



INTERVIEW READINESS

COLLEAGUE WORKBOOK

INTERVIEW READINESS

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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this section is to enable you to perform effectively in selection interviews and activities and increase your chance of success.

Whilst it may sound basic, the preparation is the key part to being a successful interviewee and people who interview and assess regularly will tell you that is always evident when a candidate is well prepared. It does not guarantee success, however, it may lead to positive recommendations.

Interviews can take on many forms: Digital, video conferencing, panel, telephone and the traditional face to face, so your ability to be able to prepare for this variety of approaches is key.

It is normal to feel apprehensive or nervous before an interview and it helps to have techniques for managing these feelings and we will look at some tips to assist you.

First impressions always count! Whilst we are all aware of this it is helpful to remind ourselves of the detail that matters.

Finally, anticipating the questions and considering your responses before the interview makes for a more polished interview performance... And following up after an interview is also important.



WHY HAVE YOU BEEN INVITED TO INTERVIEW?

Congratulations!



Your CV/application form impressed the reader



You have been recommended to them



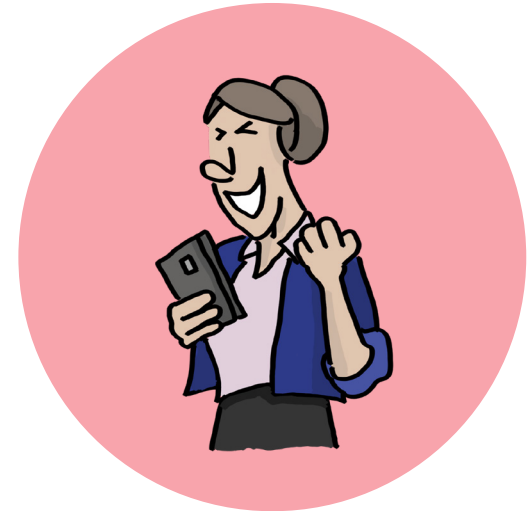
The recruiters want to know more about you



They feel positive about you



To give an opportunity for you to build rapport and demonstrate how you can add value to their organisation.



THINK LIKE THE INTERVIEWER

So often we focus on ourselves as the interviewee, however, if we think like the interviewer we can then prepare with their needs in mind:



What generic qualities are you looking for in an interviewee?



What makes the difference between an average interviewee and a good or outstanding interviewee?

Make a note of your ideas:

WHY PREPARE?

We have already considered looking at the interview process from the Interviewer's view as well as your own. So what are the benefits of preparation?

- > Helps you feel more confident
- > Creates a positive impression
- > Shows that you are interested
- > Improves interview performance
- > Demonstrates that you plan and prepare!
- > Fail to prepare, prepare to fail!



PREPARATION: SOME RESOURCES

Whilst there is a lot of preparation to be done, there are also many resources easily available to assist. Here are some listed below:



LinkedIn



ZoomInfo - A platform which employs automated machine learning to constantly scan corporate websites, news article, SEC filings, job postings, and other sources for information about industries, locations, revenue, and more



Companies House - A government agency which incorporates and dissolves companies and allows the public to see basic information about them



Glassdoor - A site which allows you to view reviews from people who have worked within organisations



Recent press articles: successes and challenges



Your extended network: ask around.

Preparation activity: List the 10 things you would do

A week before

The night before

WHAT THE INTERVIEWER WANTS TO KNOW

Can you do the job?

Will you do the job?

Will you fit in our organisation?

INTERVIEW FORMATS AND STYLES

Click for more info

One to One

Scenario *(what would you do if ...)*

Panel

Competency *(give me an example of ...)*

Telephone

Technical

Video interview

Informal chat.

Biographical







(reviewing your career to date)

Consider each type of interview and what you will need to consider when preparing.

VIDEO INTERVIEWING

Video interviews are frequently used and it is essential that you are prepared for this particular type of interview. They can take the form of a traditional face to face interview except it is done by video or it can be a more automated type of interview or '**on demand**' interview. This is where there you are expected to record answers to preset questions to camera with no-one at the end of the line.

For both there are extra things to consider:

-  First impressions count so you need to be appropriately dressed for the interview from top to toe as this will ensure that your mindset is in the right place
-  Have a couple of practice run throughs using the technology to identify any potential challenges and how to work around them at the interview time
-  Ensure there is sufficient band width at interview time
-  Identify an appropriate space where you will do the interview and clear the background clutter
-  Record yourself doing a practice interview and review it to see how you look and sound
-  Ensure the space is well lit, ideally the light source should be in front of you and behind the camera.

