

APPRENTICESHIPS

Interview Hints & Tips

Good preparation is essential for a good interview! Companies can always tell who has prepared and who hasn't. Here are some hints and tips to help you before, during and after an interview:

Before the interview

- Research the company; take a good look at their website to familiarise yourself with their corporate image. Social media such as Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn can provide a useful insight as to their events and promotions and may give you some points to talk about at the interview. The more knowledge you have about the company, the more confident you will feel at interview.
- Plan your journey to the interview. If you are going to use public transport, be clear on the best route to travel to the interview. Allow some extra time for any delays. If you are driving, ensure you are familiar on where to park.
- Make sure you have planned a suitably smart outfit in advance and prepare it the day before. You cannot go wrong with conventional office wear to create a professional first impression.
- Always prepare a list of questions. If some of your questions have been answered during the interview, do not panic, just state that you were going to ask about that particular aspect but it has been discussed during the course of the interview and perhaps ask for an email address / telephone number so you can contact them if you think of any additional questions.

Arriving at the interview

- Arrive 15 minutes prior to the interview
- Stay calm and focussed.
- On the day of an interview, allow plenty of time to get there without rushing or being stressed by delays.
- Take everything you might need such as notebooks, pens and a copy of your CV.
- Be polite and friendly (although not too relaxed!) to other staff you meet whilst waiting for your interview such as the receptionist. It is possible that they may be asked what their thoughts were about you once the interview has finished.
- Do not be afraid to make small talk with the person showing you to the room the interview will take place in. You could ask the person walking with you how their day has been / how long have they worked here / something similar?

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During the Interview

- Smile. A smile can be a powerful tool at a first meeting. Even if you feel nervous, make sure you smile - it will make you come across as friendly and relaxed.
- Think about the questions that you could be asked before you get to the interview. The most common interview questions can all be prepared for. These are some of the most frequently asked interview questions:
 - What can you tell me about yourself?
 - Why have you applied for this apprenticeship?
 - What qualities do you have that make you right for this apprenticeship?
 - Why should I consider hiring you?
 - Where do you see yourself in five years?
 - What motivates you?
 - What makes a good team player?
 - Is there anything that you would like to ask me?
- Remember to try and make eye contact, focussing on what they are saying. Listen to the questions being asked and pause for a second if you want to think about your answer.
- If the question was unclear, ask if they could rephrase the question or explain what they mean.
- Show an interest in the person interviewing you; you could ask how long they have been at the company? What do they enjoy about working there? How have they progressed whilst working there?
- End positively. When the interview is finishing, try to end on a positive note. This could be as simple as saying something like, "I look forward to hearing from you."

After the Interview

- Remember an interview is also for you to decide if you would like to work somewhere, not just for them to make a decision about you so take some time to think about whether the role is for you or if you have any questions about the position.
- If the interview has been arranged by a college, make sure you contact them as soon as possible to provide your thoughts and feedback to them. That way, they can pass this on to the company when they speak with them and this demonstrates that you are still interested in the role.
- Always start and end your interview with a firm handshake
- If the interview was arranged directly with the company, you may wish to send them a brief email thanking them for meeting with you and expressing that you are still interested in the position.