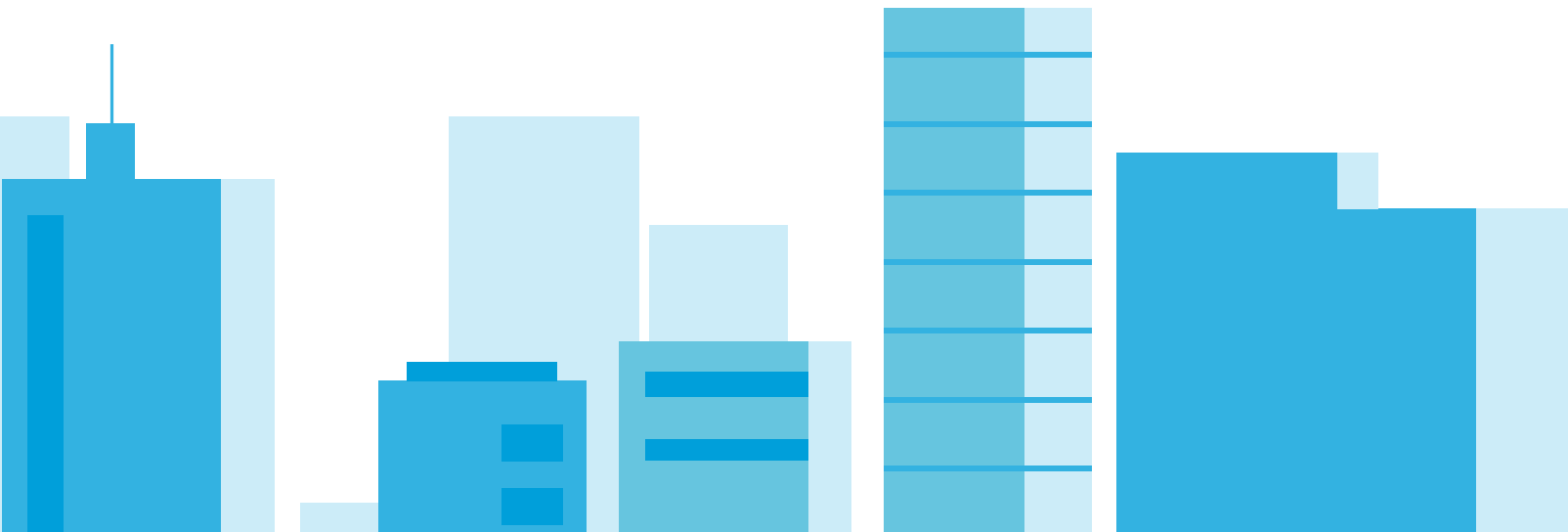


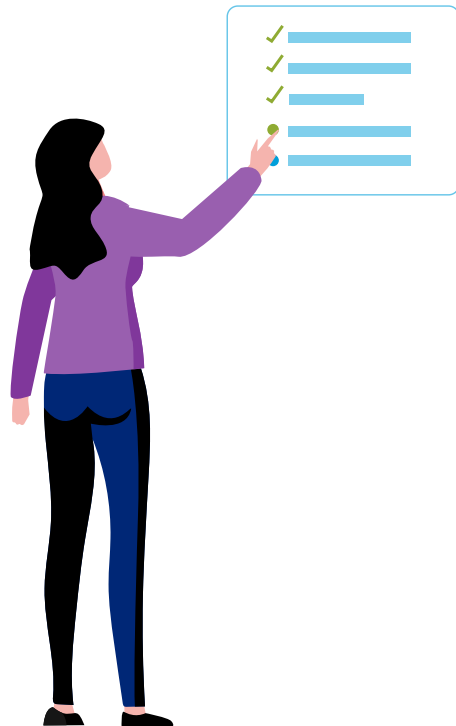
# YOUR GUIDE TO A SUCCESSFUL JOB INTERVIEW



# WHAT'S INSIDE?

Welcome to your Interview Guide! Here you will find all the tips and advice you need to guide you through your next job interview and ensure it's a success - whether it's taking place in-person, over video or phone.

## PART 1: YOUR PRE-INTERVIEW TO DO LIST



## PART 2: WHAT TO DO ON THE DAY OF YOUR INTERVIEW

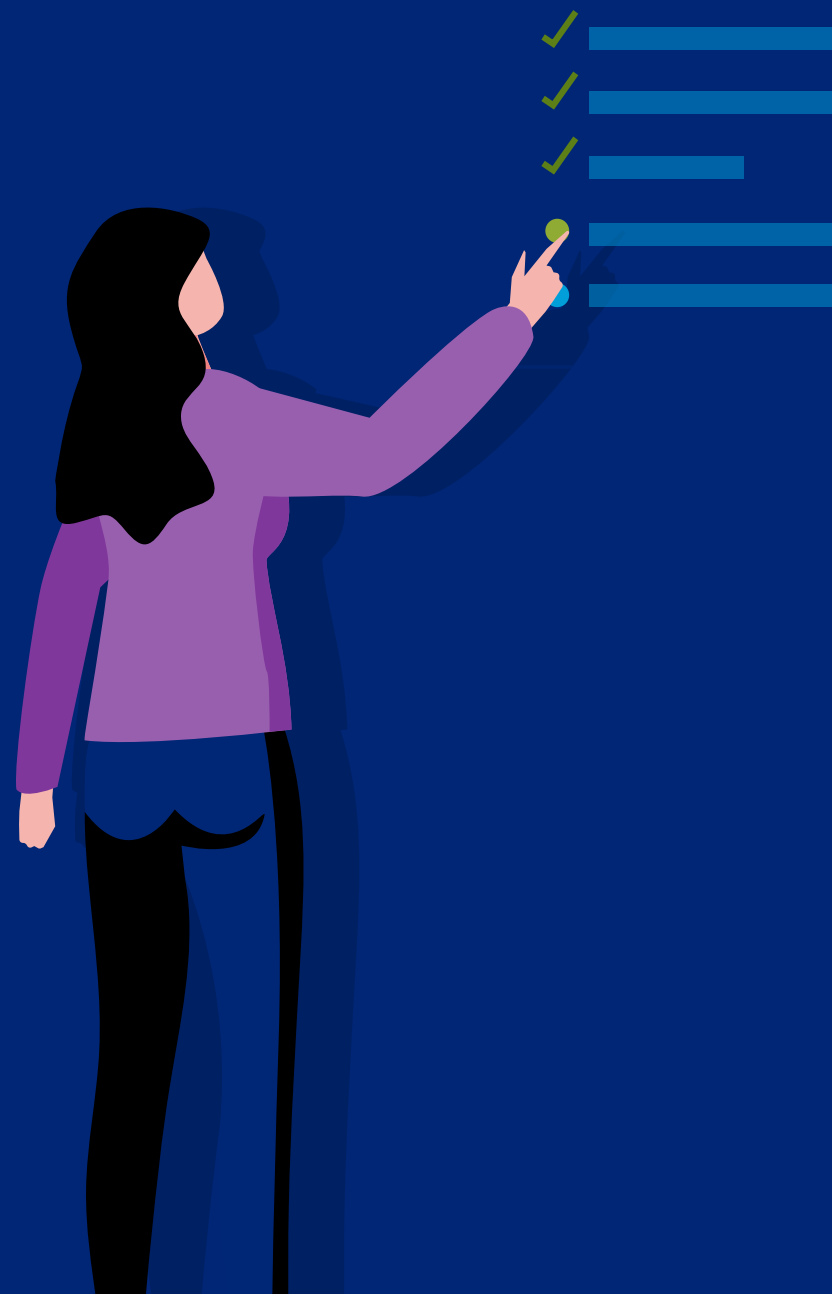


## PART 3: AFTER YOUR INTERVIEW – WHAT'S NEXT?



# PART 1

## YOUR PRE-INTERVIEW TO DO LIST



# DO YOUR RESEARCH

In order to get yourself interview-ready, you need to research and speak to your recruiter about these four things:



