

INTERVIEW PREP GUIDE

Interview Prep Guide

Preparing for the Interview

- 1 **Know your agenda.** What are the three things you want to make sure your potential employer knows about you by the end of the interview? Jot down different ways you can make those points.
- 2 **Practice common interview questions.** Start with the questions on page three. Begin by jotting down bullet point answers, then speak each response aloud. Think of several specific examples you can use to illustrate your replies.
- 3 **Do research in advance.** Review your potential employer's website, relevant news articles, and other interviewers' experience on LinkedIn.
- 4 **Review the job description thoroughly.** This will help you anticipate the kinds of questions they might ask. If the job description says the ideal candidate has excellent time management skills, bring at least one example of a time you demonstrated this skill. *Bonus: find and review their core values!*
- 5 **Prepare in-depth questions for the interviewer.** Ask about the future of the company, particulars about the role, company culture, etc. This shows you've thought deeply about the position and done your research.

Dos and Don'ts During the Interview

DO use the **STAR** method on page three to give examples that illustrate when you have personally made an impact and led positive changes. Even if the question is general, such as "Do you manage your time well?", cite specific examples of when you managed your time well at work or in school, rather than just a vague response.

DO answer the question but **DON'T** ramble. Your answers should be short yet specific, highlighting concrete examples.

DO be truthful and highlight your experience but **DON'T** be arrogant.

DON'T talk about a previous employer negatively during your interview, but **DO** focus on what you learned from that experience.

DO smile and be enthusiastic, but **DON'T** be robotic. Employers want to see you engaged in the conversation and genuine interest in the role.

DO ask great questions throughout the interview to show you've done your research, invested in the conversation, and are using your active listening skills.

DO ask what the next steps are. This affirms your interest but also helps you know what to expect moving forward.



Special Tips for Phone Interviews

- Make sure you'll be in a quiet location with good reception - so you won't be interrupted.
- When they call, answer the phone by saying something like "Hello, this is Alex." - this way the interviewer knows they've reached the right person.
- Prepare notes you can reference during your interview.
- Dress up - this helps you get into a professional mindset, feel sharp, and be at your best.
- Speak clearly - avoid mumbling or rushing through your response. You want to make sure the interviewer can hear you loud and clear.
- Act as if your interviewer is in the room and smile enthusiastically - they will pick up on your enthusiastic tone through the phone, which will leave a positive impression.
- Feel free to pause before responding to ensure your interviewer is done speaking - that way, you avoid awkward moments of talking over each other.



After the Interview

- ① **Send a professional follow-up note via email to your interviewer.** If you interviewed with multiple people, send each note individually. Highlight something specific from your conversation in your note. This shows you were engaged and will help them remember you. Have someone you trust proofread your emails - you don't want a silly grammar mistake to hurt your chances!
- ② **(Optional) Send a second, follow-up letter via traditional mail.** This is a potential way to stand out. If you do this, be sure to use professional cards/ stationery and your best handwriting.
- ③ **Write down any new interview questions you weren't prepared for.** Think through how you would give an ideal response to this question and make a note of this. A running word document with every interview question you've been asked, along with the ideal responses, will help you prepare for your next interview!



STAR Answer Format

Use the STAR method when answering interview questions.
Consider a variety of situations + contexts (e.g. work, volunteer, leadership).

Situation - What issue/challenge/project did you face?

Task - What task did you need to address or overcome?

Action - What steps did you take to accomplish this task?

Result - What was the result of your effort/ How did the situation resolve?

Common Interview Questions

- Tell me about yourself.
- Why did you choose to attend your college/university?
- What are your biggest strengths/weaknesses?
- Why do you think you are a good fit for the job/internship?
- Tell me about a time when you faced a challenging situation.
- Tell me about a time you received feedback from your manager.
- Tell me about a time you had to persuade someone.
- Tell me about a time you went above and beyond for work.
- Tell me about a time you reached a big goal at work. How did you reach it?
- Tell me about a time you had to resolve a conflict.
- Tell me about a time when you had to work closely with someone whose personality was very different from yours.
- Tell me about a time you had to work to meet a deadline.
- Give an example of a time you managed numerous responsibilities. How did you manage that?
- Tell me about a time when you had to work with very little guidance.
- What is your proudest professional accomplishment?
- What questions do you have for me?

