



preparing for

the interview.



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stand out in an interview.

Your guide to preparing for the interview process.
The information in this booklet will help you to
prepare for an in-person or video interview.

Knowing what to do to set yourself apart from other candidates during job interviews can be challenging. Often, it's not enough to demonstrate your passion for the opportunity since everyone else will be doing the same thing.

To stand out in an interview you need to consider the following:

- Craft and deliver a great elevator pitch.
- Infuse testimonials into your interview answers.
- Position yourself positively using past examples.
- Demonstrate your achievements.
- Make the interview conversational.

There are a number of ways to ensure you're highlighting yourself as the top choice for the job at hand beyond the obvious.

Here are some of our top tips.



deliver a great elevator pitch

To make a positive impression with a hiring manager, you'll need to put together a strong elevator pitch that concisely highlights your background, skills, training, development and your future career goals.

An effective elevator pitch should answer four questions:

1. Who are you?
2. What do you do?
3. What are you looking for?
4. Why are you the best choice for the role?

Focus on what you can offer a new employer – your unique selling point or USP. Include how your skills and experience will help the organisation achieve its goals – the more specific you can be, the better.

infuse testimonials

Include a testimonial from a manager or senior colleague to reinforce what you're saying about your skills and experience. This can take the form of positive feedback you received after delivering a project ahead of schedule or a particularly positive comment that you received during an appraisal.

adapt your language to highlight yourself

Research has shown that adapting your language during an interview can help you to stand out in an interview. Use more first person pronouns (I, me, our) when answering a question to demonstrate to the interviewer that you were the driving force behind your work.

Using second (you) or third person (he, she, they) pronouns when answering an interview question may result in the interviewer questioning whether you are talking about your work, or somebody else's.



make the interview a conversation

Your aim should be to connect with the interviewer during an interview. One of the most straightforward ways of doing so is to turn the interview into a conversation. You can do this by asking questions early in and during the interview.

Instead of waiting until the end of the interview, ask follow-up or probing questions about something the interviewer says you're curious about.

For example, if the interviewer talks about a project the team are working on, ask a probing question like "what are the goals and objectives of the project?" or "How will this role contribute to the success of the project?".

This will demonstrate to the interviewer that you're curious about the team's work and also open up a conversation about the wider impact of the role.

end note

Following these tips will help you to polish your interview skills and prepare you to head into your interview confidently. Practice incorporating these tips into your interview style by asking a friend or family member to role-play a few interview questions with you.

2



smart interview questions.

It's typical for interviews to end with a question from the interviewer, "do you have any questions for me?"

This can be a challenging question to answer, particularly if you feel that everything you wanted to know was covered during the interview. To avoid an awkward situation, it is always a good idea to have some questions in your back pocket to ask during and at the end of an interview.

To prepare impactful questions to ask during the interview, consider the following:

- Read the job ad or description.
- Research the company's website.
- Read through annual reports.
- Browse their social media accounts.





use questions to show your interest

Many people prepare for all the tough interview questions about strengths and weaknesses and their past job experiences but forget that they should also ask questions to get to know their potential employer.

Don't waste this valuable opportunity to ask about the company you could be working for and show that you're invested in the opportunity.

research the company

Review the company website or read their annual report. This can help you formulate questions about the company strategy or work they do in the community.

Asking about the company strategy or corporate social responsibility activities can also help you to share more of your personality, interests and values.

suggestions for questions

To help you prepare some questions for an interviewer, start by reading the job ad and description and note down any relevant questions like:

- How big is the team I will be joining?
- What is the culture of the team/company like?
- What goals have you set for the role previously?
- What learning and development opportunities are there in the company?

These questions show you are interested in more than just what you can glean from the job ad or description.

end note

By asking carefully selected, impactful questions, you will stand out from other applicants and demonstrate to a potential employer that you've thought carefully about how you will fit into the company and role and how you might contribute to their future success.

3



preparing for a video interview.

This guide will help you prepare to present yourself in the best possible light when being interviewed online.

With remote, flexible and hybrid working environments now here to stay, video interviews are standard tools companies rely on for their recruitment process.

To prepare for an effective video interview, consider the following:

- Prepare your room and background.
- Dress like you're attending an in-person interview.
- Be ready with evidence of your skills on your screen.
- Stay focused on the interviewer.
- Convey positive body language and eye contact.
- Practice beforehand with the video interviewing platform.
- Ensure your video profile is up-to-date and professional.





prepare your room and background

There's nothing more distracting than a clothes drying rack in the corner in full view of the interviewer. To help present a calm, professional demeanour to a prospective employer, make sure the room you select for your interview is quiet, tidy and free from any distracting items. Tell people to keep the noise levels down, close the door, and keep pets out of the room – do whatever you can to give yourself the best chance to stay focused and concentrate.

Change the visual background on the screen to be 'blurred out' or choose another professional/ appropriate image available.

dress presentably as if it's in-person

The right outfit can boost your confidence, so ensure you are dressed professionally.

Not neglecting the bottom half of your body is essential, as many candidates do when participating in a video interview. You don't want to be caught in your pyjama bottoms if you need to get up unexpectedly and the camera is still on.

be ready to provide evidence of your skills

Depending on the role you are interviewing for, you might be asked to bring documents with you – think portfolio, visuals and other supporting documents – to discuss with and impress the hiring manager during an interview.

This is no different just because it's happening via video. It would be best if you were prepared to share these documents on your screen, so have anything you think could be relevant ready on your desktop or in an open tab.



stay focused on the interviewer

When preparing the set-up of your interview space, remember that it is critical to stay 100% focused on your interviewer.

