



# Your complete interview guide

Useful advice and tips  
for your interview





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## Introduction

Preparing for an interview can feel daunting, whether you're just starting your career or you're an experienced professional looking for your next challenge. This guide is designed to help you feel confident, prepared, and ready to showcase your skills and experience to potential employers.

Interviews aren't just about answering questions – they're an opportunity to demonstrate your value, connect with employers, and ensure the role and company are the right **fit for you**. By taking the time to prepare, you'll set yourself apart from other candidates and increase your chances of securing the role.

In this guide, we'll walk you through every stage of the interview process, from understanding the types of interviews you might face to mastering the questions you'll be asked. You'll also find practical tips on what to do before, during, and after your interview, along with insights to help you avoid common mistakes.

Let's get started!



# Types of interviews you might face

Interviews come in many forms, and the type you'll face will depend on the role, the company, and the industry. Each format has its own expectations and preparation strategies, so it's important to be familiar with the different types of interviews you might encounter.

## Telephone interviews

Telephone interviews are often used as a first step in the recruitment process. They're typically shorter and more focused on your background, experience, and motivation for applying. Employers use them to screen candidates, often before inviting them to the next stage in the process.

**Top tip:** Make sure you're in a quiet area, with good signal and sufficient battery – you don't want to be cut off in the middle of the interview. You can also keep your CV or notes on the organisation in front of you, if this helps settle your nerves.

## Video interview

Video interviews have become increasingly popular, especially in remote work environments. They may be conducted live (via platforms like Zoom, Teams, or Skype) or recorded (where you answer preset questions at your convenience).

**Top tip:** Test your technology beforehand (internet connection, camera and microphone), clear your backdrop or blur your background if this is possible.

## Face-to-face interviews

These are the traditional, in-person interviews. They may involve one or more interviewers, and often include a mix of questions designed to assess both your qualifications and fit for the company culture.

**Top tip:** Plan your journey and arrive early, have a copy of your CV to hand in case this is helpful, be prepared to engage in conversation and ask thoughtful questions about the company and role.

## Group interviews

In group interviews, candidates are assessed collectively in a group setting, often to see how they interact with others and perform in a team. These interviews may include group discussions, collaborative tasks, or even problem-solving exercises.

## Assessment centres

Assessment centres are a more comprehensive approach used by many employers, particularly for graduate or entry-level roles. They typically involve multiple candidates participating in a variety of exercises over a few hours or even a day. This may include group tasks, presentations, role plays, and interviews.

**Top tip:** Focus on demonstrating teamwork and communication skills, actively listen and contribute thoughtfully, be respectful and supportive – showing that you can work well with others.

### **Psychometric testing**

Not used as commonly, psychometric tests are designed to assess cognitive abilities, personality traits, and potential fit for a particular role. They can be online or as part of an in-person interview, and often include verbal reasoning, or abstract reasoning questions.

**Top tip:** Try not to anticipate the employer's answer and be honest as there are usually no right or wrong answers. You can practice these online to become familiar with the format.

### **Technical testing**

Common for roles in fields such as IT, actuarial and finance, these tests assess technical skills and knowledge relevant to the role. This might include data analysis or numerical tests.

**Top tip:** You can take a look at various online tools dedicated to technical testing.

### **Role plays**

Role plays are often used in interviews for customer-facing roles, sales positions, or leadership positions. You'll be asked to act out a scenario related to the role to demonstrate how you would handle a situation in a real work environment.

**Top tip:** Familiarise yourself with common scenarios that you might encounter in the role, be clear and professional in your approach, and demonstrate confidence.

### **Working interviews**

This is an opportunity to showcase your skills to an organisation and perform tasks related to the role, either on the spot or during a trial period. This could be part of your interview, or take place on a separate day.

**Top tip:** Ask questions if necessary to clarify tasks in order to complete them to the best of your ability, pay attention to the work culture and how others interact – it's a chance to evaluate the environment as much as it is for the employer to assess you.

