

Interview Guide

Preparing for your **interview**



Preparing effectively



So you've been invited to interview with an employer. Feeling nervous? Or perhaps you're excited to meet with them and tell them all about why you're the perfect candidate?

When preparing for an interview, it's natural to feel some degree of nerves about an interview. But sometimes, these nerves can stop us preparing effectively so we've put together **a simple interview guide** to give you some helpful guidance on making sure you're as prepared as possible on the day.



Interview Statistics

Did you know...

- **Having little to no knowledge** of the company is the most common mistake made during interviews. (Source: [Undercover Recruiter](#))
- **47.7%** of applicants had no previous relationship with a company prior to applying for a job there. (Source: [Recruiting Daily](#))
- On average, every corporate job opening attracts 250 applications and CVs, of which only **4 to 6 people will be invited for an interview**, and only 1 of those will be offered a job. (Source: [Inc](#))
- **33%** of interviewers know within the first 90 seconds of an interview whether they will hire someone. (Source: [Undercover Recruiter](#))
- When meeting new people, **55%** of the impact comes from the way the person dresses, acts and walks through the door. (Source: [Undercover Recruiter](#))



Recommendations for a successful interview

Recommendations



Your recruitment consultant would have already sent the company a copy of your CV however make sure you go through it and familiarise yourself with what you have put on it. You'd be surprised at how many people put things on their CV that they forget about during an interview! And, **don't forget your notebook and pen for important notes.**



Research the company you are interviewing with beforehand. Employers expect their interviewees to be knowledgeable about their company before coming to the interview. Use our simple template in the pack to help with your researching activities.



Be smart and presentable – impressions are formed in a matter of seconds so don't let your appearance be the reason you don't get the job. If you're unsure what constitutes appropriate dress for the day then just ring us for a chat and we can help.

Be open and optimistic – don't let your nerves get the better of you and think positively. Your interviewer wants you to do well – they aren't trying to catch you out, they just want to know more about you, your experience, your skills and interests.

Prepare a few key points to common questions – don't try and memorise full answers but do try to have a few points ready to some of the common interview questions (we've included some later in this pack for you to look at).

Get in touch with your YourPrime consultant after the interview to feedback how the interview went so that we can contact the client for feedback to let you know any info as soon as possible.



Ask questions

An interview is a two-way process, and through years of recruitment and management experience we have found the best interviews are a conversation rather than an interrogation. For this to be the case though, you need to have good questions prepared. An employer will not only see that you have done your research, but will also appreciate the fact that the interview will turn into more of a conversation.

A lot of the feedback we receive from employers of successful candidates, is that they had great questions. Don't be afraid to write down any questions you want to ask and take them with you.

Think beforehand about the questions you want to get answers to, but also have a few general questions prepared to show that you are enthusiastic and interested. **Examples might be:**

- How long have you worked at the company? Why do you like working here?
- What are the company objectives for the next 3 – 5 years?
- What would you say is the biggest challenge about this role?
- I saw XYZ mentioned on your company website which was really interesting, can you tell me a little bit more about what you're doing in this area?
- How do you compare to your competition? Who are they?
- Where can I hope to progress to within the company over the next few years if my performance is good?
- When are you looking to have the successful person in the position for?
- What do you think your current customers would say about your organisation?
- With people you have hired before, what has made them successful and what makes a good employee for you?
- How long has this position been open and why has it come about?
- What does the initial onboarding and training within the business look like?
- If I was successful in securing the position, what advice would you give me to make the best impression within the first 6 months?
- How do you feel my background and experience fits for this position? Do you have any questions about my ability that I could clear up for you?

Company Research Template

| | |
|--|---|
| About the company | Annual Report / Mission Statement / Values |
| Company's products/services/solutions | Who are their customers? |
| Why do customers use them? What are the benefits or what benefits do they provide? | Social Media Updates – LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube |

Common questions

We put together some thoughts around some of the most common, and often, the most difficult, interview questions to help you prepare for your interview.

