

Job interviews

Going for an interview is always challenging. That is why Octagon gives you advice on how to prepare for a job interview, give a good first impression and the do's and don'ts during an interview.

Preparing for a job interview

Good preparation is key to a successful job interview. Going for an interview can be a bit like going for an exam and could therefore make you nervous and give the wrong impression. To avoid this we have gathered a checklist to prepare you for the big day.

Research the company

Before you go for a job interview, be sure to research the company. What industry is the organization in? What are the vision and the mission? How large is it? It will help you prepare to both answer interview questions about the company and to ask the interviewer questions about the company. The interviewer will notice that you know certain specifics and this will make the conversation easier.

Prepare questions and answers

When researching the company you have probably noticed a number of things you may have questions about. List the questions and make sure to ask them during the interview. Try to ask debatable questions to keep the conversation going.

Look up the interviewer on LinkedIn

Look up the interviewer on LinkedIn to get a sense of the type of person you are meeting. This will help you feel more at ease with the person sitting opposite you.

A good first impression

Your clothing, handshake and posture are important when giving a good first impression. Be sure to dress professionally, give a firm handshake and make sure you have a straight posture.

Smile

Smile, think positive and laugh when you think it's appropriate. Positive people get hired quicker.

Good handshake

Handshakes matter more than we think and are important when giving a good first impression.

Below are some tips:

- Give a firm, but not bone crushing handshake.
- Make and hold eye contact. This gives the other person a confident impression.
- Shake up and down for a maximum of three or four times. Over shaking may feel odd for the other person.

Clothing

Dressing well can increase your confidence and is incredibly important when making a good first impression. In general, it's important to dress professionally for an interview. A candidate dressed in a suit and tie is going to make a better impression than a candidate dressed casually. Depending on the industry, clothing expectations may vary. Dressing professionally or casually can depend on company and industry. The most important factor is not to be underdressed.

The interview

Be confident in your skills and capabilities, make sure your posture is good and ask questions during your job interview.

Good posture

Non-verbal communication techniques are just as important as verbal communication techniques. Therefore, using appropriate body language during your job interview is essential for it's success.

Sit upright and not too stiffly, relax and lean slightly forward towards your interviewer. Keep your hands loosely clamped on your lap or on the table. Keep eye contact for periods of 10 seconds before looking away to show interest in the interviewer.

Ask questions

Asking questions will help you and the interviewer determine whether you are suitable for the job. Asking the right questions will show your interest in the job and give the interviewer the impression that you are a professional.

What questions should you ask? We have listed some examples below:

- *Is there space for career development/training opportunities?*
This question shows your career ambitions.
- *What does a typical workweek look like?*
With the answer to this question you can determine whether this role suits you.
- *What are the main challenges and opportunities for this organization?*
This will help you find out in what direction the company is going.
- *What should I accomplish in the first four months?*
Getting insight in the interviewers expectations will clarify the work pressure. There are many more questions you could ask, but this all depends on the type of conversation you are having. Most important advice: always ask questions.

Getting insight in the interviewers expectations will clarify the work pressure. There are many more questions you could ask, but this all depends on the type of conversation you are having. Most important advice: always ask questions.

Second job interview

You passed the first job interview, congratulations! So what happens next? What can you expect? First round interviews are for screening candidates, whereas second round interviews are more in depth. You can expect more in depth questions about subjects discussed in the first interview. More questions about your skills, capabilities and even personal life, will give you the chance elaborate and tell more about your personal life and previous work experiences. Be creative by giving different examples and asking different questions.

How to prepare for a second interview

- Find out the itinerary for the second interview, so you know what to expect and how to prepare yourself.
- Research even more about the company, the management and the interviewer.
- Review the questions and answers you gave in the first interview. Make sure your answers are the same and elaborate further.
- Be prepared to ask more questions and show the interviewer or future colleagues that you are the right pick for the team.