### **Presentation interview**

At some point in your career and as you progress into more senior roles, you may be asked to prepare and deliver a presentation. Usually you will be asked to deliver a presentation to assess the strength of your communication and organisation skills, your technical knowledge and abilities, as well as your commitment and enthusiasm for the role. There are more tips on building an interview presentation later in this document.

**Top tip:** Be prepared for follow-up questions and use visual aids - but don't overdo this, you don't want your audience to be distracted.



# Preparing for your interview

Preparation is key to feeling confident and making a positive impression in your interview. The more effort you put into preparing, the more you'll be able to showcase your skills and enthusiasm for the role. Here's how to ensure you're fully prepared:

## Double check the practical details

First and foremost, make sure you know the logistics of the interview.

- > **Time and location:** Check the interview time and location (if applicable) to avoid being late. For in-person interviews, plan your route in advance and leave extra time for unexpected delays. For phone interviews, ensure you're in a quiet, comfortable space with a good phone signal.
- > **Technology:** If the interview is virtual, test your technology beforehand. Make sure your internet connection, camera, and microphone are working properly, and choose a quiet, well-lit space for the interview.
- > **Interview format:** Revisit any communications from the employer to confirm whether the interview is a panel, one-on-one, or group format. This will help you mentally prepare for the kind of interaction you'll have.

## Revisit the job description

Before your interview, take another look at the job description:

- > **Key responsibilities:** Refresh yourself on the main duties and responsibilities of the role. This will help you focus on your relevant experience and tailor your answers to demonstrate your ability to excel in the role.
- > **Required skills:** Highlight the key skills and competencies the employer is seeking. Think about how your background aligns with these skills, and be prepared to give examples that show how you meet or exceed the requirement.

**Top tip:** If you're struggling with this in any way, speak to your Recruitment Consultant who will be able to help you to understand the organisation and may have some handy tips on what skills you should highlight during the interview.

## Research the company

The more you know about the company, the more engaging and thoughtful your interview will be. It shows that you're genuinely interested and committed to the opportunity.

- > **Company website:** Start by reviewing the company's website. Look at their 'About Us' (or equivalent) page/s, recent updates and products or services they offer.
- > **Awards and accreditations:** Check if the company has received any awards, certifications, or accreditations. This shows that they're recognised in the industry, and it's a great way to highlight your interest in their success. You can bring up these recognitions in the interview to demonstrate that you've done your homework.
- > **Mission and values:** Make sure you understand the company's mission, values, and culture. Aligning your responses to their values shows you're a good cultural fit.

## LinkedIn and Google research

Use LinkedIn and Google to gather more specific information on the company and the people you'll be speaking with.

- > **Company LinkedIn page:** Explore the company's LinkedIn page to see updated, projects, and industry involvement. This can provide great conversation starters and insight into what's currently happening within the business.



- > **Employee LinkedIn profiles:** If you know who'll be interviewing you, take a look at their LinkedIn profiles to understand their role, background and interests. This could help build rapport with the interviewer.
- > **Google and press releases:** Search for recent news articles, press releases, or blog posts about the company. This can help you learn about recent achievements, projects, or any changes in the business that you can refer to during your interview. It's also a great way to stay up to date with their latest developments, showing you're informed and proactive.

**Top tip:** Websites like Glassdoor are a great way to learn about the company, the culture and what employees think about working there.

### Prepare questions to ask the interviewer

An interview is a two-way conversation, and preparing insightful questions is just as important as answering the interviewer's questions. You can ask about:

- > **The role:** Ask about day-to-day responsibilities, team dynamics, or what success looks like in the role.
- > **The company culture:** Ask about the work culture or team environment. For example, "How would you describe the company culture here?" or "What's the management style like at the company?"
- > **Growth and development:** Discuss opportunities for growth or professional development. For example, "What opportunities are there for professional development and career growth within the company?"
- > **Challenges and expectations:** It's useful to understand potential challenges and expectations upfront. You might ask, "What are the biggest challenges facing the team right now?" or "What are the most important qualities for someone to succeed in this role?"

