



Congratulations – You have secured your first interview so now is the time to really make all that effort count. Whether you are an interviewing pro or it is the first one you have had in 10 years the same rules apply – prepare, prepare, PREPARE!

Below is our guide to planning and preparing for your interview. It's not exhaustive but there are some great ideas to help reduce those nerves and enhance your performance. Good luck!

1. Research the company

There is nothing more unprofessional or embarrassing than being invited into a business and knowing nothing about what they do so find out as much information as you can. Visit their website to learn about the company's products, services and customers. If they have a social media presence then this is a great way to get the latest updates on projects, funding or employee news. Sites such as LinkedIn are also fantastic tools to learn a little about your interviewer if they have a profile on the site. This is important and it shows that you are serious about the role and the business but it can also help you come up with some questions to ask at the end of the interview.

2. Utilise the knowledge of your recruitment consultant

Interviewing can be tough at the best of times and every company will have their own process and method of questioning, so this is where you can use the knowledge of your recruitment consultant to your advantage. They will have probably placed people in the company before and may know what the managers like to see, the sorts of questions they will ask and structure of the interview so make yourself open and available to talk through this prior to your interview. This is also the perfect time to talk through any concerns, practice your answers and make sure you understand what is expected of you. Any good recruitment consultant will always be at hand to help!

3. Know yourself

Preparing for an interview is not only a great way to understand who you are meeting but also a wonderful opportunity to reconnect with yourself and your achievements over your career. Take the time to go through the job description and any advice your recruitment consultant has given you and compare this to your experience. Think back through the projects you worked on, what you achieved and how you did it. Depending on the role you are interviewing for, prepare some competency based answers to demonstrate why you would be a good fit for this company and position.

A key thing to remember here is if you have included it on your CV, be prepared to answer questions about it!

People Technology Progression



4. Get in the right mindset

Positivity is both infectious and hard to resist –

Entering the interview room and greeting your potential future employer with a firm hand shake, good eye contact and a big smile not only shows them you are a confident individual, it will also make you feel confident in yourself and will get the interview off to a very positive start.

By telling yourself that this is your time to shine and this is the role for you will naturally make you feel empowered and will also help calm any last-minute nerves. All you can do is your best and enthusiasm and confidence are the first ingredients to success.

5. Be precise

It's so easy to ramble and go off-piste when you're answering interview questions, so prepare your answers. Think of it like a story and all good stories have start, middle and end. What was the situation: "We were launching a new product", then describe your part: "I designed, I was responsible for, I managed... and finally talk about the result: "The product launched without any issues and the design actually improved the overall product," etc.

It is perfectly acceptable to bring your preparation notes to the interview, so that if your mind does go blank, you can quickly pick up again. Plus, it shows the interviewers how much work you did in advance.

6. Be honest about salary expectations

Discussions around salary can be awkward and not always the right thing to bring up in an interview. The good thing about going through a recruitment agency is that your consultant will handle all of this for you. They will have told the hiring managers your expectations when putting you forward for interview, so you shouldn't have to worry. If they do ask, stick with what you told your consultant – it shouldn't come as a surprise to them.

If you haven't used an agency, it is best being honest. State that you know the salary range and would naturally like the top end but are flexible to an extent as it's such a good opportunity.

Salary expectations are always best managed by justification and substantiation. Put yourselves in the seat of the employer and think what it would be like if it was your business and your money. What would you get in return, are the skills and experience of the candidate in line with the needs of the business, the current team et.

NOTE: It's not all about the basic salary... don't forget benefits, bonuses but for some its about the opportunity, training and future prospects too.



7. Always ask questions

An interview is a two-way process, it's meant to be a conversation which also gives you the opportunity to get a feel for the company, so ask plenty of questions. Here are a few good ones:

- What are the biggest challenges facing the company this year?
- What would my first month in the role look like?
- What do you like about working here?
- Are there any concerns about me that you'd like me to address?

The last question in particular is effective, as it allows the interviewers to bring up any little niggling doubts and lets you answer them there and then, putting you right back in the game again.

8. Call your consultant

And relax... you can relax! Now call your consultant and tell them how it went. This is important as they will discuss the interview with the hiring managers, so need to have your feedback in advance. They can also answer any questions you may have, i.e. when might you hear anything? Commit to calling your consultant so that they can continue to help you.