School of Mathematics *Employability Tuesdays* Careers Seminars

Preparing for Interviews

The session will begin at 12:00 (UK time)

To join this session you will need the following:

- **Strong internet** access (broadband connection highly recommended)
- Using **Google Chrome** for the best experience,
- We recommend **closing all other programmes** except for the browser you are using for your Collaborate session
- **Headphones** (recommended)

This session will be recorded.

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Before we start

Can you hear the presenter talking?

- Please select yes/no on the on-screen poll, or type your answer in the chat box.

- If you can't hear, try leaving and re-joining the session – Google Chrome is the recommended browser.

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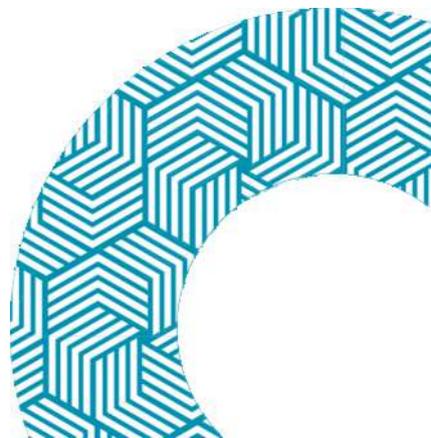
Asking questions

Etiquette
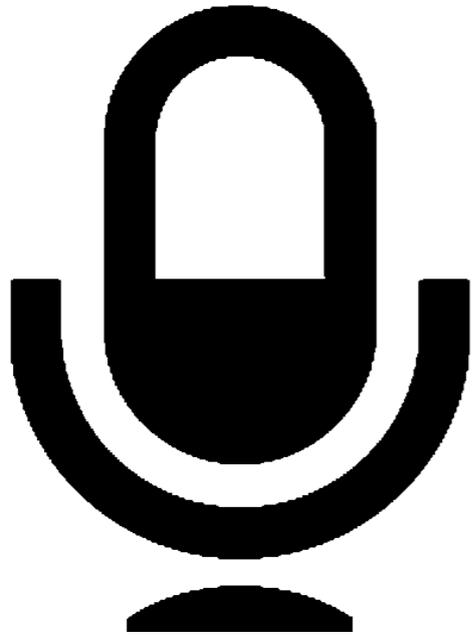
Please mute your microphone

You can type a question or comment at any time in the text chat.

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Recording

- **This session will now be recorded**. Any further information that you provide during a session is optional and in doing so you give us consent to process this information.

- These sessions will be stored by the University of Edinburgh for one year and published on our website and Media Hopper during that time.

- The text chat is recorded but will not be visible on the published recording.

- By taking part in a session you give us your consent to process any information you provide during it.

- We will tell you when we stop recording.

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THE UNIVERSITY *of* EDINBURGH
Careers Service

School of Mathematics *Employability Tuesday* Careers Seminars

Preparing for Interviews

Matt Vickers

Careers Consultant

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Today's session supports you towards

Making it happen!
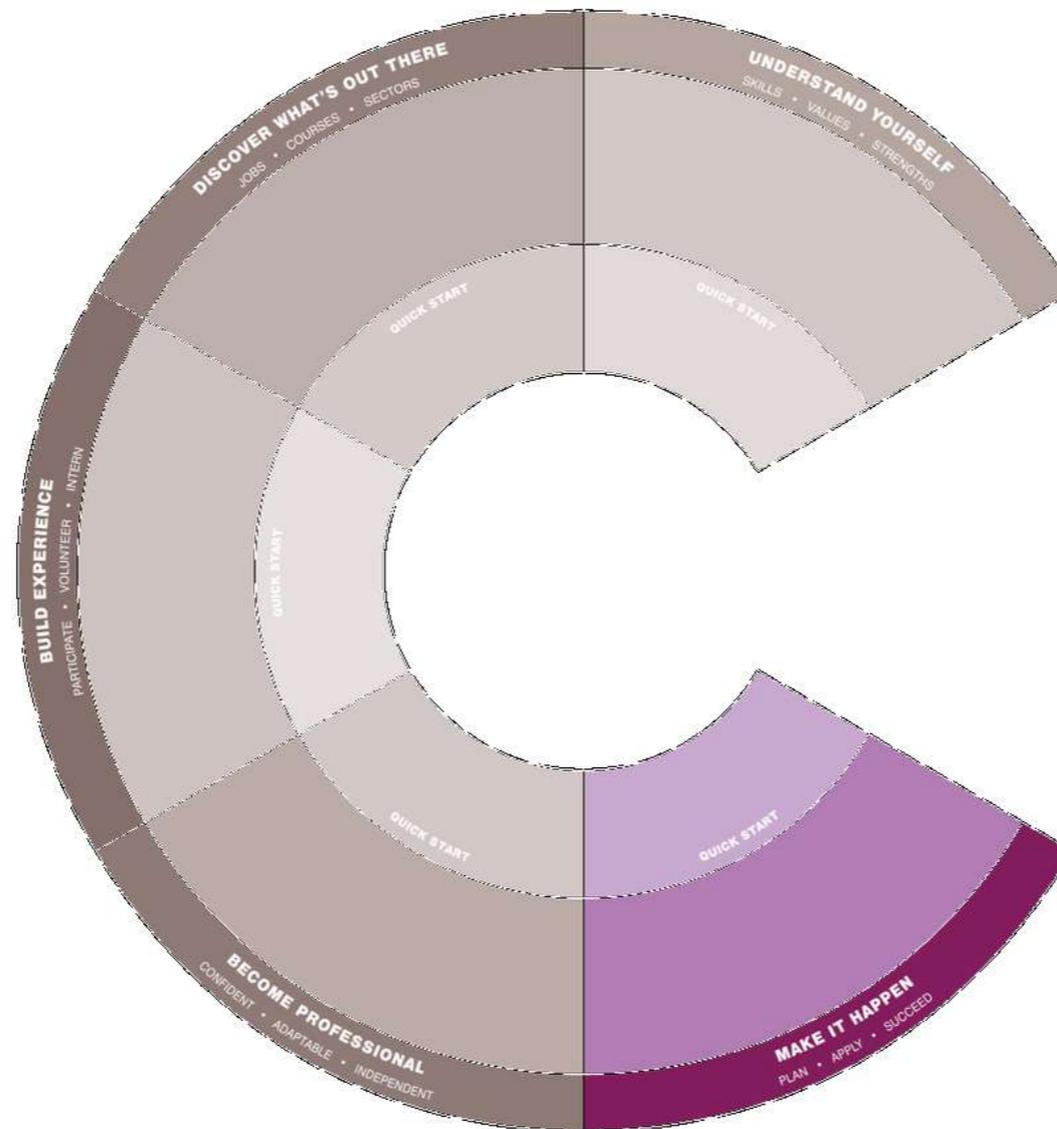
Find out more…
www.ed.ac.uk/careers/compass