## 1. THE INDUSTRY

### WHAT DO I NEED TO KNOW?

About any recent developments, trends and changes

### WHERE CAN I FIND THIS INFORMATION?

Search engines, news stories and company websites



## 2. THE COMPANY

### WHAT DO I NEED TO KNOW?

Its history, its products and services, its mission, its values and purpose, its customers and its culture

### WHERE CAN I FIND THIS INFORMATION?

Their company websites, annual reports, marketing material, company social media accounts, employee social media activity, news stories, events and review sites



## 3. THE HIRING MANAGER

### WHAT DO I NEED TO KNOW?

Who they are, what their role is, what their expertise is, and their past experience

### WHERE CAN I FIND THIS INFORMATION?

Their LinkedIn profile, search engines, the company websites, speaking appearances (try searching YouTube), and ask your recruiter



## 4. THE ROLE

### WHAT DO I NEED TO KNOW?

As much as possible about this role and any previous work the team has completed

### WHERE CAN I FIND THIS INFORMATION?

The job description, company social media accounts, employee social media activity and company websites

# PLAN HOW YOU ARE GOING TO INTRODUCE YOURSELF

A key part of getting ready for your interview is preparing how you will introduce yourself and talk through your 'story' so far. So, how should you structure your introduction?

**1** Firstly, explain your relevant **educational and professional background**

I am a business management graduate with a master's in Digital Marketing. Since leaving university I have enjoyed a two year marketing career within the sports industry.

**2** Next, discuss the **key skills and expertise** you have which directly relate to this opportunity, using measurable examples

During my time within this industry, I have been able to apply what I learnt during my master's, whilst building upon my digital marketing expertise even further. I believe that my digital marketing skills are best showcased by an email marketing campaign I recently led, which increased our conversion rate by 10 per cent.

**3** Finally, describe **what you are looking for** in your next role and why this role, at this organisation, appealed to you

My previous organisation has helped me develop the digital skills I have today, however, I believe that for the sake of progressing my expertise further, it's time to move on. Therefore, I'm looking for a more challenging role within a fast-paced global organisation, where there is plenty of room for me to grow as a marketing professional; hence why I was so pleased to be invited to interview for this role.

## THINGS TO REMEMBER:

When talking through your CV, ensure you do so in chronological order – focusing on only the roles which are relevant to this job interview

Keep your language simple, and where possible, use [action verbs](#) to better showcase your skills

You can find more information about introducing yourself in a job interview [here](#).



# PRACTISE INTRODUCING YOURSELF



**1. YOUR RELEVANT EDUCATIONAL AND PROFESSIONAL BACKGROUND**

**2. THE KEY SKILLS AND EXPERTISE YOU HAVE WHICH DIRECTLY RELATE TO THIS OPPORTUNITY**

Tip: use measurable examples

**3. WHAT YOU ARE LOOKING FOR IN YOUR NEXT ROLE AND WHY THIS ROLE, AT THIS ORGANISATION, APPEALED TO YOU**

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# PREPARE YOUR ANSWERS TO THESE COMMON INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Once you've introduced yourself and spoken through your CV, you will likely be asked some common interview questions. Here are some that you should prepare for:



## 1. "WHY ARE YOU LOOKING TO LEAVE YOUR CURRENT JOB?"

- The interviewer will ask you this because they want to understand what motivates and fulfils you, and what type of company culture you are best suited to
- Don't focus this answer on what you dislike about your current role or organisation; focus on the opportunities that you see in the position you've applied for – such as the opportunity to learn new skills, or develop your understanding in a new industry

For example:

"While I've learnt a great deal in my current role, I believe it is now time to make a change, because I'd like to expand on my skills, and build on my experiences on a more consistent basis. I believe this opportunity may enable me to do that, as I've found from my research that your company has a commitment to lifelong learning for your staff."

Find more advice on answering this question [here](#).



## 2. "WHY SHOULD I HIRE YOU?"

- This is an opportunity to sell yourself; think about what benefits you will bring to the company if they take you on, rather than someone else
- Identify three skills/experiences you're going to mention. This list should include 'hard skills' mentioned in the job description (i.e. technical abilities), as well as transferrable or 'soft skills', like communication and the ability to work as part of a team
- Be informative, but succinct. Don't risk disengaging the interviewer with an overly long and poorly structured response
- Rehearse, but also maintain some spontaneity. Be sure not to over-rehearse your response to such an extent that you come across as robotic when you give it

Find more advice on answering this question [here](#).



## 3. "HOW WOULD YOUR FRIENDS DESCRIBE YOU?"

- By asking this question, the interviewer is trying to determine if your personality suits the role, team and company
- What kind of personal attributes of yours would be useful for demonstrating your suitability for this role?

For example:

You might be interviewing for a sales role, and you think your friends would describe you as friendly and a good listener. These would be good qualities to mention, as they demonstrate your ability to build rapport, including with potential and existing clients.

- Don't just think about traits that relate to the job description, think about how your friends would truly describe you – or better, ask them. This will indicate to the interviewer how well you will get on with your potential colleagues

Find more advice on answering this question [here](#).

# PREPARE YOUR ANSWERS TO THESE COMMON INTERVIEW QUESTIONS



## 4. “WHY DO YOU WANT THIS JOB?”

Structure your answer with these four key points:

1. Why you are passionate about the company
2. Why you are passionate about the role
3. How this opportunity would allow you to progress
4. Reiterate how pleased you are to have been invited to the interview

[Find more advice on answering this question here.](#)



## 5. “CAN YOU TELL ME ABOUT A TIME THAT YOU FAILED?”

- This will help the interviewer to assess how you deal with set-backs; do you take a step back and think about where you went wrong, or do you sweep it under the carpet and act like it never happened?
- Plan which example you are going to talk about – not something which is a thinly veiled success story, but is a genuine example of where you made an oversight or error in judgement
- Some key points to remember: explain clearly how it happened, don't make excuses, don't blame others and show that you have learnt from the situation

[Find more advice on answering this question here.](#)



## 6. “WHAT ARE YOUR SALARY EXPECTATIONS?”

- Make sure you are aware of the industry standard for your role and level of experience before going into your interview. If you're unsure, consult our [Salary Guides](#) or ask your recruiter
- Having this information will allow you to answer this question with a lot more conviction, and will put you in a much better position should you need to negotiate

[Find more advice on answering this question here.](#)

## 7. “ARE YOU INTERVIEWING WITH ANY OTHER COMPANIES?”

The interviewer will ask you this for a range of reasons, whether that's to gain validation that you are genuinely interested in *this* role and their company, or to see how quickly they would need to act if they were to offer you the job.



### Do:

Convey that this is your company of choice; pivot the conversation towards what you are looking for in your next role; keep it general; don't hide the fact you've already received a job offer if that's the case.



### Don't:

List specific company names or the number of other jobs you've applied for, and don't exaggerate the scale of your job search or progress so far.

