, or made a decision under time pressure and with limited information, for example.  
  
Step 1 is to anticipate the behaviors this hiring manager is likely to be looking for. Step 2 is to identify at least one example of when you demonstrated each behavior. Step 3 is to prepare a story for each example. Many people recommend using SAR (Situation-Action-Result) as a model for the story. Step 4 is to practice telling the story. Also, make sure to review your resume before the interview with this kind of format in mind; this can help you to remember examples of behaviors you may not have anticipated in advance.  
  
**19. Send thank-you notes.**Write a thank-you note after every interview. Type each note on paper or send them by email, depending on the interviewers' preferences. Customize your notes by referring specifically to what you and the interviewer discussed; for example, "I was particularly excited about [or interested by, or glad to hear] what you said about ..." Handwritten notes might be better if you're thanking a personal contact for helping you in your job search, or if the company you're interviewing with is based in Europe. Whatever method you choose, notes should be sent within 48 hours of the interview.  
  
To write a good thank-you note, you'll need to take time after each interview to jot down a few things about what the interviewer said. Also, write down what you could have done better in the interview, and make adjustments before you head off for your next interview.  
  
**20. Don't give up!**If you've had a bad interview for a job that you truly think would be a great fit for you (not just something you want badly), don't give up! Write a note, send an email, or call the interviewer to let him or her know that you think you did a poor job of communicating why you think this job would be a good match. Reiterate what you have to offer the company, and say that you'd like an opportunity to contribute. Whether this strategy will get you a job offer depends on the company and on you. But one thing's for sure: If you don't try, your chances are exactly zero. We've seen this approach work on numerous occasions, and we encourage you to give it that last shot.

**Be on time.**  
This often means 10-15 minutes early. Interviewers often are ready before the appointment.

**Know the interviewer’s name,**its**spelling, and pronunciation.**  
Use it during the interview. If you don’t know the name, call beforehand and ask the secretary. Also, note the secretary’s name in case you have to call back. Secretaries can influence the hiring decision!

**Have some questions of your own prepared in advance.**  
There is nothing wrong with having a short list of questions and thoughts- it shows you have done your research and want to know more about the organization and the position.

**Bring several copies of your resume.**  
Also, bring a copy of your transcript. Carry your papers in an organized manner.

**Have a reliable pen and a small note pad with you.**  
But do not take notes during the interview. However, immediately afterward, write down as much as you can remember, including your impression of how well you did.

**Greet the interviewer with a handshake and a smile.**  
Remember to maintain eye contact (which does not mean a stare down).

**Expect to spend some time developing rapport.**  
Don’t jump right in and get down to business. Follow the interviewer’s lead.

**Don’t be embarrassed if you are nervous.**  
As you gain experience you’ll become more at ease with the interviewing process.

**Focus.**  
On your attributes, your transferable skills, and your willingness to learn; don’t apologize for a lack of experience; describe your strengths in terms of what you can do for the organization.

**Tell the truth.**Lies and exaggeration will come back to haunt you.

**Listen carefully to the interviewer.**Be sure you understand the question; if not, ask for clarification, or restate it in your own words. Answer completely and concisely. Stick to the subject at hand.

**Never slight a teacher, friend, employer, or your university.**  
Loyalty ranks high on the employer’s list.

**Watch your grammar.**  
Employers are interested in candidates who can express themselves properly. Even if you have to go slowly and correct yourself, accuracy is preferred over ungrammatical fluency.

**Be prepared for personal questions.**  
Some interviewers may not know what they can and cannot ask legally. Anticipate how you will handle such questions without losing your composure.

**Wait for the interviewer to mention salary and benefits.**  
To research pay scales, refer to salary surveys and information on the Career Services website on in the career library.

**Don’t expect a job offer at the first interview.**  
Often you will be invited to a second or even third interview before an offer is made several weeks later.

**Close on a positive, enthusiastic note.**  
Ask what the next step will be. Thank the interviewer for his/her time and express your interest in the job. Leave quickly and courteously with a handshake and a smile.

**No interview is complete until you follow up with a thank-you note.**  
Express your appreciation for the interview and, if true, reaffirm your interest. This last step can make a difference. Don’t forget it.