More on this in the next section 'Questions'.

### Be prepared for competency-based questions

When answering competency-based questions, think about how you structure the answers you give to make it easier to understand the point you are trying to make. Generally, you should break the answer down into four points.

Firstly, start with the **situation** or issue you had to deal with, secondly talk about the **task**, objective or goal you had to reach, the third part is the **action** you implemented to achieve the goal and finally talk about the **results** and impact it had on the business. While it is important to give a full answer, you should also remember to be concise.

This is known as the **STAR** method. More on this in the next section 'Questions'.



# Questions

As part of the interview process there may be a mixture of basic questions and competency-based questions (to assess your skills, how you would apply them in the role and determine how you react in different circumstances).

Here we will outline the different types of questions that candidates may be faced with, these are broken down to commonly asked questions that you might want to prepare for, competency-based questions and questions that senior candidates may find themselves faced with.

## Commonly asked questions

Here we provide valuable information regarding the format of a typical interview and tips on how to prepare. Not all of these questions will be relevant, but this will give you a good idea of what you can expect to be asked so you can prepare concise and relevant answers.

- > **Introduction/Tell me about yourself:** The interviewer wants to see how articulate you are, how confident you are, and generally what type of impression you would make on the people you come into contact with on the job.

The interviewer also wants to learn about the trajectory of your career and to get a sense of what you think is important, as well as what has caused you to perform well. You should focus on your skills, experiences and achievements relevant to the role.

- > **Why do you want this job?** Highlight your enthusiasm for the role, your alignment with the company's values, and your interest in their mission or industry. Show you want to be part of an exciting company, underlining what it is about both the company and role that attracts you. Combine these with your beliefs on how you can make a definite contribution.
- > **What are your greatest strengths and weaknesses?** Be honest but strategic. Focus on strengths that align with the job and choose weaknesses you are actively working to improve.

**Top tip:** Remember not to sing your own praises too much or dwell on the negatives of your weakness. Turn both points into a real positive and tailor them to the role you are applying for.

- > **Where do you see yourself in five years?** Show ambition and vision, tying your future aspirations to the company's goals.
- > **Give an example of a difficult objective you have been set and how you have met it:** Choose a goal that you have achieved that would be similar to one you may be asked to do in this role. Briefly outline what it was, what made it 'difficult', how you approached it, the positive responses you got and the effect it had on the company.
- > **Describe a situation where you were part of a failed project or something did not go to plan:** If you are not able to discuss a failure or mistake, the hiring manager might think that you do not possess the depth of experience necessary to do the job. Everyone at a senior level should have a prepared response to this question, be that a recent one or one

from earlier in your career. Ensure you let them know that you have learned something valuable from every mistake you have made.

- > **Why are you leaving your current role/looking for a new role?** Be positive. Focus on aspects such as the need to develop yourself further, a desire to bring your skills to a new environment, the opportunity working for this company gives you.

## Competency-based questions

Competency questioning involves a situation-based question that involves proving an example of a time you demonstrated a particular skill. To help you answer these style questions you may want to use the below approach.

The '**STAR**' approach – the acronym STAR stands for:

- > The **S**ituation
- > The **T**ask required as a result
- > The **A**ction you took
- > The **R**esult of that action

### Step 1: Situation or Task

Describe the situation that you were confronted with or the task that needed to be accomplished. With the STAR approach you need to set the context. Make it concise and informative, concentrating solely on what is useful to the story.

For example, if the question is asking you to describe a situation where you had to deal with a difficult person, explain how you came to meet that person and why they were being difficult. If the question is asking for an example of teamwork, explain the task that you had to undertake as a team.

### Step 2: Action

This is the most important section of the STAR approach as it is where you will need to demonstrate and highlight the skills and personal attributes that the question is testing. Now that you have set the context of your story, you need to explain what you did.

