

Checklist Job Interview

Congratulations! You have reached the next step on the path to finding a job. Based on your cover letter and CV you have been invited for a job interview. What should you do now?

1. Before the interview:

- Closely read the job description of the vacancy. Write down the points in the ad which apply specifically to you and think of some concrete examples that illustrate these points. For instance, if the vacancy requires someone with a high sense of responsibility, write down a project at university that you were heavily involved in.
- Prepare yourself for questions that are most commonly asked during interviews. You can easily find examples of such questions on the internet.
- Also, think of a couple of questions you would like to ask during the interview. The best questions are those that illustrate your interest in the organization and the field in which it operates. It is therefore highly recommended to first study the challenges that a person in this field, or in this function, will have to face.
- Carefully study the company's website, and, if possible, stop by the office sometime. What kind of people enter the building? What are they wearing? This may prove to be useful information when looking for a suitable outfit to wear to your interview.
- Observe the LinkedIn profiles of the company's employees, and especially those of the recruitment team. In this way you can find out ahead of time what their responsibilities are within the company.
- Make sure to find out the term of notice of your present employer, in case you already have a job.
- Find out how to reach your interview's location beforehand, and make sure you know how to get there. If, for instance, you do not know what a certain bus stop looks like, you might get off at the wrong stop and be late for the interview. Print your travel schedule (or save it on your phone).
- Select your interview outfit. Make sure you match the company spirit. If everyone wears a suit, make sure you put on a suit as well. However, if the employees of the organization have a more informal attitude, it might be better to wear a nice pair of jeans, a shirt, and a blazer. You can almost never go wrong with an outfit that is slightly more formal than what you are used to. Additionally, wear something that makes you stand out, or reflects your personality. This could be a nice scarf (women) or an original shirt/tie (men).
- Always make sure your clothes are clean, washed, and ironed.

- Print multiple copies of your CV and cover letter and bring these to the interview in a folder, so that they will not wrinkle.
- Bring two or three pens and a notepad.
- Make sure you have eaten enough before the interview. You want to avoid having a rumbling stomach or being low on energy!
- Leave the house at least half an hour earlier than necessary.

2. Upon arrival:

- Make sure you arrive approximately ten minutes before your interview is scheduled to start. If you arrive much too early, perhaps take a stroll around the block or have a coffee somewhere. Your future employer should not have to worry about having to entertain you!
- Be kind and respectful to everyone you meet. In case you snap at the receptionist, they will definitely let the recruiter know how you treated them.
- Make a quick visit to the bathroom to check whether you still look as professional as when you left home.
- Do not play with your phone while waiting for your interview. Rather, read a book or a magazine. However, do note that whatever you are reading will reflect your personality and interests. Therefore, it might be wise to bring a serious magazine, instead of an entertainment magazine.
- Shake hands with the person who will be interviewing you (do not squeeze too hard) and make eye contact while introducing yourself.

3. During the interview:

- Remember that the interview is meant for finding out whether you match the company, but also whether the company matches you! It is definitely not a cross-examination. Have an open attitude and ask your recruiter questions as well. You can use the questions you have prepared beforehand. This will show that you are genuinely interested.
- Pay close attention to your body language. Keep your back straight, have your hands on the table in a relaxed way, and establish eye contact with the person who interviews you. There are many websites that can provide you with information on body language.
- At the end of the conversation, make sure to ask about the hiring procedure. How many candidates are there and when will you find out whether you have made it to the next round?

4. After the conversation

- You can inquire about your application, in case you have not heard from the company after two weeks. Make sure not to sound impatient, but politely ask whether there is any news regarding the hiring procedure.
- You got the job? Congratulations! But, do wait to announce this on social media and to share it with all your relatives and friends. Also, in case you already have a job, do not share the news with your current employer until you have signed your contract with your new employer.
- You did not get the job? Please try not to be too disappointed and ask the recruiter what their opinion was of your performance. You can ask for some points for improvement which you may use for future job applications.