

Interview technique: Brush up your skills

With your new professional qualification safely under your belt – or your results perhaps still en route by post – we understand that your focus will now shift to finding better and brighter job opportunities.

So while you proudly update and enhance your CV with your new CIMA, CIPFA, ICAEW, ICAS or ACCA accreditation, you'll no doubt also want to brush on some basic and essential job interview techniques.

Here are our top tips to help make sure you shine at interview, and get the job you want.

Make a great impression from the outset Believe it or not, you can make a great impression before you've even stepped inside the employer's office by arriving on time, if not 10 minutes early, for your interview.

Punctuality is a strong indicator of your professionalism and enthusiasm for the role. Research the address and how you are going to get there. Give yourself plenty of time for traffic, train delays or any other obstacles that may arise on the day.

Be professional Your future career depends on this interview, so it's important you act professionally and remain serious throughout the entire interview process. Do not chew gum, slouch in your chair or crack jokes. Some employers might not mind the odd joke, and sometimes it may lighten the atmosphere, but it's hard to know whether the employer interviewing you appreciates a joke or not. So it's best to just focus on being professional.

Dress to impress Your appearance reflects how seriously you take the role. Wear appropriate clothes that indicate how you would represent the company. A neat, tidy and clean appearance will portray professionalism. Make sure you don't over-dress by wearing too much jewellery, perfume or aftershave.

Keep your composure It's important to remain as relaxed as possible. Even the most seasoned professional can get interview nerves. Preparing thoroughly will help you to maintain your composure. Remember that both you and the interviewer want a successful outcome from the interview.

Be confident Your nerves may be all over the place and your heart may feel like it's going to beat out of your chest, but it's critical to remain confident right from the beginning. Greet your interviewer standing, with a firm handshake, good eye contact and a smile. Researching interview questions and preparing examples beforehand will lift your confidence when answering questions.

Make sure they remember you Close the interview with a handshake, a smile and a genuine thank you. A brief, friendly email thanking the interviewer for their time and consideration is often viewed positively. Restating your enthusiasm for the role could be a deciding factor as to whether you are offered the job.

And – finally – use our helpful interview checklist, below, to ensure you make the best possible impact.

- Where will the interview take place?
- How do you get there?
- Where's the nearest coffee shop?
- Do you need to bring identification?
- What type of interview will it be?
- What is the name and title of your interviewer(s)?
- How long will the interview take?
- Will you be shown around the department?
- Will there be any tests involved?
- Will there be further interviews?



Tips for success: follow this advice and you could be celebrating getting that dream job

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