



In-Person Interview Tips

In-person interviews require special preparation, as you not only need to be prepared to answer questions and discuss your experience, but you need to exude a professional appearance and demeanor. Following are some of our favorite tips for in-person interviews.

Before the Interview

- Select your clothing and shoes at least one day before your in-person interview. This will help ensure you are not rushed on the day of the interview, and give you time to purchase new items if needed.
 - If you are familiar with the company's dress code, a good rule of thumb is to dress a step above that for your interview. For instance, if the dress code is casual, dress business casual. If the dress code is business casual, wear a suit. When in doubt, it is better to be overdressed than underdressed.
 - It is also important to ensure you are comfortable in your clothing, especially if you are interviewing for a long period of time.
- Avoid wearing fragrance, as your interviewer may have allergies.
- Avoid wearing excessive jewelry, makeup, or other adornments that may distract from what you are saying during the interview.
- Eat a high-protein meal or snack prior to the interview. Low blood sugar may reduce your ability to think.
- Bring a notepad, pen, and at least one copy of your resume per person you will interview with. A padfolio can help keep these items organized.
- Prepare a list of at least two references, but do not offer it unless asked. Ensure your references are aware you are interviewing and they may be contacted.
- Leave yourself twice as much time to get to the interview location as you think is required. Accidents and road closures always happen at the worst times.
- Silence your cell phone.

At the Interview

- Stand tall with your shoulders back when you meet the interviewers, and extend your hand for a firm handshake with each one. Remember to make eye contact and smile!
- Once seated, maintain good posture. If you have brought a portfolio or notebook, set it aside on the table rather than holding it in front of you.
- Request a business card from everyone you meet early on; otherwise you may forget.
- Consider showing your palms while you are talking, as it can convey honesty. Avoid looking down while speaking, as it can convey dishonesty.
- Always maintain eye contact with your interviewers. To avoid “staring,” make an inverted triangle out of their eyebrows and nose, and continually move your gaze from point to point.
- Answer all questions fully and with great detail, but also as succinctly as possible. Do not talk longer than one minute without pausing. This will give the interviewer a chance to interject in case they want to dive deeper on a certain point you’ve made, or if you’ve veered off topic.
- An interviewer may ask you why you are seeking a new opportunity, or request that you discuss what you didn’t like about a previous job you held. Be honest in your answer, but remember to frame it as positively as possible. Never bad-mouth your current or previous employers, as this can reflect negatively on you.
- Listen more than you speak. Typically, the split should be 60% interviewer / 40% candidate. And never interrupt the interviewer!
- Try not to bridge your thoughts or sentences with “uh” or “um.” A pause is a better choice.
- Take your time – it’s perfectly acceptable to take a moment or two to collect your thoughts.
- Remember to say “thank you” at the end, and ask about next steps in the process.

After the Interview

- Write a thank you email to your interviewer(s) within 24 hours. Highlight one or two key talking points from the interview to help them remember you and set you apart from the competition. See our section on Thank You letters for additional tips and examples.
- If you’ve only received the direct email address of one interviewer, ask that they pass along your thanks to the others.
- Follow through on any promises you made during the interview – such as sending work samples or letters of reference.