



Guidance on preparing for an interview





Preparing for an interview:

Preparation is key to ensuring you are in the best position to perform at interview. Below are some points to consider when planning to attend an interview.

1. Establish what is expected of you:

- Is there an exercise element to the interview? E.g. presentation.
- Do you need to prepare anything?

2. Practicalities:

- Do you know exactly where you are going?
- Are there parking facilities?
- Make sure you know who you are meeting and have their details written down should you need them on your journey to the interview.
- Timings – ensure you allow yourself plenty of time to get to your interview. Aim to arrive early to allow yourself time to compose and settle yourself.

3. Know the role and the Association:

- Conduct some research, it is so important that you know as much as possible about the Association you are being interviewed to work for.
- Make sure you are familiar with the Associations Vision, purpose and make up.
- Familiarise yourself again with the role profile and your application form.

4. Identify potential questions:

- Using the knowledge and experience section of the role profile identify questions that maybe asked of you.

For example; an essential point on the knowledge and experience section is;

“Excellent customer service skills”.

A question that could be asked is

“Can you give an example of when you have had to deal with a difficult customer? How did you handle it and what was the outcome?”

5. Prepare examples using the STAR Technique:

The STAR technique

The STAR technique is an additional tool that can support you in demonstrating your skills and experiences further.



The STAR technique is a structured method of responding to a behavioural based question, by discussing the specific **SITUATION, TASK, ACTION and RESULT**.

Utilising this technique, allows you to be more concise and focused.

- **SITUATION:** present a recent challenge and situation in which you found yourself.
- **TASK:** what were you required to achieve?
- **ACTION:** what did you do? Why did you do it? What were the alternatives?
- **RESULTS:** what was the outcome of your actions? What did you achieve through your actions? Did you meet your objectives? What did you learn from this experience?

6. Practise with someone:

- Practice makes perfect.
- Set out some potential questions and get someone to ask you.
- Treat it like a real interview situation, ask them to make notes of your responses and provide feedback.

7. Top tips for the interview:

- Check with the recruitment officer / hiring manager if you are able to take notes into the interview with you. Taking in one piece of paper with buzz words to jog your memory of potential experiences can be helpful, but these need to be concise. Don't take in more than one piece of paper, you will get flustered looking for what you need.
- Take your time in answering the questions, a few moments of silence is ok. Take a sip of water to gather your thoughts.
- Listen carefully and answer the question in full. Ask for clarification if you don't understand the question, or aren't sure what exactly is being asked.
- Be yourself, be honest, be positive and enthusiastic, and don't be afraid to sell yourself and your achievements. Always portray your skills and experience positively and avoid the temptation to downplay experiences.
- Prepare questions to ask the panel at the end of your interview. Ask questions related to the role, how it will work, what induction/training will there be – and you might also want to ask when a decision will be made and how it's communicated.



On occasions we might ask you to prepare a presentation ahead of the interview. This will be asked of you at the point of inviting you to interview.

Tips on preparing a presentation for an interview.

- Research the question you have been given and prepare a clear structured response. Make sure you have answered the question in full
- A presentation doesn't have to be a PowerPoint, do whatever you are most comfortable with – this could be using flipchart paper, a poster or just one slide of a PowerPoint
- Don't write too much on your presentation, use short sharp sentences – you don't want to be reliant on what you have written.
- Don't over complicate it with fancy animations and transitions – this can make you flustered if all the points don't come up on the slide. Less is more
- Avoid reading directly from the presentation whenever possible, try and maintain eye contact with the interview panel when talking. It is ok to have notes and to refer to them, but don't be reliant on them, find the right balance
- Prepare for potential follow up questions at the end of your presentation
- Practise delivering your presentation with someone – ensuring you are familiar with what you have written will make you feel more relaxed on the day
- Manage your time. You are typically provided with a timeframe to deliver your presentation. When practising make sure you time yourself. On the day make sure you check what time you start, keep an eye on the time and stick to your time allocation