In doing so, you will need to remember the following:

- > Be personal, i.e. talk about you, not the rest of the team.
- > Go into some detail - do not assume that they will guess what you mean.
- > Steer clear of technical information, unless it is crucial to your story.
- > Explain what you did, how you did it, and why you did it.

The interviewers will want to know how you reacted to the situation. This is where you can start selling some important skills. For example, you may want to describe how you managed the team to achieve a particular objective and how you used your communication skills to keep everyone updated on progress.

### Step 3: Result

Explain what happened – how it all ended. Also, use the opportunity to describe what you accomplished and what you learnt in that situation. This helps you make the answer personal and enables you to highlight further skills.



Interviewers want to know that you are using a variety of generic skills in order to achieve your objectives. Therefore, you must be able to demonstrate in your answer that you are taking specific actions because you are trying to achieve a specific objective and not simply by chance.

### Competency types

Remember, be yourself when answering competency questions; use real life examples and relate them to your experience, how you reacted or how it made you feel.

- > **Individual competencies:** Refer to your personal attributes such as your flexibility, decisiveness, tenacity, knowledge, independence, risk-taking and personal integrity.
  - Example: Tell me about a time when your work or an idea was challenged.
- > **Managerial competencies:** Refer to your ability to take charge of other people such as leadership, empowerment, strategic thinking, corporate sensitivity, project management and managerial control.
  - Example: Tell me about a time you led a group to achieve an objective.
- > **Analytical competencies:** Refer to your decision-making abilities such as innovation, analytical skills, problem-solving, practical learning and attention to detail.
  - Example: Tell me about a time when you identified a new approach to a problem.
- > **Interpersonal competencies:** Refer to social competence. Many workplaces function on the basis of project teams and the more collaborative they are, the more likely they are to thrive.
  - Example: Describe a situation where you got people to work together.
- > **Motivational competencies:** Refer to the things that drive you such as resilience, energy, motivation, result orientation, initiative and quality focus.
  - Example: When did you work the hardest and feel the greatest sense of achievement?

## Technical questions

In addition to general and competency-based questions, many roles require candidates to demonstrate their technical knowledge and expertise. These questions assess your understanding of key principles, industry regulations, and practical applications within your field.

Technical questions will vary depending on the sector and the role, but they typically focus on:

- > Industry-specific knowledge – e.g., legal frameworks, accounting principles, IT systems.
- > Problem-solving skills – applying technical expertise to real-world scenarios.
- > Case studies or exercises – analysing a legal case, financial statement, or HR based scenario.

You can prepare for these types of questions by:

- > Reviewing industry regulations and updates – stay informed about recent changes in your field.
- > Refresh your technical skills – revisit key concepts and processes relevant to the role.
- > Practice case studies or problem-solving exercises – use past examples or mock scenarios to refine your approach.

- > Use job descriptions as a guide – identify technical skills and topics mentioned in the job advert and ensure you can confidently discuss them.

Being prepared for technical questions not only demonstrates your expertise but also reassures the employer that you have the skills to succeed in the role. If unsure what to expect, speak with your recruiter, who can provide industry-specific guidance.

## Questions for senior candidates

Interviews for senior positions typically focus on leadership, strategic thinking, and your ability to drive results. Employers or hiring managers want to understand how you've contributed at a higher level and how you can bring value to the organisation.

While some of these questions may not be relevant, it is worthwhile preparing for those that may be.

### **Growth, financial, and operational management**

- > Describe an instance where you have driven a company or business to accelerate growth, expand EBITDA and profitability, increase efficiency and enhance shareholder return.
  - What was the vision and what needed to change?
- > Describe your experience managing significant budgets and P&Ls.
  - How did you prioritise your investments?
  - What process did you use to gain support?
  - What have been your experiences with tough decisions regarding budget cuts, restructuring or reallocating resources?
- > With an example or two, tell us about how you have grown or changed a business or an organisation through strategic partnership, joint venture or acquisition.
- > Have you ever created and/or launched a new product or business that resulted in a new revenue stream?

