

# INTERVIEW PREPARATION

In the competitive job market, it is no small feat to get an interview, so congratulations!

Our team at SelectLeaders wants to help give you the best chance of interview success with this extensive checklist. This resource will provide some tips, help you organize your thoughts and allow you to hone in on the areas that matter most before, during and after the interview. Many of these may seem common sense but you'd be amazed how many people fail to consider basic etiquette.

Now, let's get you ready for the interview!

## PRE-INTERVIEW CHECKLIST

### DO YOU UNDERSTAND THE ROLE?

Make sure to have the job description close by and clearly understand the role, responsibilities and what the company is looking for in terms of experience, skills and cultural fit.

Understand why the position has become available.

### ARE YOU CLEAR ON THE DAY/TIME AND LOCATION OF THE INTERVIEW?

If your interview is in person, we recommend checking the location information on the company website or asking your interview coordinator for any specific location logistics. Give yourself more than enough time to arrive before the interview.

Add the day/time and location of the interview to your calendar with an active reminder or alert.

Check transport and parking options, if needed.

Plan to arrive 10-15 minutes before the interview and never be late.

### DO YOU HAVE A VIRTUAL INTERVIEW?

We recommend checking the information given to you well before the day of to know whether the interview is via phone, Zoom, Google Hangouts, Skype, Facetime, etc.

If your meeting requires the internet, make sure you have a quality, high-speed connection to avoid any technical issues.

#### Rehearse:

Download the correct software/application for the interview and login in advance of the interview.

Run a practice test with a trusted friend or family member to check the lighting, audio and video quality.

An attractive backdrop can often be well received, even subconsciously, but be sure it's not distracting, cluttered or showing anything distasteful.

A quiet, private environment would also be beneficial to avoid any distractions or disturbances.

## DO YOU KNOW THE COMPANY?

Learn about the company. They are more than likely going to ask what you know about them. Some research will go a long way, demonstrating your eagerness to work for them.

What do they do? What is the culture of the company and how do you fit the bill?

Do as much as you can to learn about the market the business is in, show your knowledge.

What are the company's plans for the future and has there been any news, recent events or enhancements to their business you could use as conversation points? Check their website, social media or do a quick Google search.

Who are their competitors and how do you think they compete?

Who are the main stakeholders in the business? Research executive management to owners and understand what the organizational structure looks like.

*Are there things you want to know but couldn't find the answer to? Note down your questions to ask during the interview.*

## WHO ARE YOU MEETING WITH?

Make certain you know the name of the person who's interviewing you, and anyone else joining.

Research them. This can be helpful in building common ground and coming up with questions or topics of conversation. See if they're on the company website, view their profile on LinkedIn or do a Google search.

What is their position within the company and how long have they been there? Have they moved roles within? What was their job prior to joining the company?

Where did they go to school? What qualifications do they have? Do you have similar hobbies? Do you have any connections? These can make for perfect icebreakers.

## DO YOU KNOW YOUR RESUME?

You need to know the ins and outs of your resume. The interviewer will certainly ask about areas that stood out to them.

Take time ahead of the interview to review what you submitted so you can easily articulate your experiences, skills and accolades.

Be prepared to address any weaknesses in your resume. Do you have gaps in employment? Have you switched careers? Be certain you can justify and place a positive spin on these circumstances.

Practice makes perfect. Practice how you will speak about yourself so you can provide confident responses.





## WHAT MIGHT THEY ASK YOU?

What do you know about our company?

Tell me about yourself and why you're interested in the role?

Why do you want to leave your current job?

Why do you want this job?

Why should we hire you?

Are you a team player?

What do you think you'll be able to contribute to the company?

What are your short and long term goals?

What can you do for us that someone else can't?

What is the biggest work challenge you've faced?

Tell us your greatest strengths and weaknesses.

Tell us about the worst boss you have ever had.

What level of salary are you expecting?

Do you work well under pressure?

What are your biggest career accomplishments?

Do you have any questions for me?

## Some Tips:

- Answer truthfully and honestly and don't hesitate to ask if you don't fully understand the question.
- We advise you not to share any derogatory comments about previous bosses, colleagues or companies you've worked for.
- If you are discussing a negative topic, end with a positive spin. Avoid "I can't", "I haven't", "I won't" and "I don't".
- Tell them something that sets you apart from the rest. It could be something personal or professional — some examples would be that you love to travel and recently visited Morocco, that you were a part of a major acquisition or were on a team that completed a major project which transformed the business.
- Before the interview comes to an end, ask when you should expect to hear from them, when the start date is and if there is anything else they would like to know before you leave.
- Don't worry about pay or benefits, we will speak with them about this on your behalf.
- Show gratitude. Thank the person or people who interviewed you for their time, stand up, shake their hand(s) and let them show you out.

## HAVE YOU PREPARED YOUR QUESTIONS?

Ask genuine questions and not generic ones you think they want to hear. Remember, interviews go both ways! You are also trying to determine if the role and company are right for you.

### Example Questions:

Who will I work most closely with and who will I report to?

What does career progression look like?

What's keeping you working for the company?

What will the biggest challenge be working here?

Is there anything in my resume that makes you think I might not be a good fit?

What will you expect me to accomplish in the first 1-3 months?

What does training/the ramp up period look like?

## WILL YOU BE DRESSED TO IMPRESS?

Wear business attire, look professional and be appropriately dressed for the role.

If you have a virtual interview dress the same as you would if you were meeting them in person — you will look and feel professional.

## WHAT SHOULD I BRING TO THE INTERVIEW?

If you're interviewing in person, take a few copies of your resume with you just in case they don't have it on hand.

The questions you have about the company and role.

A pad of paper and a pen. There is nothing wrong with taking notes and it can demonstrate you're engaged and interested. **Tip: If there are multiple interviewers, write down their names so you remember to thank them individually.**

Cash/credit card in case you have to pay for parking.

## HAVE YOU THOUGHT ABOUT INTERVIEW ETIQUETTE?

Turn your cellphone to silent/do not disturb before entering and tuck it away.

Always stand up to shake your interviewer's hand...not too limp, not too hard, somewhere in between — firm and confident.

Wait to be asked to take a seat and arrange yourself for the interview to proceed.

If the interview is virtual, ensure they can hear and see you.

Always look interested in what your interviewer has to say. Give them the attention they deserve and don't create any disturbances. For example, for virtual interviews, turn off any alerts as it is easy to see when your eyes are wandering.

Be patient and don't interrupt the interviewer. Listen intently and take in what they have to say so you can respond appropriately.

Sit up straight in your chair, don't slouch.

Maintain good eye contact but not too much and always speak honestly.

Don't point, cross your arms, fidget or look nervously around the room.

Never express that you want the job straight away, you are vetting them as well.

Lastly, be positive, relax, smile with confidence and enjoy yourself. We know it's easier said than done, but if you do you'll likely leave a good impression.

## POST-INTERVIEW CHECKLIST

We wish you the best of luck with your interview. Please call us as soon as the interview is finished so we can discuss:

How you felt the interview went.

What you thought about the company.

Questions the interviewer asked during the interview.

If you want the job and are interested in progressing to the next round.

Finally, be sure to send a thank you email to whomever you interviewed with!

## DO YOU HAVE OTHER QUESTIONS WE DIDN'T COVER?

Call or email your SelectLeaders recruiter or shoot a note to [support@selectleaders.com](mailto:support@selectleaders.com).