## **Practice Good Nonverbal Communication**

It's about demonstrating confidence: standing straight, making eye contact and connecting with [a firm handshake](https://www.monster.com/career-advice/article/perfect-your-business-handshake). That first [nonverbal](https://www.monster.com/career-advice/article/nonverbal-communications-interview) impression can be a great beginning—or quick ending—to your interview.

## **Dress for the Job or Company**

Today's [casual dress codes](https://www.monster.com/career-advice/article/Appropriate-Interview-Dress) do not give you permission to dress as "they" do when you interview. It is important to know [what to wear to an interview](https://www.monster.com/career-advice/article/what-to-wear-for-job-interviews) and to be well-groomed. Whether you wear a suit or something less formal depends on the [company culture](https://www.monster.com/career-advice/article/culture-fit-questions-you-should-ask-1116) and the position you are seeking. If possible, call to find out about the [company dress code](https://www.monster.com/career-advice/article/what-to-wear-job-interview) before the interview.

## **Listen**

One of the most crucial interview tips: Listen. From the very beginning of the interview, your interviewer is giving you information, either directly or indirectly. If you are not hearing it, you are missing a major opportunity. [Good communication skills](https://www.monster.com/career-advice/article/communicate-better-at-work-0117) include listening and letting the person know you heard what was said. Observe your interviewer, and match that style and pace.

## **Don't Talk Too Much**

Telling the interviewer more than he needs to know could be a fatal mistake. When you have not prepared ahead of time, you may ramble when answering [interview questions](https://www.monster.com/career-advice/article/100-potential-interview-questions), sometimes talking yourself right out of the job. [Prepare for the interview](https://www.monster.com/career-advice/article/practice-makes-perfect-how-to-rehearse-for-your-next-job-interview-hot-jobs) by reading through the [job posting](https://www.monster.com/career-advice/article/job-description-0617), matching your skills with the position's requirements and relating only that information.

## **Don't Be Too Familiar**

The interview is a professional meeting to talk business. This is not about making a new friend. Your level of familiarity should mimic the interviewer's demeanor. It is important to bring energy and enthusiasm to the interview and to ask questions, but do not overstep your place as a candidate looking for a job.

## **Use Appropriate Language**

It's a given that you should use [professional language](https://www.monster.com/career-advice/article/persuade-new-job-crimmins-1216) during the interview. Be aware of any inappropriate slang words or references to age, race, religion, politics, or sexual orientation—these topics could send you out the door very quickly.

## **Don't Be Cocky**

Attitude plays a key role in your interview success. There is a fine balance between [confidence](https://www.monster.com/career-advice/article/build-confidence-at-work-0217), professionalism, and modesty. Even if you're putting on a performance to demonstrate your ability, overconfidence is as bad, if not worse, as being too reserved. All the interview tips in the world won't save you if you come off as unpleasant to work with.

## **Take Care to Answer the Questions**

When interviewers ask for an example of a time when you did something, they are asking [behavioral interview questions](https://www.monster.com/career-advice/article/you-can-survive-the-behavioral-interview), which are designed to elicit a sample of your past behavior. If you fail to relate a specific example, you not only don't answer the question, but you also miss an opportunity to prove your ability and talk about your skills.

## **Ask Questions**

When asked if they have any questions, most candidates answer, "No." Wrong answer. Part of knowing how to interview is being ready to [ask questions](https://www.monster.com/career-advice/article/nine-questions-to-ask-interview) that demonstrate an interest in what goes on in the company. Asking questions also gives you the opportunity to find out if this is the right place for you. The best questions come from listening to what you're asked during the interview and asking for additional information.

## **Don't Appear Desperate**

When you interview with the "please, please hire me" approach, you appear desperate and less confident. Reflect the three Cs during the interview: cool, calm, and confident.

## **Bonus Tip: Work on Your Answers**

You know you can do the job; make sure the interviewer believes you can, too. One way to do this is by preparing well-thought-out answers to questions they're most likely to ask. Need some help with that? Make a [free profile on Monster](https://www.monster.com/profile/detail). As a member, you'll get interview tips, career advice, and job search insights sent directly to your inbox so you can come across as a strong, viable candidate. From ice breakers ("Tell me about yourself") to the nitty-gritty ("What's your biggest weakness?"), Monster's expert advice can help you craft answers that highlight your skills and eagerness to get the job.