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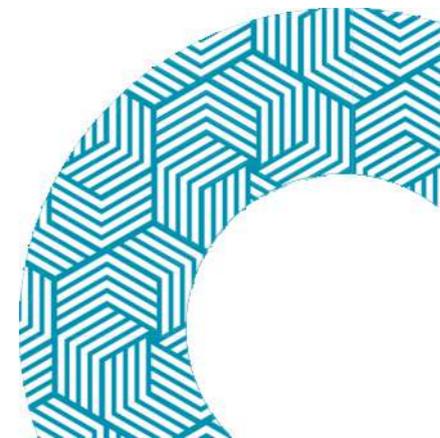
What are we going to cover?

- What interviews are about

- What you can expect: types of interviews

- Preparation

- What might you be asked – sorts of questions

- Approaches for answering

- Further help

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What an interview is NOT!
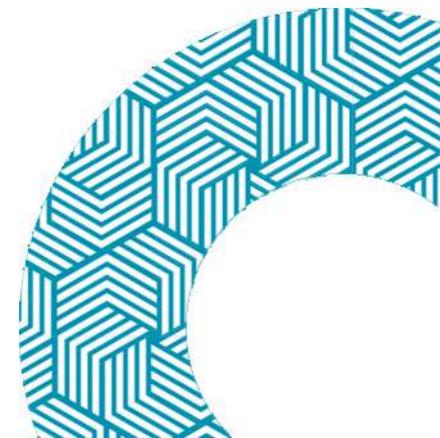
Some dictionary definitions…

Torment/Suffering:

"A source of severe mental anguish and anxiety; an ordeal".

Interview:

"A meeting between an employer and a candidate to ascertain, by questioning and discussion, the latter's suitability for a post."
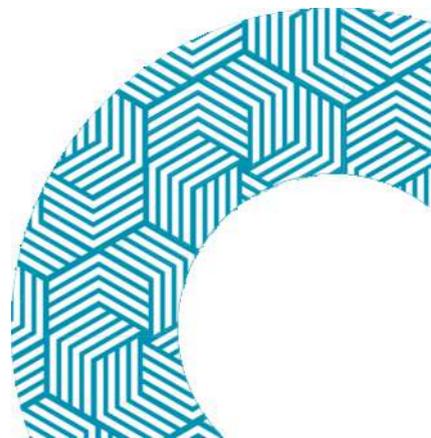
Reasons to be cheerful...

- Your CV/application form works!

- You're over the biggest hurdle

- You've prepared and know your selling points

- You might enjoy it?!!

- It's a learning experience

What about them?
The interviewers' perspective

- Already **think you are good**

- They **want you to be good/perform** to your max!

- Looking for **evidence** from you to support their belief

- Want to know:

  - Can you do the job? (skills, knowledge, experience)
  - Do you want to do the job? (motivation: role + employer)
  - Do they want you to do the job? (cultural fit)

- Is human…

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Your agenda?

Your aim is to...

- Sell yourself and what you can do/know

- Find out more about the company and the job

- Get a job offer

If successful...

↓

Is it the right job/employer?