### **Strategy and vision**

- > What do you think are the most important strategic priorities for our company over the next three years?
  - What would you do as senior member of our team to achieve success against these priorities?
- > How have you developed strategy when your business faced new market entrants and competitive threats?
  - What were the short and long-term goals that you put in place?
- > Describe your experience managing an organisation as it creates new business models, products, content or initiatives that are essential to the company's growth.
  - How did you develop a vision and a strategy to support it?
  - How did you communicate and gain buy-in from key stakeholders as the organisation evolved?
  - What were the results?

### **Leadership and teambuilding**

- > How would you describe your management style?
  - How would your staff and peers describe you?





- What would they say are your major strengths and/or weaknesses as a leader or manager?
- Where do you think you might improve?
- > Explain some of the different environments that you have worked in.
  - Where have you been at your very best?
  - Describe the environments in which your leadership style is most effective.
  - Where have you been frustrated and less successful?
- > Tell us something about your communication style in the workplace with your direct reports, your superiors and your staff more broadly?
  - Also with the external community – clients, and investors?
- > Tell us about a time when you took over a team that had been under the leadership of another person for a long period of time.
  - What did you do to build support, rapport, trust and followership quickly?

### Technology

- > Many businesses are experiencing changes in our operating environment due to continued digital transformation, the shifting patterns of content consumption and aggressive competitors. What have you done to implement technology improvements, e.g. platform integrations, new enterprise management systems?
- > Can you share a time when you have had to expand a core product set through innovation, and particularly in a mobile environment?
- > How would you bring greater innovation to our company? What innovations have you led at other businesses?
- > What business that has adopted new technology and evolved their business model do you admire most? Why?

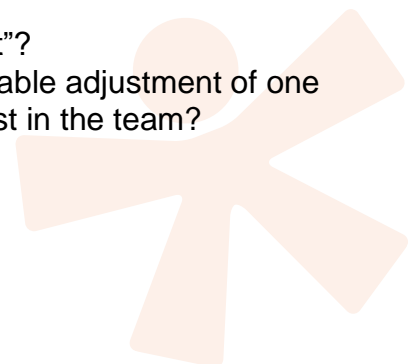
**Top tip:** Prepare to discuss your track record with specific metrics (e.g., increased revenue by X%, reduced costs by Y%).

## Questions on diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI)

Many employers now include questions on diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) as part of their interview process. These questions assess your understanding of DEI principles, your ability to work in diverse teams, and how you would contribute to an inclusive workplace.

### Example questions

- > What is your definition or understanding of diversity?
- > How would you promote diversity and inclusion?
- > What do you see as the challenges of leading and managing a diverse workforce?
- > How have you/would you handle a situation in which one of your colleagues made a discriminatory remark?
- > What kind of experience have you had of working with others from a different cultural background than your own?
- > What do you understand by the term “reasonable adjustment”?
- > How have you/ would you handle a situation where a reasonable adjustment of one employee is affecting the workloads of others / causing unrest in the team?



## Questions to ask the interviewer

Interviewers like candidates that come prepared and that seem genuinely interested about the role, so it is important to think about any questions you may have and ask them at the end of the interview (or during if the opportunity presents itself).

Here are a few examples of questions you might want to ask:

- > What are the future plans of the company? / What are the company's growth plans?
- > How does this role contribute to the organisation's wider goals?
- > What does success look like in this role, and how will it be measured?
- > How large is the current team I may be working with? Can you tell me more about the team or colleagues I could be working with?
- > Why has the vacancy arisen?
- > What does a typical day look like?
- > What advice would you give to succeed in this role?
- > What is staff retention like?
- > Do you have any training, study support or opportunities to pursue professional qualifications?
- > Is remote/hybrid working feasible?
- > What are the next steps?
- > What do you find most enjoyable about the role?