[Find more advice on answering this question here.](#)



# PRACTISE YOUR ANSWERS TO THESE COMMON INTERVIEW QUESTIONS



1. "WHY ARE YOU LOOKING TO LEAVE YOUR CURRENT JOB?"



2. "WHY SHOULD I HIRE YOU?"



3. "HOW WOULD YOUR FRIENDS DESCRIBE YOU?"

Blank space for writing the answer to question 1.

Blank space for writing the answer to question 2.

Blank space for writing the answer to question 3.

# PRACTISE YOUR ANSWERS TO THESE COMMON INTERVIEW QUESTIONS



4. "WHY DO YOU WANT THIS JOB?"



5. "CAN YOU TELL ME ABOUT A TIME THAT YOU FAILED?"



6. "WHAT ARE YOUR SALARY EXPECTATIONS?"



7. "ARE YOU INTERVIEWING WITH ANY OTHER COMPANIES?"

# LEARN HOW TO USE THE STAR TECHNIQUE FOR SITUATIONAL INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

You may also be asked **situational** and **behavioural** interview questions that are about understanding how you work, and what your innate response to a particular situation would be. For example:

“Tell me about a time when you supported a colleague who was struggling.”

“Give me an example of a time that you missed a deadline. How did you learn from it?”

“Tell me about a time when you saw that a colleague had made a mistake. What did you do?”

In order to answer this type of interview question successfully, you need to use the storytelling method called the **STAR technique**. This will keep your responses clear, focused and memorable. Let’s demonstrate this technique by using the example question “Can you think of a time where you used a problem-solving attitude?”



S

## SET THE SITUATION

“Yes, whilst I was employed at X company, I was responsible for digitally promoting a portfolio of X products. One week, our online sales for a particular product were 25 per cent lower than usual.”



T

## DESCRIBE YOUR TASK AND INVOLVEMENT

“I was tasked with making changes to our digital marketing presence to rectify this dip in sales.”



A

## YOUR ACTION

“Therefore, I created banner adverts for these products to go on our homepage and email signatures. I also increased our social media activity promoting these products. I encouraged internal teams to “like and share” this activity. I then launched an email campaign to go out to a targeted list of customers for that product.”



R

## SHOW OFF THE RESULTS

“Consequently, by the following week, online sales for this product saw a 40 per cent increase and have remained steady ever since.”

[Learn more about the STAR technique here.](#)

# PRACTISE THE STAR TECHNIQUE: ANSWER ONE OF THE QUESTIONS BELOW



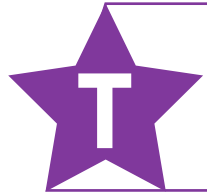
“Tell me about a time when you supported a colleague who was struggling.”

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SET THE SITUATION



DESCRIBE YOUR TASK  
AND INVOLVEMENT



YOUR ACTION



SHOW OFF  
THE RESULTS

# BE READY TO EXPLAIN ANY GAPS ON YOUR CV

Everyone is bound to have some sort of gap on their CV, whether that's down to redundancy, travelling, illness, caring for a relative, looking after children, studying, and so on.

Whatever the circumstances, this is very common and explaining the gap in an interview doesn't need to be a source for stress or worry. But how can you explain these gaps to an interviewer in a manner that further sells you as a potential hire?

## REMEMBER THESE FIVE GENERAL PRINCIPLES:

1.



When explaining how you've spent your time out of the workplace, try to demonstrate anything you've done that has been **productive or proactive** – such as learning a new skill, keeping up to date with the industry, or any voluntary work you undertook.

2.



**Structure** your answer well. Briefly start by explaining why you were unemployed during that time, then go on to explain what you did, and lastly emphasise why you think this is the right opportunity for you.

3.



Rather than going into specifics about the reason for your gap, focus your answer on how you used your time and **why you think you would be great in this role.**

4.

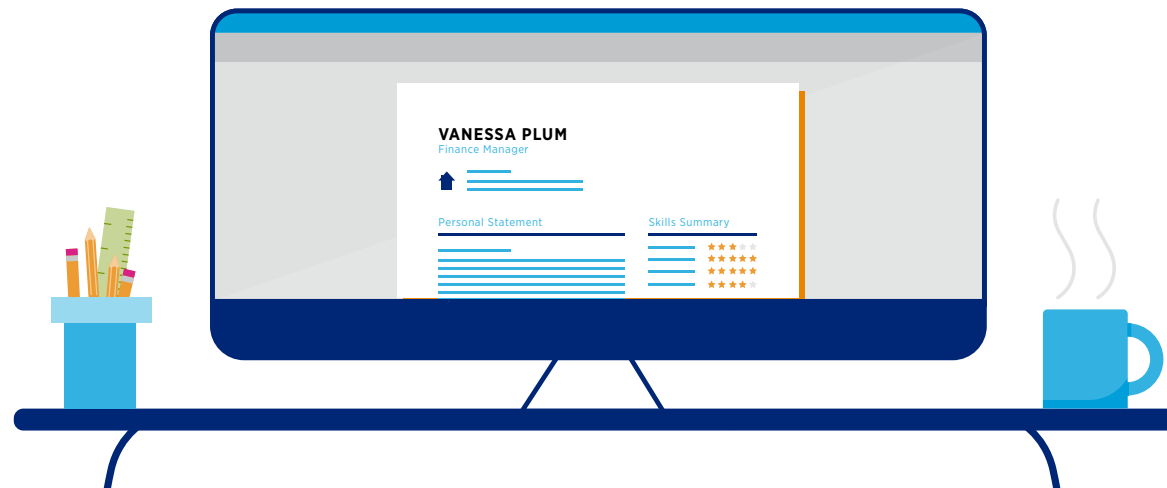


Whatever the reason is, remember to be **open and honest** with your answer, without going into unnecessary detail.

5.



Use **positive language** and don't apologise for taking a break or having a gap.



You can learn more about explaining CV gaps in an interview by reading [this blog](#).

# PLAN THE QUESTIONS YOU ARE GOING TO ASK THE INTERVIEWER

When you are asked “Do you have any questions?”, it’s important to use this as an opportunity not only to determine if this truly is the perfect job role, company and team for you, but to demonstrate your creative thinking, curious mindset and genuine interest to your potential employer.

## FOCUS YOUR QUESTIONS ON THESE SIX AREAS:

### 1. THE ROLE

- Is this a new role? If not, how has it evolved?
- Is there scope for career progression?
- What does success look like in this job?
- What does a typical day look like?

### 2. THE TEAM

- Can you tell me more about the team?
- How does the team fit into the overall structure of the company?
- What constitutes success for the team?

### 3. THE HIRING MANAGER

- What’s your background?
- From your perspective, what’s it like to work here?
- What is your management style?



### 4. LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

- How often would my performance be reviewed?
- What training opportunities are available?

### 5. THE ORGANISATION

- What are the main challenges and opportunities the business faces?
- How long do employees usually remain with the business?
- How does your organisation live its purpose?

### 6. NEXT STEPS

- What is the next step in the hiring process?

# PLAN THE QUESTIONS YOU'RE GOING TO ASK THE INTERVIEWER



**THE ROLE:**

**LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT:**

**THE TEAM:**

**THE ORGANISATION:**

**THE HIRING MANAGER:**

**NEXT STEPS:**

# YOU ARE ALMOST INTERVIEW-READY, WITH JUST A FEW FINAL PREPARATIONS LEFT...

Ensure you're clear on these five practicalities:



## WHAT TIME AND WHERE THE INTERVIEW WILL TAKE PLACE

If the interview is being conducted at the organisation's office, ensure you know how to get there and how long it will take.

