

Preparing for Interview: A Practical Guide for Adults

Preparing properly for an interview increases your confidence, reduces anxiety, and significantly improves your chances of success. Employers can tell when a candidate has taken the time to prepare — it shows professionalism, motivation, and genuine interest in the role.

Research the Company

Understanding the organisation is one of the strongest ways to demonstrate enthusiasm and commitment.

What to research:

- Company mission and values
- Services or products they offer
- Recent news, projects, or achievements
- Their clients, partners, or community work
- Their culture and working environment

Why this matters

Employers want to see that you care about *their* organisation, not just any job. Research helps you tailor your answers, ask intelligent questions, and show that you understand how you could contribute

Study the Job Description Thoroughly

The job description is your roadmap — it tells you exactly what the employer is looking for

How to use it:

- Highlight key responsibilities
- Identify essential and desirable skills
- Match your experience to each requirement
- Prepare examples that demonstrate your strengths

Why this matters

Interview questions are almost always based on the job description. The more familiar you are with it, the easier it is to give relevant, confident answers

Dress Appropriately

First impressions are formed within seconds. Dressing professionally shows respect and helps you feel more confident

Tips

- Choose clean, well-fitted, neutral clothing
- Avoid overly casual outfits unless the employer specifies otherwise
- When in doubt, dress slightly more formal than the workplace standard

Why this matters

Your appearance communicates professionalism before you even speak. Employers want to see that you understand workplace expectations

Prepare Your Documents

Check whether the employer has asked you to bring:

- Photo ID
- Proof of address
- Certificates or qualifications
- Right-to-work documents
- Portfolio or examples of work (if relevant)

Why this matters

Being organised shows reliability. Arriving without required documents can delay the process or create a negative impression.

Practice, Practice, and Practice Again

Preparation builds confidence and reduces nerves

What to practise:

- Common interview questions
- Competency-based answers using STAR
- Talking through your CV and achievements
- Explaining why you want the role
- Asking thoughtful questions at the end

Why this matters

Practising helps you speak clearly, stay focused, and avoid rambling. It also ensures you can highlight your strengths without hesitation.

Plan the Practical Details

Small things can make a big difference

Checklist:

- Know the interview location and how long it takes to get there
- Plan to arrive 10–15 minutes early
- Bring a notebook and pen
- Charge your phone
- Prepare water and any accessibility needs

Why this matters

Being calm and punctual sets the tone for the entire interview. Planning ahead prevents last-minute stress

Prepare Questions to Ask the Employer

Interviews are a two-way process. Asking questions shows interest and helps you decide whether the job is right for you

Examples

- What does success look like in this role?
- What opportunities are there for training or progression?
- How would you describe the team culture?

Why this matters

Employers value curiosity and engagement. It shows you are thinking long-term

Prepare Your Mindset

Confidence is not about being perfect — it's about being prepared

Tips:

- Remind yourself of your strengths
- Review your achievements
- Visualise a positive outcome
- Take slow, steady breaths before entering the room

Why this matters

A calm, confident mindset helps you communicate clearly and build rapport with the interviewer