

Tips for job interviews

Student/Whānau Information



Get ready for your interview

You've got a job interview coming up? Congratulations! You've impressed the employer with your application and now they want to meet you.

It's natural to feel a bit nervous, but if you do some preparation you'll feel more confident.

- Research the organisation to get an idea of what they are looking for in an employee.
- Plan what you're going to wear. You don't have to wear new or expensive clothes, but make sure you look smart and tidy.
- Work out how you'll get to the interview and how long it will take. It's important to arrive on time. Have a back-up plan in case something goes wrong.
- Find out if you need to do anything extra at the interview. You may need to go through a series of interviews, take tests, do a presentation or take part in group activities.



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Get ready for interview questions

- Start by reading the job description again.
- Think of questions the employer may ask and how you'll answer them.
Review your application to remember the skills and experiences you shared.
- Think of examples that show how you've used your skills and experience in the past.

Practise answering questions and describing your examples by Speaking, either to yourself or someone you trust.

Tips for answering interview questions

- Speak clearly and change your tone of voice sometimes to show you're interested and enthusiastic.
- Lean forward in your seat. Remember to smile sometimes.
- You can take time to think about a question so you can give a good answer. You might say, "Oh, good question – let me think about this one."
- If you don't understand a question, ask for it to be explained or repeated.
- Give examples from your experience that demonstrate your knowledge and skills.
- Keep your answers brief and to the point.

Use the STAR method to talk about your experience

When you answer interview questions about something you've done it's best to use the STAR method (situation, task, action, result).

- Situation – describe what the situation was.
- Task – describe the task you had to do.
- Action – describe what you did to achieve the task.
- Result – describe the final result.

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Common interview questions explained

- Can you tell us about yourself?
Summarise your work experience and qualifications and talk about your goals.
- Why do you want to work for us?
Use your research about the job and organisation to answer.
- What made you apply for this job?
Talk about your interest in the job and the organisation.
- What makes you the best person for this job?
Explain how you'll use your personality, skills and experience in the job.
- Have you done this kind of work before?
Discuss any skills or experience you have that will help you do the job.
- What are your strengths and weaknesses?
Discuss your strengths and then talk about how you overcome your weaknesses.
- Tell me about a time when you...
Describe a specific task or situation, what you did and what the result was using the STAR method.

Be prepared to ask the interviewer a question

Show that you're interested in the job and organisation by having some questions ready to ask the employer. Your research can help you come up with questions.

You could ask about:

- what training and progression opportunities they offer.
- what the people and team are like.

Remember that an interview is not only for an employer to decide if you're the right person for the job. It's also your chance to find out if the job and organisation is right for you.