If the interview is being conducted remotely, ensure you're clear on the technology used – and plan where you will sit, thinking carefully about what you'd like your background to be. Also ensure you inform anyone you live with about the interview, so as to avoid any noise disruption.



## HOW LONG THE INTERVIEW WILL LAST

As a general rule of thumb, a face-to-face interview will last around 45 minutes to one hour.



## WHAT FORMAT THE INTERVIEW WILL BE

Will it include tests, or meeting the team?



## WHAT THE DRESS CODE IS

This is still important even if the interview is taking place remotely.



## THE JOB DESCRIPTION

It's a great idea to print this out to have with you, just in case.

If your interview is face-to-face, you can have this in your bag for some final preparations on your way.

If your interview is remote, you can have this to hand so you can refer to it at any point.



**If you're feeling unsure about any of these points, your recruiter can help you.**



# IF YOU NEED TO ARRANGE TIME OFF FOR YOUR INTERVIEW, CONSIDER THESE THREE THINGS

## 1. TRY TO AVOID SCHEDULING THE INTERVIEW DURING WORKING HOURS, IF POSSIBLE

- First thing in the morning, during your lunch break, or even after work are the preferable times to arrange an interview
- If your interview is scheduled for a time that could be particularly difficult for you to attend, let your recruiter or the hiring manager know as early as possible
- Explain the situation and request some alternative dates and times

## 2. BOOK A DAY'S ANNUAL LEAVE ON THE DAY OF THE INTERVIEW

- Or if that's not possible, what about booking a half-day?
- This way, your anxieties will be significantly diminished, allowing you to focus solely on your interview

## 3. DON'T LIE OR SNEAK AROUND

- If you have been unable to move the interview to a time that fits around your current work commitments, it can understandably be tempting to manufacture a mythical doctor's appointment or even call in sick on the day
- But we do not recommend this; it is a very difficult situation to be in, but it's not worth getting caught out in a lie. If you are at last resort, then it's best to be vague and say that you have a personal appointment you must attend



You can find more advice on arranging time off for a job interview [here](#).

# GET INTO A POSITIVE FRAME OF MIND BEFORE YOUR JOB INTERVIEW

This will allow you to perform at your very best, in the knowledge that you're as prepared as possible. It will also help you feel more confident, enabling you to really sell yourself and your skills in an authentic way to the interviewer.

Follow these five steps in the days before your interview to get into a positive mindset, and to calm any nerves you may be feeling:

## 1. REFRAME THE WAY YOU THINK

Check your language for phrases like “this is impossible” or “I can’t” and replace them with positive affirmations, such as “I can do this”.

An interview is merely a conversation with someone to get to know each other and to find out more about the job – there’s no need to build up the situation and cause yourself unnecessary stress or anxiety.



## 2. SPEAK TO YOUR RECRUITER AND SUPPORT GROUP

Do you have a friend or family member who is great at giving advice, or calming you down? Give them a quick call for some reassurance.

Remember, too, that your recruiter is an expert, and can answer questions about any worries or concerns you may have.



## 3. DON'T LET IMPOSTER SYNDROME GET THE BETTER OF YOU

Rather than telling yourself that your success to date has just been down to luck, remind yourself of your uniqueness and your worth.

Take that self-belief into your job interview.



## 4. PICTURE POSITIVE OUTCOMES

Negative thinking can send the best of us into a downward spiral of anxiety, and this is not the right mindset to be in before an interview. Give yourself a pep talk, believe in yourself and remember all that you have achieved so far in your life and career.

Now try to mentally visualise positive outcomes, whether that’s building rapport with the interviewer or delivering great answers that set you apart.



## 5. CHANGE YOUR PERCEPTION OF THE INTERVIEWER

It’s easy to be intimidated by an unknown, presumably senior person. But this doesn’t need to make you nervous; after all, if you’ve followed this guide’s advice, you will have already looked up your interviewer and found out more about them.

Realise that this person will have also been in your shoes once, so you don’t need to feel intimidated.

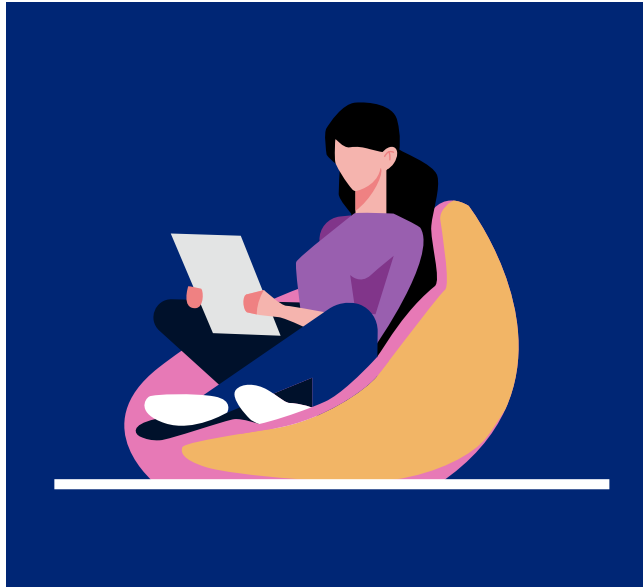


# LAST BUT NOT LEAST...

The evening before your interview is the time for you to wind down and relax your mind. You've done all you can by way of interview preparation, so now you need to ensure you go into the interview tomorrow with a fresh mind.

## THE NIGHT BEFORE YOUR INTERVIEW, YOU SHOULD:

- Make sure you have time to switch off from your preparation. You could do that by exercising, speaking to friends and family, or planning an activity or hobby for the evening
- Eat a nutritious meal
- Stay calm and keep things in perspective – if you need to revisit the steps for maintaining a positive mindset then do
- Get a good night's sleep – make sure you avoid any phone or computer screens in the lead up to going to sleep, and focus your attention on things that calm you down and distract your mind, such as reading or mindfulness



# PART 2

## ON THE DAY OF YOUR JOB INTERVIEW

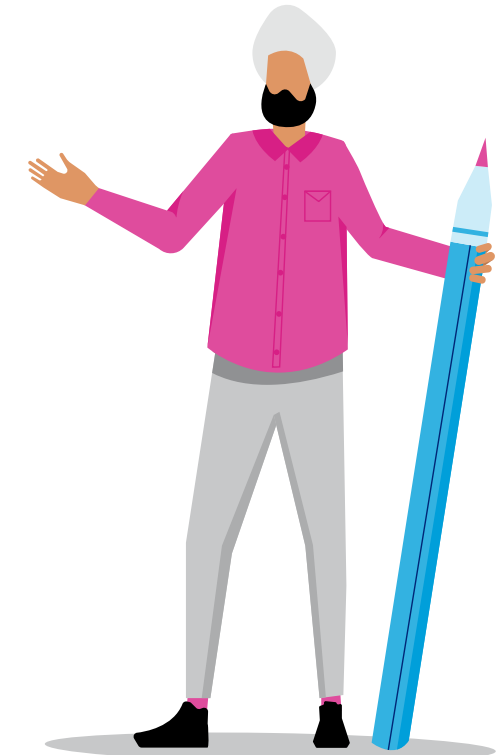


# MAKE THE BEST FIRST IMPRESSION POSSIBLE

It's essential that you are mindful of the fact that the second you step through the door – before even meeting your interviewer – you are already making your first impressions. So, on the day of your interview, ensure you:

1. Refresh your mind of the job description, your CV, and any key notes you have made
2. Be polite to everyone you meet – whilst receptionists and passing employees will not be deciding if you get this job or not, they could play a factor. Be your true, authentic self when meeting anyone during your interview process
3. For a face-to-face meeting, wait professionally in the reception area before you're invited for your interview. Rather than scrolling through your phone, look around you. Are there posters that tell you more about the organisation? Or marketing materials like booklets that you could flick through? This will not only help to illustrate your interest in the company from the outset, but will also teach you more about the organisation
4. Arrive on time – being 10 minutes early is best. But if you're running late because of factors outside of your control (like unexpected travel issues), then let your interviewer or recruiter know. Being on time is essential for a video interview too – while being early for this isn't necessary, be sure you are ready to go 10 minutes prior to the meeting

(TICK)



## AND FINALLY...

- Switch off your phone
- Don't chew gum
- Smile!

