



# LET ME PLAY

***INTERVIEW GUIDE***

In any interview situation, you will be up against competition from other candidates and therefore it is very important that you make a great impression and sell yourself and your attributes concisely in a very short amount of time.

### PREPARATION

- Think about your skills, competencies and experience as well as your recent certifications.
- Research the company. Attend interviews armed with information to add to conversations during the interview to show your interest.
- Be clear about why you want this role and make sure you show you are keen and enthusiastic
- Plan your journey and allow extra time for transport delays. Do make sure you plan to arrive at least 20 mins early.
- Make sure you prepare your clothes and that they are clean and ironed. Clean your shoes and maybe get a haircut if it will make you look smarter and get you that job.

### ON THE DAY

**Personal:** First impressions count. Arrive looking like a true professional and don't forget to smile. Are you well groomed with tidy hair, shoes and clothing? Cover tattoos and take out visible piercings. Practice a good positive handshake; not too firm, not too weak. Be confident.

**Dress:** Are you correctly dressed? The company may adopt a smart/casual approach in their daily activities but you should always attend an interview in a suit/smart attire unless specifically advised otherwise. If you are taking papers to the interview, put them in a suitable case or folder.

**Timing:** Plan a reliable way of getting there and arrive at least 20 minutes early.

**Last few minutes:** Recheck any paperwork and make sure you are comfortable with the name and title of the person you are meeting. Try to relax. Remember, you would not have been invited for an interview unless they felt that you were an appropriate candidate. Switch mobile phone off.



### AT THE INTERVIEW

Try to answer the question in the interview and try to elaborate but don't get carried away.

Take some copies of your current CV – one for you and each interviewer.

Know what the company does in order to appear serious about the job.

Find out what are the key parts of the job so you can show how you meet them. Have at least 3 points about yourself that you can relate to the job and give examples of when you have demonstrated these competences.

Avoid too much self-opinion.

Don't let nervousness put you off.

Try not to fidget or cross your arms/legs and maintain eye contact.

Never smoke before an interview or anywhere outside the building, and it is probably safer not to accept tea or coffee as it can get in the way. Ask for a glass of water (taking a sip can give you a chance to think before answering a tricky question)

Keep your replies simple. Do not waffle. Offer positive information — don't give bad news unasked. Don't harp on problems or criticise previous employers.

Sell yourself. Make sure the employer knows the benefits of employing you.

Be enthusiastic.

### LEAVE AN IMPRESSION

The interviewer may ask you if you have any questions. Almost always, this is a sign the interview is ending.

Do have questions ready, this is a must. It is polite to **NOT** ask questions about payment in the interview.

Thank the interviewer for their time and the opportunity.

After the interview try not to worry. You can't change anything that was said and done, so it's best just to relax and think positively. Every interview is a chance to learn, what mistakes you make in one interview you won't make in the next.

### EXPERT TIP!

*Be polite to the support staff you meet. They count too — and may influence a decision in your favour.*

## ON THE DAY

**Top Tip for answering a typical interview question using STAR!**

**Give an example of a time when you worked well in a team?**

### SITUATION

Where were they, description, what was the day like, what was going on in that location.

### TASK

Why were they there? Describe their job role and what skills it involves.

### ACTION

What happened that demonstrated TEAM skills: what was the initial problem, how was the team feeling, who were the other players what did they do and what did you do, what words were spoken? How was there support?

### RESULT

What happened in the end – what did the manager/person in charge say, did someone else say anything good about how the situation was managed, how did everyone feel in the end.

## IF NERVOUS!

**It is OK to be nervous before and during an interview, it's how you manage your nerves that's important.**

- Accept offer of water to help clear your throat during your interview
- Find your comfortable seating position to avoid fidgeting.
- Be prepared prior to attending your interview e.g. research, knowing where you're going, know what's on your CV and be able to showcase your transferable skills.
- Practise talking about yourself out loud on your own

**Professional Attire:** Simple black, white and blue dress code (dark colours are bolder than pale colours).

- Make sure you iron your clothes and that they are clean.
- Clean and polish your shoes.
- Assure your hair is neat and tidy.
- Cover tattoos.
- Remove unprofessional body and facial piercings.