Naturally, you won't need to ask every one of these questions to get the most out of your interview. However, by asking the right ones when appropriate, you can make sure that both candidate and interviewer come away from the experience with a better, clearer understanding of what each party has to offer the other.

You can also close the interview with some questions on next steps, these could look like:

- > Based on the experience that I have, would you have any reservations on offering me this role?
- > Is there anything that I haven't answered in enough detail that you would like me to go over again?



## Presentation tips

Now, it's time to prepare a short presentation to an interviewer or panel. You will usually be given a specific topic to prepare and will be judged on:

- > The quality of your ideas.
- > The clarity of your thinking – for example if you are able to take a strategic perspective.
- > Your verbal communication skills, especially your ability to influence and engage your audience.
- > Your organisation skills: how well you prepare beforehand and manage your time within the presentation.
- > Your formal presentation skills where this is a key part of the job.

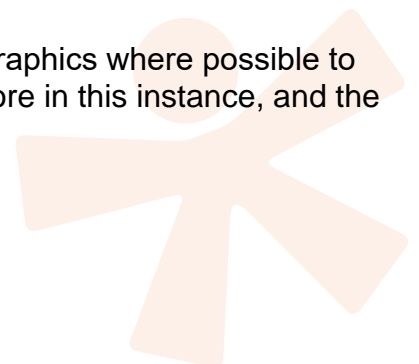
Here are our top tips to ensure your presentation goes down well during an interview.

- > **Have a clear message:** Work out what you want to say in two or three sentences before elaborating your ideas. It is important to write this down and make this the theme of your whole presentation and refer to it regularly. Remember, in order to make an impact you need to have clear recommendations, backed up by convincing arguments.
- > **Structure your presentation:** Make sure the structure of your presentation is clear and well laid out. You should include the following:
  - A short introduction explaining what the presentation is about and what you are going to cover.
  - Clear sections or themes within the presentation (there might be one slide per theme), ensuring your argument has a logical structure.
  - A summary of your arguments.
  - A clear conclusion with specific recommendations, identifying the resources required to deliver them.
  - Say thank you and invite questions at the end.
- > **Less is more:** Keep your presentation succinct and to the point. It is better to let the interviewer ask follow-up questions at the end rather than rushing which may mean they will miss your most important points. We would advise keeping the presentation to three or four slides for five-minutes, and six or seven for a ten-minute presentation.

**Top tip:** You don't have to put all your points onto your slides – it is fine to put some top-line points on a slide but then elaborate on them verbally. If your presentation requires more detail, this can be given as a supporting hard copy handout.

- > **Design of slides:** Keep your design simple. Use clear fonts and where possible use the company's logo and brand colours. This will show that you have thought about your presentation and put some effort into it. If you feel like you are putting too much on your slides, then you probably are.

Don't fill your slides with too much text and use imagery or graphics where possible to make them as vibrant and interesting as possible. Less is more in this instance, and the cleaner your slides look, the easier they will be to read.





- > **Manage your time:** Your presentation should not exceed the amount of time you have been given – if it is too short you can appear underprepared and if it is too long you may be cut off halfway through and penalised for not following instructions. It is always a good idea to have a timed run through of your finished presentation.
- > **Do your research:** Make sure you have researched your topic thoroughly. Find out how the business has handled this issue or a similar situation in the past. You may also want to research what their competitors are doing in this field to get some ideas on what might work.

**Top tip:** Have some relevant facts and figures to illustrate key trends at your fingertips – this can enhance your credibility and show impressive levels of preparation.