# ENSURE YOU BUILD RAPPORT WITH YOUR INTERVIEWER

Build a meaningful connection with your interviewer by...

## 1. SMILING

Make a conscious effort to smile when you are first introduced, when you say goodbye and regularly throughout the interview. This might seem obvious now, but nerves could make you forget.

## 2. REMEMBERING YOUR INTERVIEWER'S NAME

Use it quite often during the interview and as you leave. This is a trick that politicians use when establishing rapport with journalists who interview them, and it's surprisingly effective!

## 3. BEING MINDFUL OF NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION

Even the seemingly simplest things, like sitting up properly in your chair and maintaining good eye contact, can make a big difference to both your own mindset and how the interviewer perceives you.

## 4. NOT INTERRUPTING THE INTERVIEWER

Whilst it's important to [make the interview feel more like a conversation](#) than an interrogation, it's important you are patient and ensure the interviewer has finished speaking before responding. If you're interviewing remotely, be aware of any time lags due to technology.



## 5. STARTING YOUR ANSWERS WITH A POSITIVE AFFIRMATION OR AGREEMENT

Such as “great question”. This is another great way to humanise the interaction between you and the interviewer.

## 6. ASKING FOLLOW UP QUESTIONS

Again, make this more of a conversation. If the interviewer gives information you're interested in when delivering a question, once you have answered their question, be sure to follow up and show your interest.

## 7. RELAXING, AND BEING THE REAL YOU

Don't be afraid to let your personality shine through to help your interviewer see who you really are. Answer questions honestly and clearly.

### TOP TIP FOR A REMOTE INTERVIEW:

To appear as though you are providing eye contact during a video interview, remember to occasionally look into your camera while delivering your answers and when receiving a question. That way, you will look engaged when listening, and you will be more engaging when you are speaking.

To find more advice on building rapport with your interviewer, read our [blog](#).

# WHAT TO DO IF YOUR MIND GOES BLANK DURING YOUR INTERVIEW

## STAY CALM AND DON'T PANIC

This is crucial. It's important to know that the sense of dread and impending disaster washing over you isn't everything you fear it is. Staying calm will allow your mind to think more rationally and logically, rather than being in a panicked state of mind.

## TAKE A DEEP BREATH

Not only will this give you a moment to collect yourself, a deep breath also [sends a message to your brain](#) to calm down and relax. In a job interview, your brain has reacted to a situation it perceives as threatening, and you taking a deep breath is calmly sending it a polite message, in response, that this time it's mistaken.

## HAVE A SIP OF WATER

At the start of a face-to-face interview ensure you accept an offer for a drink, and similarly if you are at home in a video interview make sure you have a drink nearby. This is because when you're faced with a tough question or your mind goes blank, you can take a sip of water before answering. This will be a natural pause in conversation, buying you some more time to calm your mind and think of your answer.

## ADMIT TO YOUR INTERVIEWER THAT YOUR MIND HAS GONE BLANK

This shows honesty and humility, whilst giving you the opportunity to move on. It could also help you to relax from the sudden fight or flight response and allow you to ask the interviewer to repeat the question.

## REPEAT THE QUESTION BACK TO THE INTERVIEWER

This gives you a moment to collect your thoughts and listen to the question again in your own voice, and for the interviewer to confirm that you have heard the question correctly.

## WHAT CAN YOU DO TO ENSURE THESE MIND BLANKS DON'T HAPPEN IN THE FIRST PLACE?

- Relax as much as possible, so that you can think logically
- Focus on listening to the question being asked, rather than your anxieties and worries in your head
- Don't worry about moments of silence, they are normal in any conversation. Take your time
- Use gestures to help you in the retrieval of key information



For more advice on dealing with mind blanks, read this [blog](#).

# PART 3

## WHAT TO DO AFTER YOUR JOB INTERVIEW





# NEXT STEPS – WHAT YOU SHOULD AND SHOULDN'T DO AFTER YOUR INTERVIEW

Well done – your interview is now over! So, what's next?

While you're waiting to hear back from your interviewer or recruiter, follow these dos and don'ts:

## DO



### TALK TO YOUR RECRUITER STRAIGHT AFTER THE INTERVIEW

Following on from your interview, speak to your recruiter as soon as possible and provide feedback on how you think the interview went, whilst it is all still fresh in your mind.

Reiterate your enthusiasm for the role and how much you enjoyed meeting with the interviewer. This will be relayed to the company and will work in your favour.

Ask the recruiter for feedback if they have this yet. If not, then politely try to get an idea of when you can expect to hear back.



### FOLLOW UP WITH A THANK YOU EMAIL

If you have been in direct contact with the interviewer at any point, send them a follow up email to thank them for their time.

If you've not been in direct contact with the interviewer, then this thank you can be sent via your recruiter.

Use this as an opportunity to reiterate your interest in the role. You could even explain that upon meeting with them and learning more about the opportunity, you are even keener than before, and how you look forward to hearing from them.



### GIVE YOUR REFERENCES A HEADS-UP

Your references should be aware that they are being used as a reference, but drop them a note to remind them and ask them politely to keep an eye out. Ensure you thank them after they have provided this.



# DON'T



## CUT TIES WITH YOUR RECRUITER

If you are not successful following this interview, then don't lose hope and certainly don't cut ties with your recruiter. Thank them for their support so far, and get as much feedback as you can as to why you weren't successful. Be sure to take this on board ahead of your next interview.

Your recruiter is a valuable ally to have during your job search, and it is important that they get to know you and what you're searching for in your career. So, work on building a professional rapport with them, and connect with them on LinkedIn.



## BE TOO OBVIOUS

Just because a new opportunity is on the horizon, that doesn't mean you should clock off and let your performance drop within your current role. Ensure you are mindful of your focus and diligence.

It is important to maintain both your reputation and relationship with your current company. You don't know how much longer you will be working there, and even if you are offered another role, you never know when you might need their help in the future – such as by providing you with a good reference.



## LOSE TRACK OF WHO YOU HAVE INTERVIEWED WITH

Keep a spreadsheet or list of the names of the companies, hiring managers and job titles which you have or plan to interview with.

Make sure this spreadsheet is up-to-date so that you are clear where you are at in the application process with each role, and always review that list before picking up the phone or sending that email.



## CALL OFF THE JOB SEARCH

However well this interview went, do not by any means cancel any other upcoming interviews you have scheduled for different roles, or give up the job hunt on this basis alone.