### Interview Day - Before the Interview:

- Make sure you arrive a minimum of 20 minutes early.

- Be on your best behaviour before and after the interview, as other colleagues may be asked what they think of you.
- You can throw your chance of a job away if you do an amazing interview and then start screaming down the phone to your boyfriend/girlfriend in the car park.
- If you are a smoker try not to smoke before an interview as this will make you nervous and the interviewer may hate the smell of smoke.

### Interview Day – During the Interview:

- Do not talk negatively about your old boss, colleagues or past experiences.
- Ensure you maintain a professional, engaging body language and enthusiasm.
- Build rapport and trust with the interviewer keeping it professional at all times
- NEVER argue with the interviewer or challenge them as this will give a very negative impression, as this could create pre-judgement that you'll be hard to manage.

## EXPERT TIP!

*An interviewer may ask about your weak points –don't say anything too bad; this may give the impression that you are incompetent. If you discuss a difficult experience, indicate that you have learnt from this.*

## INTERVIEW QUESTIONS YOU MIGHT COME ACROSS!

### 1. Tell me about yourself

This question is in regard to your previous employment history (this can include voluntary or work experience) not your personal life. When talking about your employment history, mention your duties and responsibilities and what you learnt in your last job. Mention your transferable skills and how these will be beneficial to the company.

### 2. What do you think you could bring to the team?

Make sure you know what the job role involves - referring to the job description. Do your research about the company! Give an example of when you have been part of a team and what was your role within that team.

### 3. How do you organise your day within the workplace?

This is in relation to how you prioritise your workload, delegating work and time management as well as how you organise your daily diary.

### 4. Why do you want this job/why do you want to work for us?

Do your research about the company! Along with matching your previous employment and transferable skills.

- Do not say - 'Because I need money'
- Don't talk about future plans with other companies.

### 5. What's your greatest strength?

This is your opportunity to put forward 2-3 strengths which strongly relate to the job role.

### 6. What is your biggest weakness?

Not using the word weakness, describe an area that you would like to improve along with mentioning how your improving on this for it to become one of your strengths.

Do not say

- I have no weakness
- Working in a team
- Talking to people
- I'm a perfectionist

### 7. How would you deal with a difficult situation?

Give an example of when you had to deal with a challenging customer service situation and how you tackled it. Using Situation, Task, Action and Result (STAR).

- What situation were you in?
- What was the task you were performing?
- What action did you have to take?
- And what was the result?

### 8. What's your biggest achievement so far?

This is in relation to gaining a qualification, receiving bonuses and incentives and any business related achievements, but don't conclude that you have reached your limitations.

### 9. Give an example of a situation in which you were under pressure? How did you react?

Using Situation, Task, Action and Result (STAR) give an example and show how you also managed your emotions in this situation.

### 10. Where do you see yourself in five years' time?

Do not say that you are looking to move to a different company. Your answer should refer to your personal development plan or working your way up to a team leader or supervisor role.

### DO NOT SAY:

- Taking your position
- Continuing with my studies
- Travelling the world

### 11. Do you have any questions?

#### YES, YOU DO!

Always ask 2 questions that show your enthusiasm for working for the company. Ask about training opportunities? How will your progress in the company will be assessed? Are there more stages with the interview process? When will I find out if I have been successful? Would you be able to provide any feedback now? What's the best way to progress in this company?

#### DO NOT ASK:

About benefits e.g. pension, sick pay, travel, expenses, salary, hours, annual leave, maternity/paternity and private health care.



## CHECKLIST!

- Planned my route
- Know the name & title of the interviewer
- Have researched the company
- Look smart and presentable
- Know what the job description is
- Take copies of my CV
- Have two questions ready to ask at the end



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