



JOB INTERVIEW

CHECKLIST

The big day is just around the corner – your interview!

And we want you to ace it. Make use of this checklist to prepare yourself. Go through each of the items carefully.

We have grouped these items into things you need to do **before**, **during** and **after** the interview.

BEFORE THE INTERVIEW

1. Spend time researching the industry, and the company, in great detail. Go through free analyst reports available on the web. Talk to past and present company employees.
2. If you are switching roles, then make sure to research the industry and the job role, and prepare an answer for exactly why you are making a career change.
3. Make sure you know the name of the person or the people interviewing you.
4. Find out whether the interview would be a formal panel interview or a one-to-one interview. Will it be preceded by a written test or a group discussion? How many interviews are you likely to face that day? Are there any written formalities that would need to be completed prior to the interview? It is always a good idea to have some idea of the structure of that day, so you aren't surprised by what you experience.
5. Research your interviewers – Look up their names on Google and find them on LinkedIn. Quite often, you may know common people, or may be a part of the same alumnus! Remember to highlight that during the interview.
6. Bring three copies of your CV with you. Do not assume the interviewers will have a copy of your CV ready. Prepare for an SOS situation wherein they ask you to give them your CV during the interview. It would be embarrassing if you had to say that you did not carry it to the interview.
7. Quite often, candidates do not read their own CVs before going for an interview. They probably prepared the CV 2–3 months ago and have absolutely no idea about what was written on it. Do not be that person. Read your CV the night before the interview.
8. Plan your journey to the interview destination. Use Google Maps and chalk out



at least two routes to your destination. If possible, drive there a day earlier, to be familiar with the location, parking issues and any diversions that may not reflect on Google Maps.

9. Keep the contact number of either the head-hunter or the hiring manager, or the company's reception number, with you in case you face any problems on the way.
10. Print out a map of your route. If you have a tech glitch during your ride and Google Maps doesn't work, the good old paper map would come in very handy.
11. Leave a good half an hour before you think you need to. You will arrive on time and will be well prepared for any unanticipated delays. If you arrive too early at the venue (say, more than 20 mins), stroll or walk outside, sit in the nearby park, or stay in your car. Reaching more than 30 mins before for the interview isn't a good sign either.
12. Prepare your outfit for the interview the night before. Have your dress or suit dry-cleaned or pressed in advance. Your shoes should be polished, with socks matching your trousers, and always carry a clean handkerchief.
13. If you are a smoker, then remember to carry a pack of strong mint candy (not gum) and put one in your mouth 10 mins before the interview.

Note: Ensure that the candy dissolves within the time and you go in for the interview with an empty mouth.

14. Have a nice leather portfolio to carry your CV and two pens, along with any identification if required.



DURING THE INTERVIEW

1. Switch off your mobile phone. Please do this outside the interview room. You will be caught off guard if your phone starts ringing during the interview, and you may find it very hard to regain composure.
2. Enter the room with a broad smile! A smile shows that you are happy to be there and to meet the interviewer. Make sure your smile is genuine.
3. Shake hands firmly with each of the interviewer(s). Nevertheless, ensure your hands are not sweaty, due to heat or stress!
4. Ask for a glass of water if your mouth is dry. An interview is a stressful situation, and under stress, your mouth will go dry fast.
5. Ask questions about the role and the company. An interview is not a one-way monologue wherein you are only expected to answer questions. Prepare a few questions of your own to ask them.
6. Listen to the questions first before you answer. Many candidates are so eager to 'show off' their knowledge that they do not bother to listen and really understand the question, and end up giving an incorrect answer, causing themselves a lot of embarrassment.
7. Always ensure to keep your answers brief. Each answer should be 30–45 seconds long at the most. If you have to give a long answer, then recap the main points at the end.
8. Breathe deeply during the interview. Relax. If your breath becomes shallow, your voice would become high-pitched and would sound squeaky. It does not show confidence.
9. Lean forward slightly while answering questions. Smile a lot, maintain eye contact, and if there is more than one interviewer, then make eye contact with each of them.
10. At the end of the interview, ask them about the next steps.
11. You can use the following resource if you want to practise mock interviews: <http://myinterviewsimulator.com/>



AFTER THE INTERVIEW

1. Send hand-written notes to each of the interviewers thanking them for the opportunity.
2. Keep the head-hunter informed about your interview experience. They will probably get feedback from the hiring company first.
3. Write down your interview experience in your job journal within six hours of the interview, so you can refer to it for the next interview that you have to attend. Write down the highlights and any mistakes that you may have made, or what you could have done better.
4. Once the interview is over, reflect on the experience and move on quickly to the next lead/interview in your job search funnel. You have some control on the interview experience, but absolutely no control on the outcome.
5. If you are not selected, don't stay dejected for too long. Learn from the mistakes and move on. Rejection only means that the role was not a good fit with your profile and experience. Do not take it personally.

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