Think about what is making you so keen for this specific opportunity, and use these key points to steer your search for similar roles.

	JOB					
STAGE	✓			✗		✓
			✗			
	✗		✓	✓		?
		✗		?	✓	
		✓				✗
	?					

For more advice on what you should and shouldn't do after your interview, read our [blog](#).

# ASK YOURSELF THESE FOUR QUESTIONS TO DECIDE IF THIS IS THE RIGHT JOB FOR YOU

1

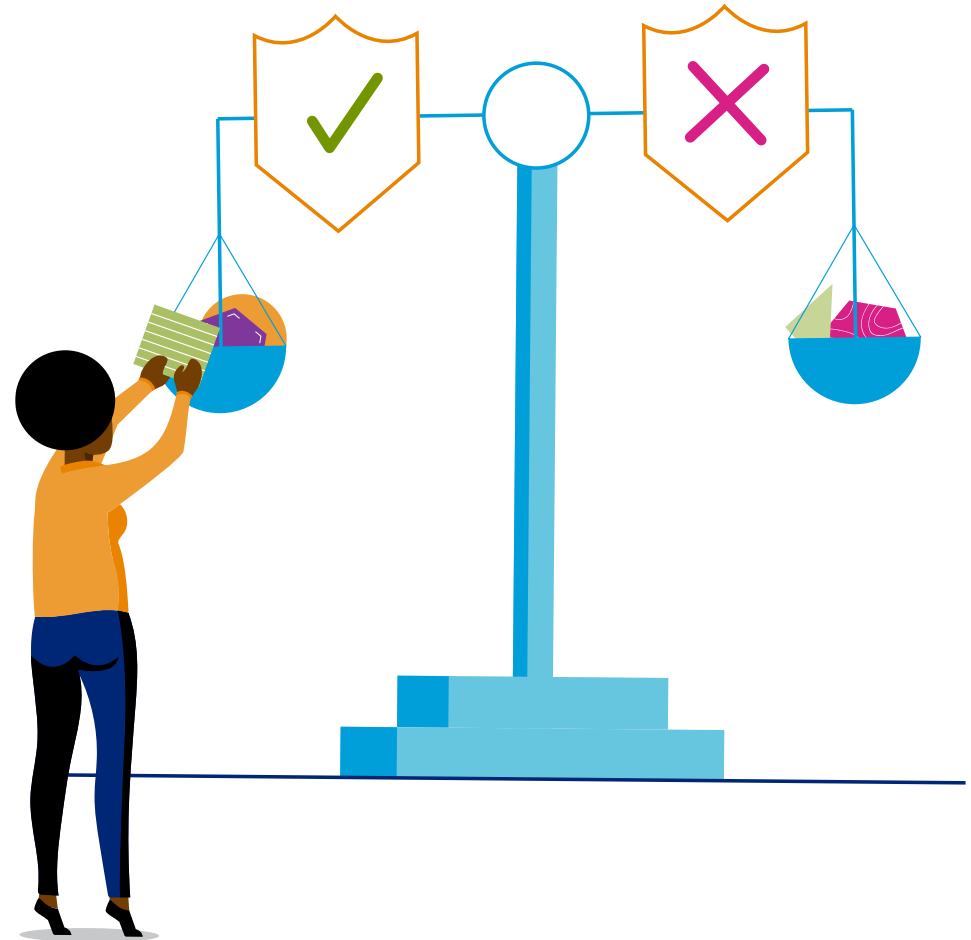
## DO YOU FEEL EXCITED ABOUT THE JOB?

- Now you have been to the interview and found out more, can you honestly say this opportunity would push you to your full potential?
- How does it fit in with the career plan and objectives you first set out when you embarked upon your job search?
- How did you feel when the interviewer was explaining the role in more detail; did you feel excited, and like this is the challenge you have been waiting for? Did you find yourself asking more questions about the opportunity?
- Does this new role have what your current one lacks? Think again about your reasons for wanting to leave. Be factual about what you want from a new role – will this job provide those things?

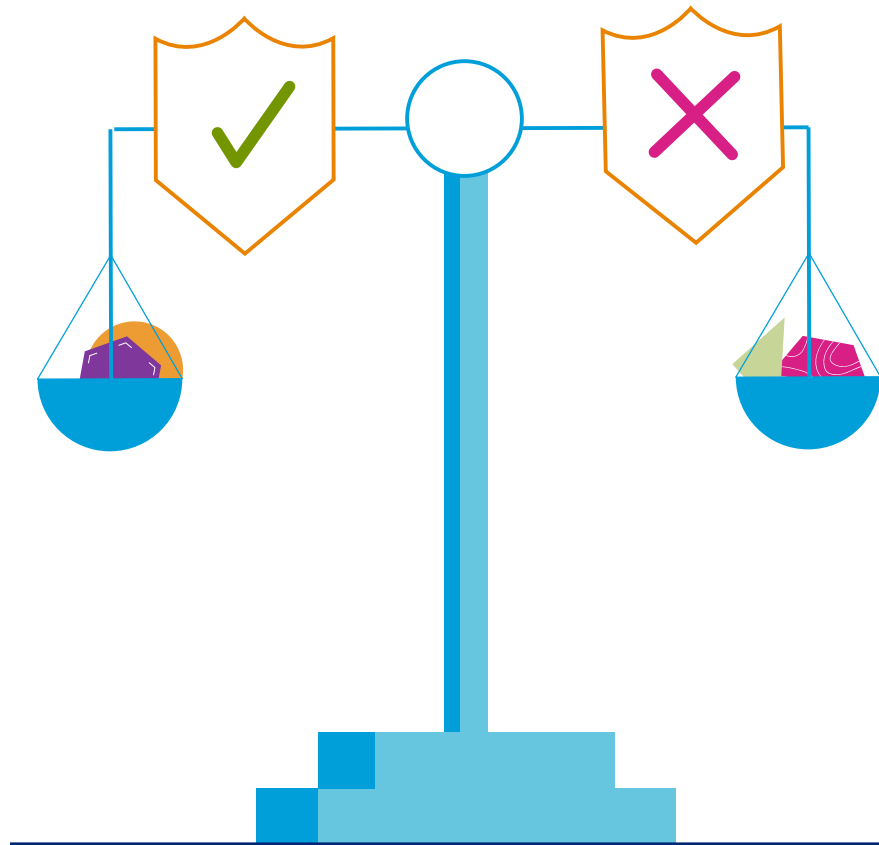
2

## IS THE COMPANY RIGHT FOR YOU?

- How did you feel about their purpose, values and culture?
- Would you feel proud and passionate about working there?
- Does their company “personality” suit *your* personality?
- What were your first impressions of potential colleagues (if you were introduced to them)?



# ASK YOURSELF THESE FOUR QUESTIONS TO DECIDE IF THIS IS THE RIGHT JOB FOR YOU



## 3 WHAT DID YOU THINK OF YOUR POTENTIAL NEW MANAGER?

- How did your potential boss come across during the interview?
- Were they a strong communicator?
- Did they explain the job and their expectations for the role clearly?
- Did they listen to your answers, and were they encouraging and receptive to what you had to say?
- Did they answer all of your questions fully?
- Were they approachable and welcoming? Did you feel comfortable talking to them and asking them questions?
- Did they seem passionate about their job, their team and the company?
- Were they interested in your ambitions for the future, and what you hoped to achieve if successful in this role?