- > **Know your audience:** Before you start writing your presentation, think about who is going to be interviewing you. What are their job responsibilities, priorities and professional backgrounds? You can find out a lot through online research on sites such as LinkedIn. Think about your presentation from their perspective and consider what aspects of the topic will most interest them.
- > **Predict follow-up questions:** Go through your presentation and work out what questions the panel might ask, especially given their job roles and personal perspectives. Make sure you have an answer ready for these questions. Typical follow-up questions might include:
  - Why are you recommending x option and not y?
  - What resources would be required to implement this?
  - How would you go about getting signed on to your recommendations with key stakeholders?
  - What are the risks of this plan of action and how would you minimise them?
  - How do your recommendations fit with the organisation's wider activities and strategies?
- > **Test your presentation out:** We would always advise that you run through your ideas for the presentation with someone else and test it thoroughly. Asking for feedback can help you discover if there is something obvious you have neglected to mention and to ensure your ideas are well understood by others. Also, make sure the presentation works to avoid any embarrassing mishaps on the day.
- > **Take a backup:** Always make sure you have a Plan B if the technology is not working or a vital piece of equipment is not available. If you are delivering a PowerPoint presentation, email it to yourself and the interviewer/hiring manager (whichever is most appropriate). If sending it to an interviewer, try to do this in advance so that they can make sure it's opening and working. It can also be helpful to print off some hard copies in case there are problems with the projector.
- > **Build rapport:** The best way to engage your audience is to maintain strong eye contact; avoid looking at the screen or reading notes.

Use keywords on a card as prompts rather than memorising sentences as a 'speech' as this will appear more natural and most importantly remember to smile, this will put you and the panel at ease and make the experience much more enjoyable.

## After your interview

The steps you take after your interview are just as important as your preparation. Following up professionally and reflecting on the process will leave a lasting positive impression and help you improve for future opportunities. Here's how to handle the post-interview stage effectively:

### > **Reflect on performance**

Take some time to evaluate how the interview went while it's still fresh in your mind.

- **What went well?** Think about the answers you delivered confidently and moments where you connected with the interviewer.
- **What could have gone better?** Identify areas for improvement, such as questions you found difficult or areas where you could provide more detailed examples in the future.
- **Take notes:** Write down key points discussed during the interview, such as role expectations, challenges, or next steps mentioned by the interviewer. These notes will be useful if you are invited for another round or when preparing to start the role.

### > **Send a thank you email**

A well-crafted thank-you email is a simple but powerful way to stand out from other candidates.

- **Send it within 24 hours:** Promptness shows professionalism and enthusiasm.
- **Be genuine:** Thank the interviewer for their time and the opportunity to learn more about the role and company.
- **Keep it concise:** A short, thoughtful email will leave a positive impression without overwhelming the recipient.

#### **Example:**

*Dear [interviewer's name],*

*Thank you for taking the time to meet with me [yesterday/earlier today]. I enjoyed learning more about the [role name] position and [mention something specific discussed during the interview].*

*Please let me know if there's anything further I can provide to assist with your decision-making process. I look forward to hearing from you.*

*Kind Regards,  
[Your name]*

### > **Job offer**

If you're offered the job, be ready to discuss salary and benefits. Review the offer and ensure it aligns with your expectations and market standards.

### > **Learn from rejections**

If you don't receive an offer, don't be disheartened. Use it as an opportunity for growth.

- **Request feedback:** Politely ask the interviewer for constructive feedback to understand where you can improve. Your Recruitment Consultant can do this on your behalf.
- **Reflect and adjust:** Use this insight to refine your interview skills or strengthen specific areas for future opportunities.



## Common mistakes to avoid

Even the most prepared candidates can fall into some common traps during the interview process. Avoiding these pitfalls will help you present yourself in the best possible light and improve your chances of success.

- > **Being unprepared:** Failing to research the company, the role, or the interviewer can leave you struggling to answer questions or appear uninterested.
  - **What to do instead:** Take time to study the job description, learn about the company's values, and prepare specific examples that showcase your suitability for the role.
  
- > **Arriving too late (or too early):** Turning up late reflects poorly on your time management and reliability, while arriving too early can make the interviewer feel rushed.
  - **What to do instead:** Plan your journey, allow extra time for unexpected delays, and aim to arrive 5-10 minutes early for in-person interviews.
  
