



# Interview Skills Workbook



# The Interview

Knowing that you have an interview coming up can be stressful. But if you use the time before your interview to prepare yourself, you are more likely to look and feel more confident.



## Research the company

During the interview, you will need to show the employer that you know about the company. One way to prepare for that is to research the company.

## Know the role you're applying for

One of the key parts of the interview is for you to know what will be involved in the role you're applying for. Ensure you take time to study the job description and come prepared with any further questions about the role.

## First impressions

Besides your CV and covering letter, the first impression you will make on the interviewer is based largely on what you are wearing. Very often, your interview attire leads the interviewer to make a snap judgment about you and how well you would fit within the company culture.

## Deciding what to wear for the interview

It is generally accepted that you cannot go wrong by wearing a business suit to an interview. However, if you are unsure about what to wear, research the company's dress code.

Generally it is better to be conservative and overdressed in an interview than be under-dressed. You may wish to express your personality by the way you dress, but keep in mind this may have the potential to jeopardise your chances. It is safer to wait until you have received the job and have spent time getting to know the company's culture, then you can add more individuality to your work attire.

## Different types of interviews

There's a number of different types of interviews including formal, informal, panel and telephone. Here are the different types:

### The Telephone Interview

Companies often request an initial telephone interview before inviting you for a face-to-face meeting in order to get a better understanding of the type of candidate you are. The one benefit of this is that you can have notes out in front of you. You should do as much preparation as you would for a face to face interview, and remember that your first impression is vital. Some people are better meeting in person than on the phone, so make sure that you speak confidently, with good pace and try to answer all the questions that are asked.

### The Face to Face Interview

This can be a meeting between you and one member of staff or even two members.

### The Panel Interview

These interviews involve a number of people sitting as a panel with one as a chairperson. This type of interview is popular within the public sector.

### The Assessment Centre

Several candidates are present at this type of interview. You will be asked to interact with each candidate in what's normally a group discussion. You may be asked to do a role play, followed by an interview.

All these types of interviews can take on different question formats so it's worth checking with your potential employer which type of interview you'll be attending.

## Interview formats

### Competency Based Interview

These are structured to reflect the competencies the employer is seeking for in the job role. These will usually be detailed in the job specification so make sure you read it through, and have your answers ready for questions such as "Give me an example of a time you worked as a team to achieve a common goal."

## Formal / Informal Interviews

Some interviews may be very formal, others may be very informal and might just seem like a chat about your interests. However, it is important to remember that you are still being assessed, and topics should be friendly and clean.

## The Second Interview

You've passed the first interview and you've had the call to arrange the second. Congratulations! But what else is there to prepare for? Now is the ideal time to look back and review. You may be asked the same questions as you were asked before, so review them and brush up your answers. It's good practice to do some more research on the company.

## The arrival

Making a good first impression is essential when you arrive at the interview. To ensure you give off the best impression, follow these tips:

- Arrive to the interview no more than 10 minutes ahead of time
- Arrive alone
- Take a few minutes to relax and check your appearance
- Introduce yourself to the receptionist, and mention your appointment
- Review your notes while waiting quietly
- Greet the interviewer and introduce yourself
- Shake the interviewer's hand with a firm handshake.

## STAR technique

The tool you can use when you're asked competency based questions is called STAR.

**S** – Situation  
**T** – Task  
**A** – Action  
**R** – Result

- Situation – introduce what happened and what you are about to describe
- Task – address your responsibilities and what were you supposed to do?
- Action – what did you do to fulfil your responsibilities?
- Result – what happened after you did it and what was the outcome?

## Practice makes perfect

We are now going to practice a competency interview using the STAR technique.

There are many websites for researching competency based interviews so just have a look and get a feel for what is involved.

- Describe a situation where you have worked as part of a team to achieve something?
- Describe a situation where you have implemented a change?
- Provide an example of where you have overcome a problem. Given the chance, what would you do differently?
- Describe an achievement that you are proud of and tell us why?
- Tell us about the biggest change you have had to deal with. How did you adjust to it?
- Tell me about a time when you had to deal with a conflict within your team?

## Your turn to ask the questions

At the end of interview it is your turn to ask any questions you may have regarding the company or the role.

## Follow up

Ask in the interview when they think a decision will be made. If the date they gave you has passed and you still haven't heard anything, follow-up with a phone call.

## Our recruitment team

As you progress through the recruitment and selection process our recruitment team will be there to support you along the way.



Maddie and Amelia are based at our head office in Nelson, Lancashire and manage all aspects of recruitment across Daisy Communications.

Once you start your application and move through the process they'll be in touch to guide you on your journey.