## 4 WHAT IS YOUR “GUT” TELLING YOU?

- Your gut feeling isn't just a suspicion; it is your intuition telling you that a certain decision is for the best, even if it doesn't make complete sense at the time.
- If you walked away from this interview feeling more excited than when you walked in, even though certain boxes in your “perfect job” criteria remained unchecked, then that's your instincts kicking in, and you should pay attention to them.
- But ensure you pair this gut feeling with facts and logical thinking. When we feel enthusiastic about things, our rational thinking can be ignored. So, make sure you don't get swept away with your excitement.

Find out more by reading our [blog](#).

# ANSWER THESE FOUR QUESTIONS TO DECIDE IF THIS IS THE RIGHT JOB FOR YOU



**DO YOU FEEL EXCITED ABOUT THE JOB?**

**IS THE COMPANY RIGHT FOR YOU?**

**WHAT DID YOU THINK OF YOUR POTENTIAL NEW MANAGER?**

**WHAT IS YOUR "GUT" TELLING YOU?**

# SIGNS THAT YOUR INTERVIEW WENT WELL

1

You were in the interview for longer than expected

2

The interview felt conversational

3

You were told what *you* would be doing in this role – for example “in this role, *you* would be expected to...” as opposed to “*the successful candidate* would be expected to...”

4

The interviewer seemed engaged – consider their body language and their responses

5

You feel excited about the company and the role

6

Your questions were answered in full – this shows the interviewer was eager to sell you the opportunity

7

You were introduced to your potential new colleagues

8

You were introduced to senior decision makers

9

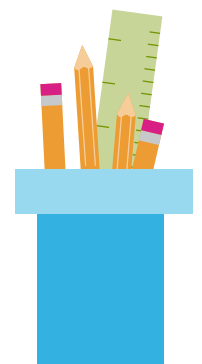
You were asked “closing questions” at the end – such as questions surrounding your notice period and when you would be able to start

10

The interviewer was clear about the next steps

11

The interviewer gave good feedback to your recruiter



If you'd like to learn more about these signs, read our [blog](#).

# WHAT TO DO IF YOUR INTERVIEW WENT BADLY

If you think your interview didn't go very well, then don't worry. You may well be able to salvage the situation, or at least make the best of it, by following these steps:



## 1. WRITE DOWN AN HONEST ACCOUNT OF HOW YOU FELT THE INTERVIEW WENT

Do this in chronological order – start right at the beginning of the day, and end with the final point of your interview. This will allow you to offload your many thoughts and feelings about the interview so you can recollect more clearly how it went.

Once you've written everything down, it will be easier to pinpoint the mistakes you made during the interview. Did you forget to prepare questions to ask at the end? Did you ramble too much with one of your answers? Did you accidentally speak negatively about your last employer? Whatever it was, identify how the mistakes happened so you can avoid them for next time.



## 2. GIVE BALANCED AND PROFESSIONAL FEEDBACK TO YOUR RECRUITER

Now that you have a clear recollection of the interview, you should speak to your recruiter. It is worth letting them know from the get-go that you don't feel the interview went as well as it could have.

When feeding back about your performance, it's important that you're honest, but also that you aren't too negative in the language you use – or cross the line from self-aware to self-deprecating. Be sure to also highlight the lessons you have learnt.

### For example, instead of saying:



“This was a really bad interview. I completely messed up one of my answers. I wasn't expecting the question, so I just rambled and talked absolute rubbish.”

### You might say something like:



“One of the interview questions caught me off-guard. Having never been asked this in an interview before, I rambled a bit. Next time I'll draw a few deep breaths and perhaps ask for a couple of seconds to think about my answer.”



# WHAT TO DO IF YOUR INTERVIEW WENT BADLY



## 3. TAKE YOUR RECRUITER'S FEEDBACK ON BOARD

Once you have fed back to your recruiter, listen to what they have to say. They have plenty of experience in coaching jobseekers for interview situations and gathering feedback from their clients, so they will be able to provide you with some advice.

The recruiter might also have some feedback from your interviewer, so remember to listen carefully. If they picked up on some of your slip-ups, don't panic. Let the recruiter know the reasons you think you made these mistakes, and how you will avoid them in the future. This shows self-awareness and honesty – both valuable traits, and both of which can be fed back to the interviewer.

Remember to take note of positive feedback, and don't be too hard on yourself.



## 4. KEEP CALM AND CONTINUE YOUR JOB SEARCH

In the stressful 'limbo' period that is waiting to hear back about your success in the interview, it's important that you keep calm and positive.

Don't contact the interviewer directly or connect with them on LinkedIn – this can sometimes be perceived as invasive and presumptuous. Instead, send a thank you note to the interviewer via your recruiter.

Don't give up on your job search whilst waiting to hear back. Relax, spend some time with family and friends who can boost you up, and then get ready to bounce back and carry on looking for new roles.



If you're looking for more advice for dealing with a bad interview, then read our [blog](#).



# WHAT TO DO IF YOU'VE BEEN INVITED BACK FOR A SECOND INTERVIEW

Firstly, congratulations if you're reading this section of your Interview Guide! That must mean you've been invited for a second interview, so well done. But how will this differ from the first?

## WHAT FORMAT WILL THE INTERVIEW BE?

Don't assume the format of your second interview will be the same as the first. You may be prepared for a one-on-one interview, only to be faced with a [panel of stakeholders](#) on the day. Check with your recruiter how many people are interviewing you and how the interview will be formatted.

If there are more people involved in this second interview than your first, during the meeting, remember to interact with everyone in the room and not just those who are asking you the most questions. Remember everyone's name and address them as such.

You may also be asked to undertake a task or test – something which would test your proficiency for the role. Again, ask your recruiter about this as they will be able to advise you on anything you should prepare or practise before the interview.



## WHO WILL YOU BE MEETING IN YOUR SECOND INTERVIEW?

At the second interview stage, you will most likely be meeting someone more senior within the business; the person who will ultimately have the final say on the hiring decision.

You may also be introduced to more team members, meeting some of your potential colleagues.

Before your interview, confirm with your recruiter who will be conducting the second interview. This will allow you to research them beforehand online, be it on LinkedIn or via the company website (following the [same steps](#) we covered earlier in this guide that you used for your first interview).

# WHAT TO DO IF YOU'VE BEEN INVITED BACK FOR A SECOND INTERVIEW

## WHAT IS THE INTERVIEWER TRYING TO ASSESS?

The main differences between your first and second interviews lie in the objectives of the interviewer. The key information they are most likely looking for in a second interview is:

### 1. Your level of interest in the role and organisation

Your level of enthusiasm is directly linked to how well you would perform if you were offered the role, so if you are still keen make sure this comes across.

### 2. Do you have the skills required?

Prepare for competency-based interview questions by revisiting the core requirements of the role, plus some examples of times you have showcased these skills. You should also double check with your recruiter to see if you are required to share examples of your work or prepare any presentations.

