

Struggling at Interviews?

Focus on the 3 p's

For many job seekers the mere thought of an interview can render you with sweaty palms and sleepless nights. From what to wear to what questions might be asked, there's plenty to get in a panic about. Whilst there's no 'magic guide' to being amazing at interviews there are techniques that you can use to give yourself the best chance.

To make it easy for you let's focus on the 3 p's and how you can use them to give yourself the edge!

Preparation

Well there's a surprise, preparation will help you do well at an interview! In all seriousness though there is more to preparation than meets the eye.

Here's a list of things that you can do to prepare:

- **Prepare an example showing your ability to perform each duty**
Work your way through the job description and use the **STAR technique** (Situation, Task, Action and Result) to help you structure your examples.
- **Develop a list of key points that you want to tell the interviewer about yourself**
List all the key points that you want them to know about you. This will help to ensure that you don't miss out on telling them anything crucial about your skills or experience.
- **Do some thorough research on the company**
Google them, check out their social media presence, check for news articles and if you can talk to people who work there! The more you know about the company and their ethos the better.
- **Prepare some questions**
An interview is a two way street. **Having questions to ask** the interviewer shows your interest and also helps you to be more informed about the role and what the role entails.
- **Check out how long it will take to get there**
The
- re's nothing worse than arriving to an interview all flustered because you've had to rush. Work out the route and how long it'll take to avoid any last minute disasters!

Practice

Practicing talking about your skills, experience and interest in the role that you're applying for will help you to feel more comfortable in an interview.

Try out these techniques for practicing your answers:

- **Develop a 60 second pitch**
Using the key points that you've prepared about yourself, develop a 60 second pitch and practice it regularly. Doing this will help to embed these key points in your memory.

- **Practice with a friend or family member**

Get a friend or family member to put together a list of questions to ask you and then have a mock interview. It's important that you aren't privy to which these questions will be; otherwise it makes it too easy to prepare.

- **Practice with a stranger**

To really take your practice to the next level get a careers adviser or friend of a friend to conduct a mock interview. This will help to put you in an 'as near' situation to a real interview as possible.

Presentation (on the day)

If you've really focused on your preparation and practice, performing on the day should be a little easier. The important thing to remember is that performance isn't limited to giving good answers. It also includes the way in which you present yourself, your attitude and body language.

Here are a few things to think about to ensure you present yourself in the best possible light:

- **A warm introduction**

When you're introduced to the interviewer make sure that you smile and extend a healthy handshake.

- **Body language**

Be sure to lean in slightly towards the interviewer to show interest and avoid confrontational or defensive positions such as crossing your arms.

- **Eye contact**

Maintaining eye contact with the interviewer shows confidence (even if you're panicking inside) and can help to build rapport.

- **Listen carefully**

To ensure that you're providing the right information, listen carefully to each question and if you aren't quite sure what they're asking don't be scared to clarify.

- **Don't rush in**

Before answering each question give yourself a moment to think about your answer. Don't give it so long that it makes it uncomfortable, just long enough to structure your answer so you don't ramble.