

King Edward VI College

Preparing for a

Job Interview

An interview is a two-way process.

1. The employer will be looking for someone to fit the criteria so your experience is very important for the suitability for the job.
2. However, although you are trying to impress the employer, it is also an opportunity for you to make sure that the job is right for you so don't be afraid of asking questions yourself.

**Preparing for a job interview**  
  
Preparation is important as you will want to show the employer that you are well suited for the job.  
  
**Research**

Make sure you have taken the time to do some research about the company or organisation. Check the company's website for any recent events that have occurred. If the company is large, find out if it has been in the news recently and why. This will be a perfect opportunity for you to tell the employer everything you know about the company even though you may not necessarily talk about all the information you have found. Always make sure you do your preparation.  
  
**Appearances**

Appearance is everything. You want to be remembered as being the smartest candidate rather than the one looking the most casual. Dressing smart shows the employer that you are taking the interview seriously. Always make eye contact during the interview and sit up straight in your chair.  
  
**Preparation**

**Check the date and time of your interview. Gather everything you may need to take – directions, copy of your CV, interview letter and exam certificates.**

**Journey**

Sounds silly but make sure you plan your journey in advance and allow plenty of time for you to get there. Allow yourself enough time for train or bus delays as you never know what may happen. Aim to arrive early - about 15 minutes early.

**Confidence**

Although interviews will seem very nerve-racking you should try and not let that show. Employers will be looking for someone who can cope with pressure so giving out confidence in the interview is the key. Don't come across too laid back though.

**Just be yourself!**

**Sell Yourself**

The employer has already shown an interest in you so now is the time to show them that you are just as good in person. Always speak clearly and don't be afraid to talk about things you have already mentioned in you form or CV. If you don't understand a question then ask for clarification. Always be honest!

**Questions**

There are various types of questions that are asked at a job interview. The first are those asked by the interviewer to assess your suitability for the role. These fall into two categories; the first is a question that is trying to find out information, the second are competency based questions which are aimed at you showing where you have achieved the skills they are looking for. Then are those asked by you to show your interest in the role.

Examples of questions you may be asked to find information:

* Why do you want to work here?
* Have you done this kind of work before?
* What did you do in your last job?
* What kinds of equipment can you use?
* What makes you think you are the right person for this job?
* Why should the employer take you on?
* How do you get on with people?
* What makes a good team member?
* How do you cope with pressure?
* What are your strengths and weaknesses?
* What would you like to be doing in five years’ time?
* When would you be available to start?

Examples of competency based questions you may be asked:

* What achievement are you most proud of?
* Give me an example of a time when you have had to achieve a specific result
* What opportunities have you identified and used to achieve success?
* Tell me about a time when you have ‘made things happen’ for yourself/your team?
* Can you please give a specific example of when you have had to influence a colleague to your way of thinking?
* Tell me about a particularly difficult issue you had to communicate.
* How would you approach ensuring that you delivered results in your role?
* It’s a busy day with conflicting priorities and deadlines, what do you do?
* Can you give us an example of when you have dealt with an upset or angry customer in the past?
* Tell me about a time when you were asked to do something that you disagreed with?
* What skills and personal qualities have you contributed to the teams you have been part of?

Then are those asked by you to show your interest in the role. An interviewer will nearly always ask if you have any questions at the end of your interview. Make sure you have some prepared. Although answers will be given to some of them during the interview, there should always be something you can ask.

Examples of questions to ask (choose those most appropriate to the role or that you are comfortable asking)

* Could you give me a more detailed job description?
* How would you describe a typical day for the person doing this job?
* What are the priorities in this job?
* What are the most challenging aspects of this job?
* Do you have any concerns about my ability to fulfil the job requirements?
* Are there any areas I need to clarify in order to confirm my suitability for this job?

**Interview Questions NOT to Ask**

* What does this company do? (Do your research ahead of time!)
* If I get the job when can I take time off for holidays? (Wait until you get the offer to mention prior commitments)
* Can I change my work hours if I get the job? (If you need to figure out the logistics of getting to work don't mention it now)
* Did I get the job? (Don't be impatient. They'll let you know.)

**Feedback**

If you are unsuccessful, it is worthwhile asking the employer if they can give you some

feedback from the interview. This is very useful as it can help you improve in the future.