### 3. Are you the right 'fit'?

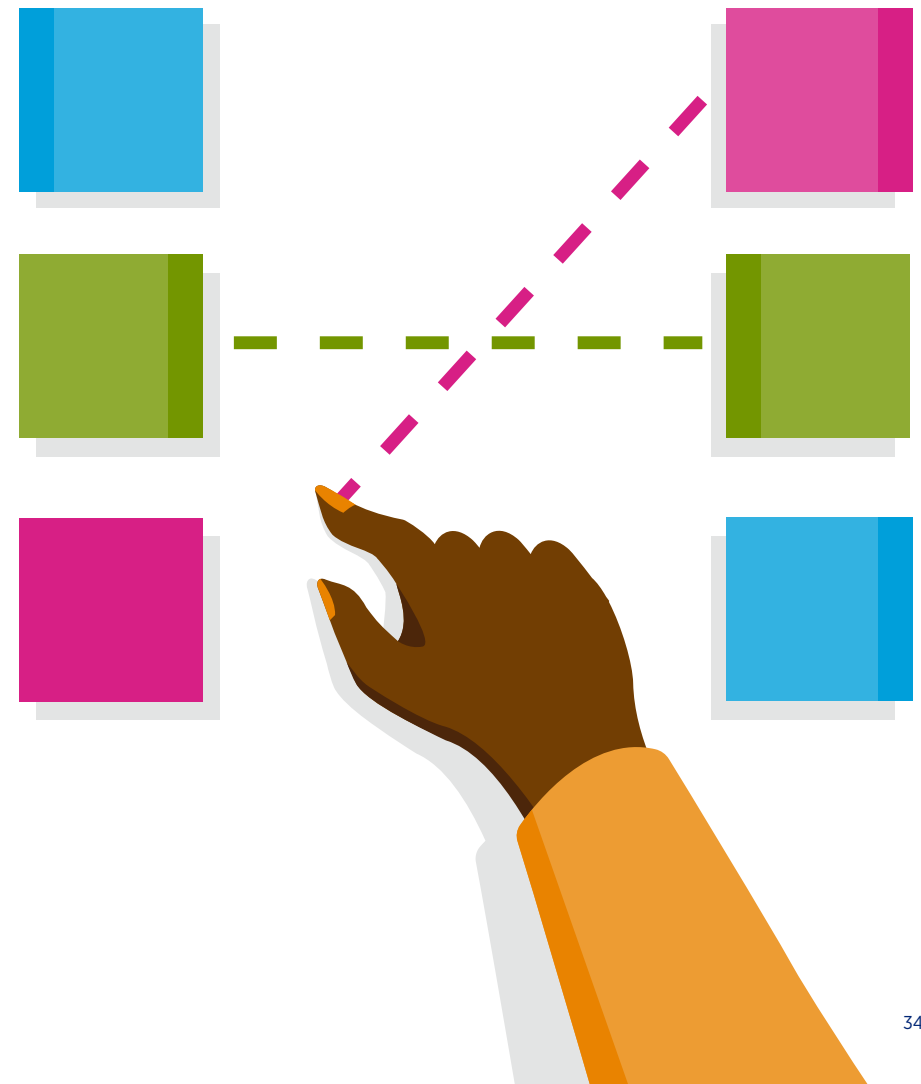
You could be asked questions surrounding your hobbies and interests, how your friends would describe you, and what type of culture you prefer to work in. As you answer these questions, it is important that you remain authentic and honest, after all, the second interview is your chance to critically assess how good a 'fit' this organisation is for you too.

### 4. Addressing and resolving any reservations or doubts

Try and recall any recurring questions that they asked multiple times but phrased in different ways. This may be reflective of a concern that they were trying to clear up.

### 5. Your availability and salary expectations

Have this information ready. If you are unsure of how to negotiate your salary, check out our [Salary Guides](#).



# KEEP IN MIND THE FACT THAT THIS EXPERIENCE HAS BEEN VALUABLE, NO MATTER WHAT THE OUTCOME

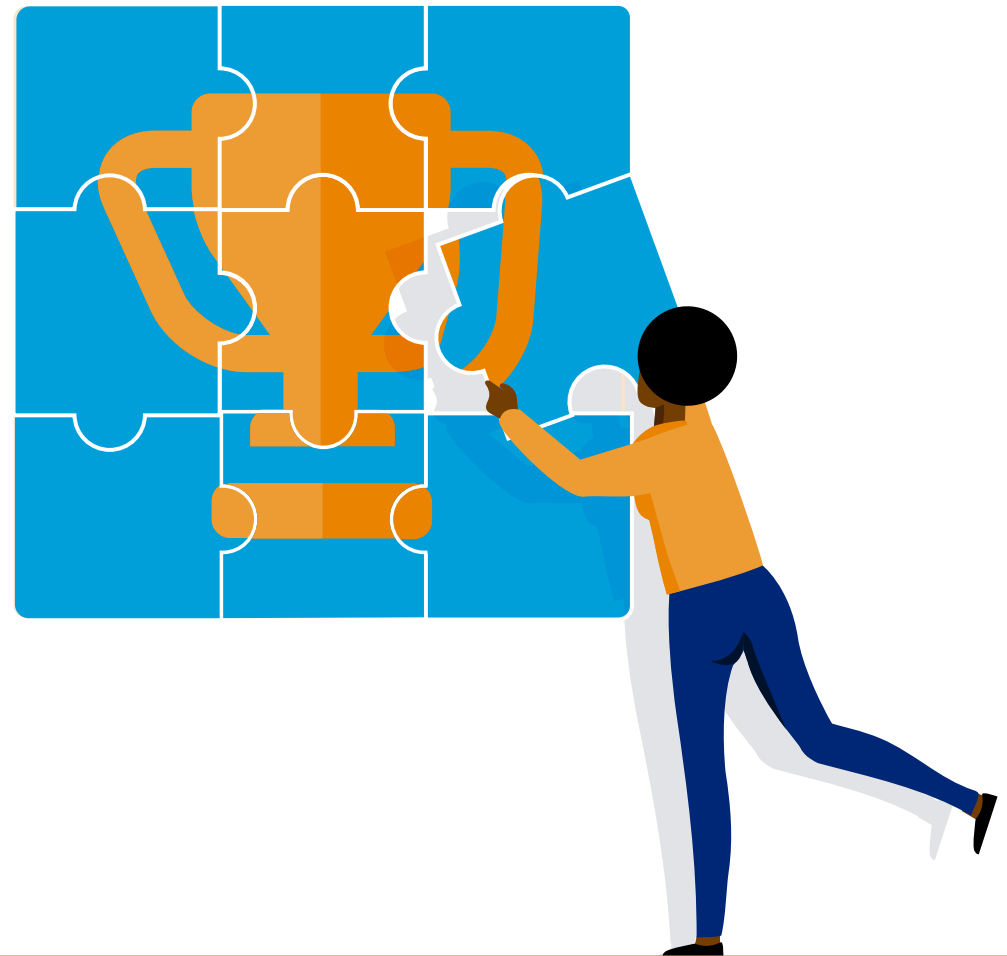
## CONGRATULATE YOURSELF FOR GETTING THIS FAR

You must appreciate that you have learnt a lot during this process, and have also increased your employability along the way.

You now have answers prepared and practised for questions such as “Why should I hire you?”, which are going to come in useful in many future interviews. Your answer to this question can also act as a great reminder to yourself of the value you bring.

You also now have an [up-to-date CV](#), which you are confident to talk through – something that is useful in both your professional and personal life.

Apply your growth mindset to this experience; after all, you will have got a lot from this interview process, no matter the outcome.



# FURTHER JOB SEARCH ADVICE

At Hays, we are your lifelong career partner, so can support you throughout each stage of your job search.

## YOU MAY FIND THE BELOW ADVICE USEFUL:

- [Create and update your CV](#)
- [Find your perfect job](#)
- [Accepting a job offer](#)
- [Starting a new job](#)
- [Get in touch with your local Hays team](#)

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