- > **Speaking negatively about previous employers:** Badmouthing a previous manager or workplace can make you appear unprofessional and difficult to work with.
  - **What to do instead:** Focus on the positives, such as what you learned in previous roles, and explain your desire to seek new challenges.
  
- > **Failing to tailor your answers:** Generic responses that don't relate to the specific role or company can make you seem uninterested or unengaged.
  - **What to do instead:** Customise your answers by linking your experience to the job description and the company's values.
  
- > **Talking too much (or too little):** Overloading the interviewer with lengthy answers can lose their interest, while saying too little may come across as disengaged or unprepared.
  - **What to do instead:** Practice concise, focused answers that stay on topic while still showcasing your expertise.
  
- > **Not asking questions:** Failing to ask questions at the end of the interview can give the impression that you're not genuinely interested in the role or company.
  - **What to do instead:** Prepare a few thoughtful questions about the company's culture, challenges, or expectations for the role.
  
- > **Not being yourself:** Trying too hard to give 'perfect' answers or pretending to be someone you're not can come across as insincere.
  - **What to do instead:** Be authentic and let your personality shine. Employers value honesty, enthusiasm, and a genuine connection.

**Top tip:** Remember to listen carefully and never talk over the interviewer. They may be asking or telling you something important that you will miss, it could also come across as rude if you don't listen.



## Your next steps

Once your interview is complete, staying proactive is key to maintaining momentum in your job search. Following up and staying in touch with your recruiter ensures you remain on track and continue to explore opportunities while waiting for feedback.

### > **Stay connected with your recruiter**

Your recruiter is there to guide and support you throughout the job search process.

- **Provide updates:** Let your recruiter know how the interview went. Share your thoughts, how you felt about the role, and any questions or concerns.
- **Follow up on feedback:** Your recruiter will often liaise with the employer to get interview feedback. Keep the lines of communication open to receive insights and updates.
- **Reaffirm your goals:** Discuss your priorities, and whether this role still aligns with your aspirations.

### > **Follow up with the employer**

Taking the initiative to follow up demonstrates professionalism and interest in the role.

- **Work with your recruiter:** Before reaching out to the employer, check with your recruiter to ensure the timing is right.
- **Send a thank-you note:** Express gratitude for the opportunity and reiterate your enthusiasm for the role. Your recruiter can provide advice on tone and timing.

### > **Continue exploring opportunities that are right for you**

While waiting for feedback, it's important to keep your options open and remain active in your job search.

- **Apply for other roles:** Explore similar opportunities that align with your skills and goals.
- **Network actively:** Stay engaged on LinkedIn, attend professional events, and grow your connections to uncover new opportunities.
- **Trust your recruiter:** Keep working with your recruiter to identify additional roles that match your experience and aspirations.

### > **Be patient but proactive**

Hiring decisions can take time, so it's important to remain patient while ensuring you're staying visible.

- **Check in regularly:** Keep in touch with your recruiter for updates.
- **Use the waiting time wisely:** Continue refining your CV, practicing interview skills, or learning new tools and skills relevant to your field.

**Top tip:** Don't forget to call your Recruitment Consultant directly after your interview to give feedback! This will show your enthusiasm and could open up discussions about next stage interviews and/or an offer for the role.






## Best of luck!

Preparing for an interview takes time and effort, but by following this guide, you'll be in the best possible position to succeed. Whether you're facing a competency-based interview, technical assessment, or panel discussion, confidence comes from preparation.

Remember, interviews are a two-way process – so, while employers assess your suitability for the role, it's also your opportunity to determine if the company and position are right for you. Stay engaged, ask thoughtful questions, and showcase your skills and experience with clarity and enthusiasm.

**If you need any further support, don't hesitate to reach out to your [Sellick Partnership Recruitment Consultant](#). We're here to help you navigate the interview process, answer any questions, and provide tailored advice to give you the best possible chance of success.**

### Get in touch with us

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