OTHER SELECTION METHODS

We have already considered looking at the interview process from the Interviewer's view as well as your own. So what are the benefits of preparation?

- Delivering a presentation: This is often used alongside an interview with a topic/question set in advance. This is used to assess knowledge, technical ability and communication and other skills (such as planning and organising, strategic thinking, business awareness)
- Psychometric tests: Some organisations will use tests, typically numeracy or verbal reasoning, primarily for graduate roles but sometimes others too
- Assessment Centres: These last a minimum of a day and involve interviews, case studies, presentations, group exercises and one to one exercises. These are all observed by several assessors to build a picture to measure against the pre determined criteria
- Preparing a business plan: Like the presentation this can often be added onto the interview as another way to measure skills and competencies.





OTHER SELECTION METHODS: TECHNIQUES FOR SUCCESS

Assessment centres, presentations, business plans and case studies:

-  Where possible find out what aspects they are assessing with each exercise
-  Read the exercise brief carefully and twice: What are they looking for?
-  Plan your response
-  Consider the wider picture (*frequently you get so much detail thrown at you, some relevant and some not so*)
-  Think through how you will present your findings
-  Anticipate the questions they may pose and any responses
-  If you feel stuck: Stop and breath! It always helps.

Psychometrics:

-  Personality tools: Answer honestly, you need to be yourself
-  Numerical, verbal reasoning and others: Find examples online and practice. It has been proven that practice improves performance.

INTERVIEWS: HOW TO ANSWER THE QUESTIONS

In this next section we will look at approaches to different types of questions:

- > Challenging questions
- > Questions about values and motivations
- > Answering the competency based questions
- > Strengths based questions.



CHALLENGING QUESTIONS

Tell me about yourself

Why are you on the market?

What are your strengths/weaknesses?

Where do you see yourself in 3 to 5 years time?

Looking back, can you tell us of something you are proud of achieving?

If we were to talk to your boss/colleagues, what would they say about you?

What salary are you looking for?

If we were to offer you this role, would you accept?

QUESTIONS ABOUT VALUES AND MOTIVATIONS

What is really important to you at work?

What do you enjoy most about your work?

What don't you like about your work?

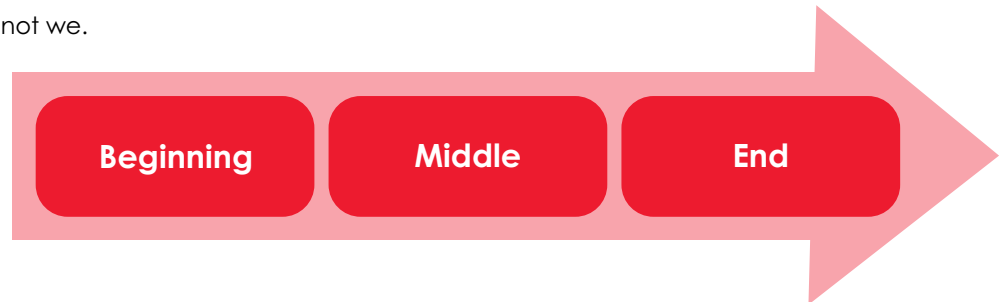
What do you like to be known for at work?

Use the space below to capture ideas for how you might answer these questions:

COMPETENCY INTERVIEWS

These are the most frequently used type of interviews by large and medium sized companies. Anticipating the competencies and preparing responses is essential.

- > The interviewers are looking for examples of how you behaved in certain situations in the past so they can evaluate how you will behave in the future
- > They are looking to see if you have demonstrated the competencies that are required for the role
- > It is based on the research that shows that typical past behaviour predicts future behaviour
- > Answers should be like a story with a beginning, a middle and an end
- > Remember to focus on what you did – use the word I – not we.



COMPETENCY INTERVIEWS: HOW TO ANSWER

Use the **STAR** method to construct your answers:



Situation - set the scene



Task - what you were aiming to achieve



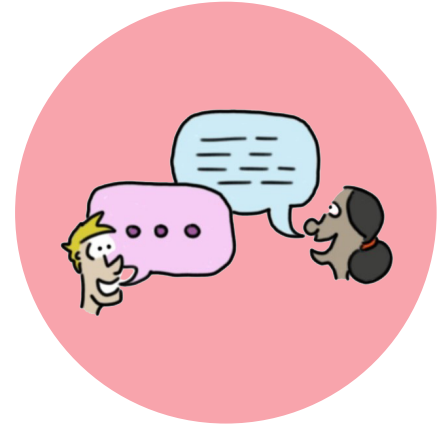
Action - what you did to achieve it



Result - what the outcome and impact was






Also reflect on what you learnt from this as they frequently add this question at the end.