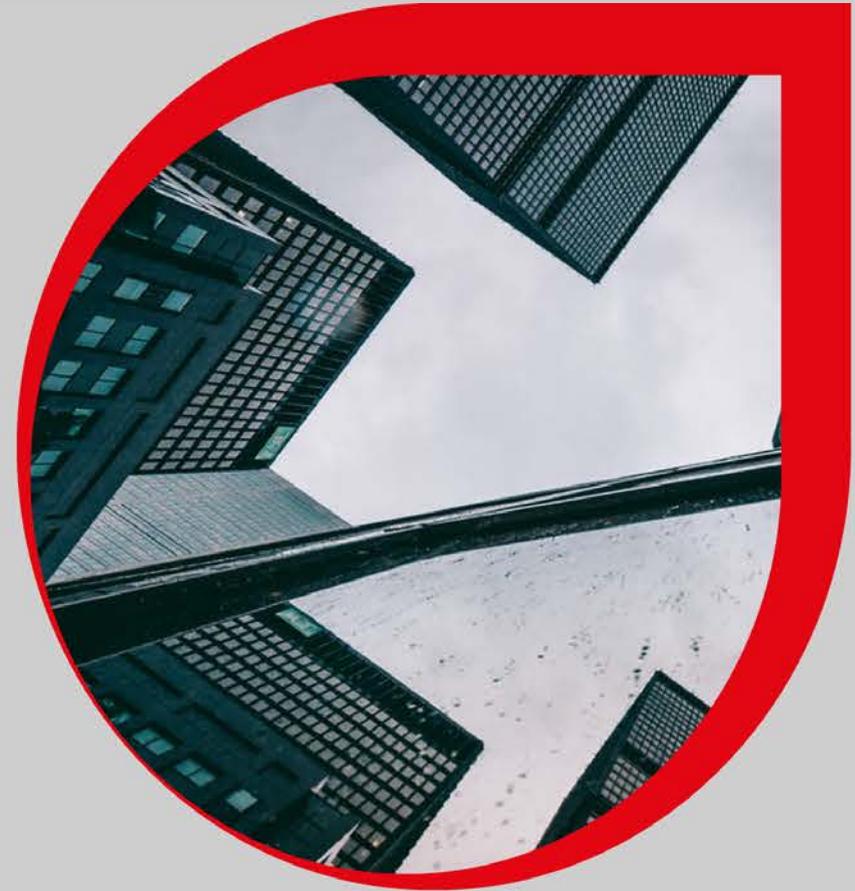
Why do you want to work for us?

Presumably, before you go for your interview, you'll have already done a good amount of research about the company; across their activity in the market, recent news items, blog posts, annual reports and more.

So, demonstrate that research in your answer to this question. Many applicants will say that they 'want a new challenge', or think that a new job could be a really good chance to 'develop themselves'. But these points are all focused on YOU. Think about what you can say that discusses the company you are interviewing with.

Ask yourself these questions instead:

- Their solutions / technology / product should excite you or else you wouldn't be interviewing, however why are these solutions of interest to you and potential customers?
- What recent news items regarding this company attracts me to working with them?
- What have their company managers/directors/C level executives said in the press recently that makes you want to work for them?
- Has the company been through a period of fast growth; brought out a new offering; made a noise in the market that attracts you?
- At the end of the day clients want people that want to work for them so the confidence, enthusiasm and genuine desire for the position will set you apart from other people!



Where do you want to be in 5 years?

In this question, a company is looking to find out if you have 'appropriate' ambition: i.e., do you want to grow and move through the ranks, but are you also realistic about what you can achieve and that you aren't going to be itching to move to a new role after six months?

The key point is to get across what you want to achieve in this role first, then talk about ideas for your potential next role within the company. If you are planning to go off travelling after a year even though you know there is a lengthy initial training period then it's probably not the role for you.

Think about:

- What can you bring to the role you are interviewing for over the next 2 – 4 years?
- What would be a sensible next move after the role you are interviewing for now?