Don't be distracted by someone off-screen, or a chat message or text. Remember, you wouldn't be distracted in a face-to-face interview.

That simple lack of focus could mean losing out on the job. If you're at home, tell everyone that lives with you – whether they are at home or not – not to distract you during your interview. This will help you avoid an awkward moment during the interview, potentially damaging your chances of moving to the next stage of the recruitment process.

ensure your body language is positive

Body language can help maintain your calm demeanour, so keep it open and approachable.

Remember that it is a little harder to interpret body language and physical cues online, so be conscious of what your body and face are portraying when you're not speaking. Maintain eye contact with your interviewer - even though this can be tricky when doing so through a screen.

practice with the video system

One way to help settle your nerves is to ensure you know the system used for the video interview.

Log in ahead of your interview to determine if you'll encounter any password issues or need to install add-ons to be able to join the call. Use this time to make sure you're positioned adequately on-screen so the interviewer will see you at your best angle.



ensure your video profile is up to date

Get rid of nicknames on your profile, any unprofessional profile pictures or statuses full of emojis and in-jokes. It would be best to portray yourself as capable and intelligent, not immature and trivial.

end note

Video interviews may be nerve-wracking, but they present significant advantages. You won't risk being late after getting stuck in traffic, and you can choose an environment you feel comfortable in. Remembering the benefits can help you stay calm during the process and help you nail your next video interview.

4



answering difficult questions.

Going into every job interview, you need to expect a few tough questions, but being prepared ahead of time can give you the edge you need to move to the next interview stage.

Here are a few tricky questions to practice.

1.

tell me about yourself?

The interviewer isn't interested in your favourite colour, hobbies or that you're a middle child. Start with your elevator pitch – the short intro you prepared at the beginning of your job search covering the who, what, and why of who you are and what you can offer a potential employer.

Expand into more detail where you think it's most relevant to the job.

2.

what are your biggest strengths and weaknesses?

To answer a question about your strengths, list qualities and traits relevant to the job opportunity you're interviewing for. In areas where you need improvement, focus on what you've learned from the challenge and how you applied your newfound self-awareness to other situations.

When a question asks you to reflect on something negative about yourself, give a short example and then focus the conversation on what you've learned and how you've grown due to the experience.

3.

why do you want this job/ to work at this company?

The best approach is to highlight aspects of the job you're interviewing for, using the research you've done about the organisation and apply your own experience and personality in your answer. For example, you want to work for a small not-for-profit because you want your work to be impactful and make a difference in the community. You like the connection and support of a small office. While you're a self-starter and enjoy working independently, you thrive in a collaborative workplace.

Your answer should always reflect your research on the organisation, the job and what you can determine about the company's work culture. You're painting a picture of how you fit in and the value and contributions you bring.

4.

what achievements are you most proud of?

Focus on work experience (or voluntary experience if you don't have any work history). Think about how your work delivered results and what you achieved. Consider any awards that you're particularly proud of and are relevant to the job.

For example, you may have implemented a new process for a company that you worked for that resulted in a saving of time and money. Any prospective employer can understand and relate to results based on your actions, regardless of where you worked or in what capacity.

end note

In this section we've outlined four of the most common, difficult to answer questions that come up in interviews. Many more complex questions can come up and can sometimes take you by surprise. Therefore, the more you research, practice and prepare, the better.

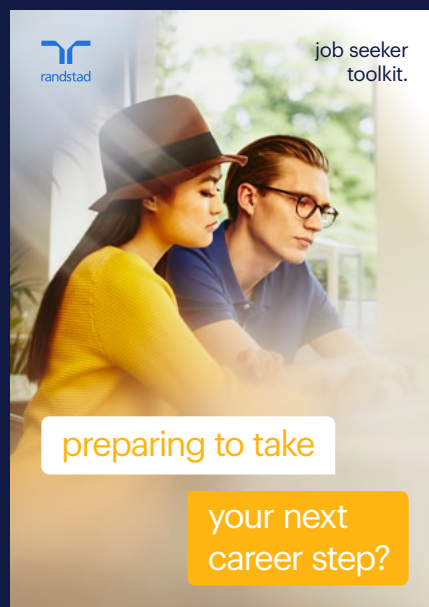
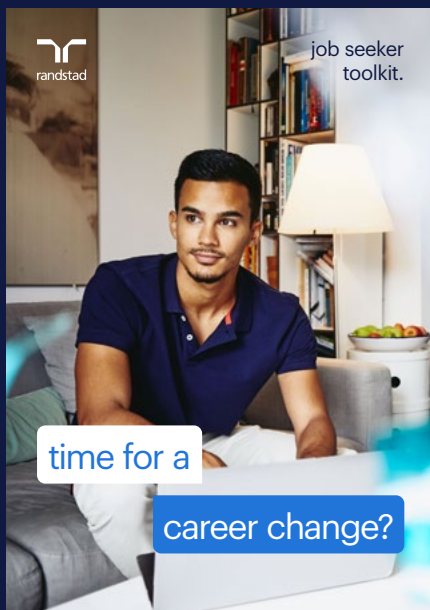
Keep in mind, as much as you prepare, there may be moments during the interview where you feel at a loss as you don't know how to answer the question. Take a deep breath, don't panic, and say something like: "That's a great question. I need to think about that. Can we come back to it later?" as a way to buy time to think and confidently move to another question.

your next step.

If you're looking for your dream job, the Job Seeker Toolkit has everything you need to make your next move unforgettable.

From crafting your resume to tackling a challenging interview, these tried-and-tested tips will empower you to move into a new role with ease.

Make sure you explore each section in this four-part series in order to move forward in your job search.





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