Your answer should be concise, to the point and you should aim to talk for a maximum of 3 – 3.5 minutes.

STAR QUESTIONING FUNNEL: TYPICAL APPROACH AND FOLLOW UP QUESTIONS

-  **1. Situation/Task**
 - What was the situation or task?
 - Describe the circumstances
 - Who else was involved?
-  **2. Actions**
 - What happened?
 - What did you specifically say/do?
 - What problems did you encounter?
-  **3. Result**
 - What was the effect/outcome?
 - What impact did that have?
 - How did you measure success?
 - What lessons did you learn?

NB. The focus is on your behaviour: What you said and what you did.

Use the space below to capture ideas for how you might answer these questions:

EXAMPLES OF COMPETENCY BASED QUESTIONS

1

Talk me through a time when you have had to handle a conflict situation at work

2

Describe a time when you felt under pressure at work. How did you handle it?

3

Tell me about a time you implemented a change at work



4

Can you give me an example when you failed to meet a deadline?




Select 1 question to answer using the **STAR** approach:

STRENGTHS BASED QUESTIONS

What are they?

-  Strengths are defined as things we are naturally good at and didn't really have to learn, or softer, rather more intangible character traits, such as social intelligence, honesty and curiosity
-  Strengths based interviews ask what you are good at and what you enjoy doing. That enjoyment combined with proficiency is what gives you the energy and flow that strengths-based interview questions are really seeking to discover.

How do they differ from skills based questions?

-  Skills are often described as something you learn to do through repetition for which there is a best practice or a set way of doing something - like coding in a given language or driving a car
-  Competency based interviews, which could be called skills based interviews, ask what you can do and what you have done
-  It's just a matter of asking yourself "Am I good at this?, do I enjoy it? and does it add value?".

QUESTIONS TO ASK THE INTERVIEWER

So the interviewer(s) have asked all their questions and now it is your turn



Prepare in advance

Think about what you need to know about the role, the company, development, colleagues etc

Focus on things that will demonstrate your interest in the position



Use your research and keep your eyes and ears open when you are there and ask questions for further information



Avoid asking about terms and conditions until you have been offered the job



Remember there are things you need to know to make your decision and this is your time to ask relevant questions about the role, the department and the organisation



Finally, what you say and how you say it will provide your interviewer with information about you.

HANDLING NERVOUS FEELINGS: WHAT CAN YOU DO?

Some tension or nervousness is normal and it can be harnessed to your advantage. Here are some tips below for managing how you feel and behave:

- Starfish up! Stand or sit in an upright open posture to feel more powerful. Essential/useful watching about how your body language impacts your behaviour; watch [Professor Amy Cuddy: Your body language may shape who you are.](#)
- Breathing: Breathe in for four counts and out for four, then try for longer counts, up to 8 each way if you can manage it
- Visualisation: Recall a time when you felt calm and in control; where were you? how did you feel? Use this memory to re-create the calm
- Dealing with unhelpful thoughts effectively: Turn the negative self talk into more positive statements about possibilities
- Smile, it will make you feel better.



TIPS FOR BUILDING RAPPORT

- > Mirror their body language (subtlety is key)
- > Copy their tonality
- > Find common ground
- > Focus on your appearance
- > Be empathic
- > Don't forget the basics - look everyone in the eye, smile, maintain good posture, ask open-ended questions and be sincere.
- > Finally: a smile is the shortest distance between two people (Victor Borge)



AFTER THE INTERVIEW:

Thank the interviewer

Try to establish when they will get back to you and what the next steps would be

Write down some notes as soon as you can

Send a thank you note (not many people do)

Follow-up if you don't hear anything from them in a reasonable time

If unsuccessful, try to get some feedback

Keep up the job search.



Be sure to leverage the **Fuel50** platform as part of your career development journey. It will give you insight into what is most important to you at work and in your career, what type of work most engages you, where you are right now in your career, and what skills you have (and would want to develop) to take you where you want to go.

There is also a rich **Resources** library to explore.

Fuel50 utilizes ethical AI technology to provide you with a **customized career experience** to support you in maximizing your opportunities – at work and in life.