Successful people, the majority of the time, are promoted. The key for a client, however, is bringing somebody in that will make a success of this role, then the career progression will naturally follow as recognition. It is key to make the client aware of this with statements such as 'once successful in this role and overachieving consistently I would like to think I would earn the opportunity to.....'

Why are you leaving your current job?

Don't ever badmouth your current employer. Unless there is something industry-known and in the papers about a terrible situation with your employer (which is a very unlikely scenario), it's best not to share anything negative. It can make you sound bitter and resentful, and the interviewer will likely be imagining you talking about them in the same way to another company in the future.

Try to sound as objective as possible, and point out what is good about your role, and what parts of your current role that you would like to do more of. This takes your focus away from what you don't like about your current role, to what you do like.

Ask yourself:

- What have you learnt in the current position and how has this developed you in to a stronger performer since joining the business?
- What in your current role have you excelled in which would also benefit your potential new employer?
- What do you like about your current role and company?
- What parts of your current role do you enjoy and want to do more of?



What can you bring to this role?

If you've done your research about the company, and you've done your research about the role you are interviewing for, then you should have a good idea of some of the possible challenges that your interviewing company is looking to solve by hiring you.

Do they want to increase sales? Then think about the ways in which, over and above just turning up and doing your job, you can help the company to increase their sales. What are your ideas? What are your proposed initiatives? Organizations are looking for enthusiastic staff to help them push forward through their challenges, and demonstrating how your specific skills can align to their business challenges will set you apart from other candidates.

Ask yourself:

- What business challenge can your skills solve?
- How can you add value to the business and how do your goals align with theirs? E.g. They have a sales number to achieve and you have delivered X amount of revenue in the last 3 years.
- Show how your background could add value due to knowledge, industry experience, client relationships and how this could benefit both parties.
- Think about how you can show examples / successes within your experience that would benefit you and them within this role.
- Consider the role from a personality, culture and attributes view as well. For example, if you are hard-working, resilient, driven, articulate and credible, what company wouldn't want this type of person within their organisation?



Closing the interview

1. You need to **confirm your interest** in the position (this is assuming you like what you have heard) - something a lot of people forget to do.
2. You need to **check that the interviewer doesn't have any reservations** or concerns over your ability to do the role.

At the end of the interview, take the opportunity to thank the employer for their time and make them aware you are keen and interested in progressing to the next stage.

Secondly it is essential to ask the employer whether there are any other details they would like to know about you, or whether they have any concerns with anything you've raised; i.e. lack of experience in specific areas or qualifications. It's better to try and answer these questions face to face with the interviewer to straighten out any concerns or lack of information. This is your chance to overcome any misunderstandings, objections or reservations and offer further information to support your application.

If the employer has a reservation, then you are the best person qualified to respond to this and it is best to do this in the interview so they don't go away thinking about it. If there are no question marks or reservations, you can be confident you have done everything you can to secure the next stage of the process or a potential offer.



Here are a few tips or questions to help you close the interview:

Initial close (confirm interest):

- Thank you very much for taking the time to meet with me, it was great to learn more about the opportunity and the business. I feel my background and experience is a good fit and I am confident I could add value and be successful here.

Reservation / Concerns Questions:

- Is there any reason why you feel I wouldn't be suitable for this role? If you do, I would like the opportunity to address them.
- Is there anything else you would like to ask me before I leave?
- How do you feel my experience and background would fit for this opportunity?
- Are there any reservations about moving me on to the next stage of the interview process?
- Are there any concerns from what we've discussed today about my suitability for the role?



Make your close count



So many times YourPrime have had the feedback of **'I wasn't sure initially, however the candidate closed me really well at the end'** or **'the interview went well and the direct questions from the candidate at the end about their suitability really impressed us'**.

Make sure the employer knows you're interested as we have also had the feedback of **'the interview went really well but I am not sure whether the candidate is interested in us'**.

The close is just as important as the first impression, so **make it count!**

