

First time interview tips

Just finished school or university and looking out to the big world of employment? Here are five tips to nailing your first job interview, and cooling those nerves that are no doubt bubbling away!

1. **Be your (best) self.** It's important to try and be yourself in an interview – but always aim to be your *best* self. Your most respectable and polite self. That means wearing appropriate attire, smiling, sitting up straight, and making eye contact.

Think of it this way: look to present the 'you' you'd bring to a nice dinner with your grandparents, as opposed to the 'you' you'd be if you were playing X-box at a mate's house.

2. **Do your research.** Showing that you have an understanding of the company you want to join – and that you've taken the time to research them and the role – can put you head and shoulders above other candidates being interviewed.

Thanks to the power of Google, you don't have to have years of work history under your belt to nail this one. All you need to do is a little smart searching online. Visit their company website and read their About, Team and Careers pages, and their mission statement if it's available. Bonus points for digging through their social media presence for an example you may be able to point to in your interview.

3. **You have more experience than you think.** You may be interviewing for your first full-time role out of school or university, but that doesn't mean you don't already have a wealth of experience to draw from when talking about what makes you a great fit for the job.

Think about any part-time jobs, volunteering opportunities or responsibilities you've had, such as babysitting, mowing lawns, captaining a sports team, delivering newspapers, or tutoring other kids at your school. If it can demonstrate punctuality and reliability, so be sure to mention it!

4. **Your attitude is greater than any lack of experience.** Your interviewers already know that you're a school leaver or new grad, so set aside any worries you have about a lack of professional experience. Instead, focus on showcasing your fantastic attitude, which is often far more valuable.

Employers are looking for enthusiasm and a willingness to learn when it comes to choosing the right person for the role, so show that you have those two attributes in spades. You could talk about what excites you about their brand or products, what motivates you about the role, and what you look forward to learning as you become a successful member of their team.

5. **Leave a lasting impression.** We often hear of the importance of making a good first impression, but it's just as important to *leave* a good impression before you walk out the door. This moment is like signing your name at the end of a cover letter, and is the final thing your potential employer will remember about you.

To leave a great impression, stand up at the conclusion of the interview, thank your interviewers very much for their time, tell them you look forward to hearing from them, and shake their hands before you leave. Within a couple of hours of getting home, send them a brief email thanking them once again, and affirming that you believe you would love to work for their company.

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