

Right place, right time

Confirm the time and venue for your interview 24 hours beforehand, and don't leave your journey to chance. Make sure you've up-to-date timetables for public transport or if you're traveling by car, leave time for parking and other hold-ups.

Sharp suit, nice smile

Although dress-down policies are becoming the norm, it's still best to stick to a smart suit. You'll be judged on your attitude as well as your appearance, so greet your interviewer with a firm handshake, make eye contact and don't forget to smile.

Fact find, feel fine

Ask your consultant for a job specification and make sure you understand what the job entails. Then find out what form the interview will take - is it a one-on-one or panel interview? Do you need to bring examples of your work? Will there be a test to assess your skills? And finally, make sure you know about the company. Check out their website or some promotional literature; find out where it stands in the marketplace and which companies are its main competitors, better still talk to someone who works there.

Anticipate questions, prepare answers

Interview questions normally fall into four categories: You as a person; your work history, skills and experience; the company; the job. Through these questions the interviewer is looking for an insight into your personality. Why are you leaving your current job? What do you know about their company and do you have the skills to fulfill the job specification? Put yourself in their shoes. What would you ask? Brainstorm your answers with a friend and don't be afraid to take some prepared notes as a prompt, along with your questions for the interviewers.

Don't be coy, sell your skills

An interviewer will often see many candidates in a day. The one he or she remembers is the one who had something interesting to say. So write down what you consider to be your skills, strengths, achievements, and the areas where there's room for improvement. If you have spent time considering what you have to offer you'll feel more comfortable presenting these strengths to your prospective employer.

Be prepared, they may want more

Make sure you can expand on all of your answers. Your CV/resume may well provide them with all the info they need - but the interviewer needs to check out your communications skills. Please make sure that you have read your CV/resume, it all makes sense, the dates are correct and that you can talk confidently about the contents.

Need to present? Practice what you're preaching

If you're asked to make a presentation, keep the content short and simple. If you have been asked to present for 15 minutes, make sure you have not completed it in five, or that you're still talking after half an hour. Run through your talk a few times in front of the mirror - this will help you get your timing right.

Ask them questions, consider their answers

There comes a point in every interview when you'll be asked: 'Have you got any questions?' The worst answer you can give is no. Think hard about what aspects of the job are important to you. Are there training opportunities for example? What are the opportunities for career progression? Don't be afraid to bring a short list of prepared questions.

Take notes, get noticed

Don't be afraid to take notes, not only does this look professional, but jotting down your interviewer's answers could come in useful as a reminder of important points if you're called to a second interview. Moreover, noting the job's benefits could help in your own decision making if you have one or more job offers.

Exit gracefully, then follow up

Leave the interview in a polite and assured fashion, meet the interviewer's eye, give them a firm handshake and smile. If you are interested in the job please let the interviewer know before you leave. Leave the rest to your consultant at RecruitR.