

Commonly Asked Interview Questions

- Why do you want to work for us?
- What are your strengths and weaknesses?
- Tell me about yourself.
- Why do you want to leave your present employer?
- How would you deal with a complaint?
- Why did you want to get into this field of employment?
- What can you offer us that someone else can't?
- What is your previous experience?
- What motivates you?
- What is your most significant achievement?
- What are your career goals?
- What have you done to increase your personal development?
- What makes you think you are suitable for this role?
- How would your best friend describe you?
- What are your hobbies and interests?
- What have you done for the last six months?

References

References are people that the employer can contact to see what kind of worker you are, what special skills you have and more.

Most employers require references so they can make sure that you have the skills you listed on your CV, verify your work record and to find out what people who know you well think of you. A character reference can come from anyone who knows you and will contain information about your personality.

What If I'm Unsuccessful?

However horrible this might feel, remember that an organisation nearly always selects from a number of applications, so you may just have been 'piped at the post' for a job. There are some things you can do to improve your chances next time.

Review your interviewing technique. Did you do enough research? Were you prepared for the questions? Did you look confident?

Review your CV - Is it up-to-date? Was it tailored to the specific job? Is it in the right format for the sort of jobs you are applying for? Is it too long? Ask others to give you feedback on it.

Widen your search, perhaps to smaller or larger organisations and locations.

Try to expand your career goals; perhaps a job in a related field, but not exactly what you want, might help you eventually reach your goal.

Where to Look For More Help

Jobcentre Plus: 0191 451 4222
www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk

Connexions Direct: 080 800 13 2 19
www.connexions-direct.com



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Young People & Help Applying for Jobs



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Looking and Applying for a Job

The more effort you put into job searching, the more likely you are to get something out of it. You increase your knowledge of writing job application forms and interview skills with each application process you go through.

Curriculum Vitae and Covering Letters

A CV is a way for employers to get an idea of your education, experience, skills and what you are capable of. It also contains your contact details.

If your CV is smart, precise and relevant, the employer will, more than likely, give it a second glance. There are a lot of hints when it comes to making an excellent CV:

- Keep it short; one or two pages will do.
- Put your jobs in order from most recent to oldest.
- Give basic information about each job; include the company name, dates you worked there, your job title and your responsibilities.
- Include other experience; if you don't have a lot of paid work experience, write about any voluntary experience or work experience from school you may have done.
- State your skills; remember to list all relevant skills you may have, such as computer use or cash handling.

When you have completed your CV, you should write a covering letter, to accompany your CV when you send it to potential employers. A covering letter has to contain information about which position you are applying for and what relevant skills and experience you have. The covering letter should be about three or four short paragraphs in length.

Application Forms

Filling out an application form can be a daunting prospect. Remember to write as neatly as you can and read through the whole form before you start to complete it. It's also a good idea to take a photocopy of the form so you can do a practice one first to avoid mistakes.

You will require the names, addresses and phone numbers of the past two places you have worked, including the approximate dates you worked there and name of your line manager.

Interviews

The key to interviewing well is being prepared. Here are some suggestions to help:

Telephone Interviews

Employers use telephone interviews as a way of screening candidates in order to narrow the pool of applicants who will be invited to a person to person interview.

- Remember to be prepared for a telephone interview just as you would for a regular interview:
- Have your CV in clear view, so you can refer to it.
- Have a pen and paper for note taking.
- If the time isn't convenient, ask if you could talk at a later time and suggest some alternatives.
- Don't chew gum, eat or drink.
- Smile, it will come across on the telephone.
- Stand up if possible; it makes your voice sound stronger.
- Speak slowly and clearly.

About a week before the interview

- Think about why you want the job; write down three reasons why you want the job and be prepared to explain them to the employer.
- Practice interviewing; ask a friend or family member to practise with you, including your handshake.
- Learn about the company.
- Get directions and plan your route. Find out exactly where you're going, how to get there and how much time it will take you to get there. Always leave extra time to get there.

On the day of the interview

- Dress appropriately, don't wear a suit to a building site and don't wear jeans to a bank! Be smart, not smelly; clean hair & teeth etc.
- Take an extra copy of your CV along with a notebook and a pen in case you want to take notes.
- Be on time; get to the interview about 10 minutes in advance.

During the interview

- Shake hands; your handshake should be firm, but not too tight.
- Make eye contact; if you're uncomfortable looking directly into someone's eyes then look at their forehead.
- Speak clearly.
- Look interested; Stay focused on what the employer is saying.
- Ask questions; listen to what they say and think about what questions you can ask. This way, when the employer asks you if you have any questions you will have some!
- Thank them for their time at the end of the interview.