If unsuccessful…

↓

A practice/learning?

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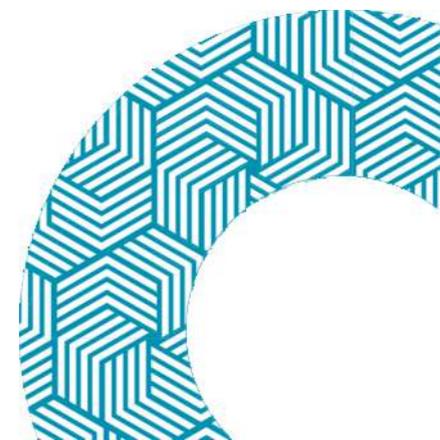
What can you expect?

What can you expect?

Anything!

Format will vary, depending on the company and the job.
<u>Some</u> insights at <u>TARGETjobs Employer Hub</u>

Method:

- Telephone
- Video (recorded)
- Skype/Web (live)
- Face-to-face

Approach:

- One-to-one (informal or formal)
- Panel
- Series of interviews (incl. a technical one?)
- Assessment Day/Centre
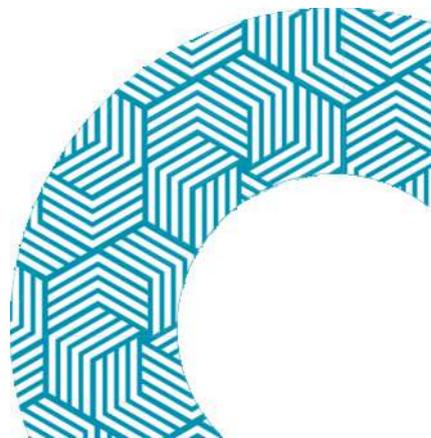
What will they ask you?
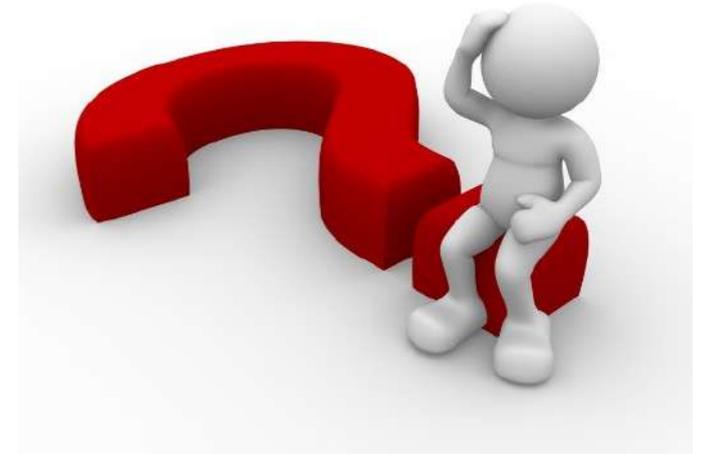
Questions to ascertain you **can do the job**

- Comparing you to the required skills/competencies
- Ask about relevant work experience
- Knowledge – poss incl. technical questions?

Questions to ascertain you **want to do the job**

- Check your job understanding
- Check your sectoral knowledge
- Check your company knowledge
- Check your interest/motivation/career plans

Questions **about you** linked into the above
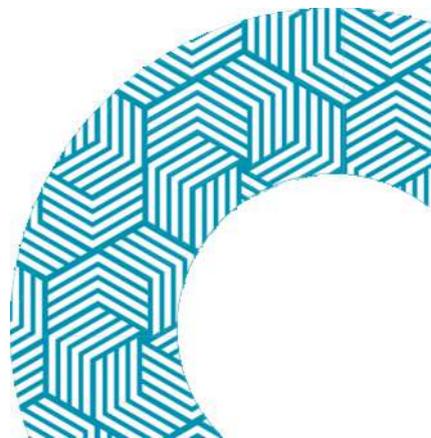
Begin by understanding
what the recruiter is looking for:

i.e. the Job Description!

Global Graduate Options: Data Science

First Derivatives PLC

📍 United Kingdom

🔖 Bookmark Opportunity | ➕ Follow First Derivatives PLC

Details

First Derivatives plc is currently recruiting for a number of HQ and Overseas roles in our Data Scientist stream. These roles offer candidates a unique opportunity to enter the Big Data world where the emphasis is on problem solving using a combination of analytics, imagination and business understanding. Data Scientists explore vast amounts of information to detect patterns, trends and correlations that enable businesses to improve their products, services and revenue.

The skills required and the techniques learned apply across various industries and we are heavily involved with financial markets, utilities and telecoms to name but a few. Those selected will embark on an exciting career that combines technical prowess with business insight and commercial acumen. Candidates will be exposed to the latest technologies for both structured and unstructured data including the market leading kdb+ database and q analytics language, Hadoop, SAP HANA, IOS and Android all of which are hosted across best-in-class hardware, mobile and cloud based platforms.

The ideal applicant will have:

- An inquisitive mindset, an aptitude for problem solving and technical skills to combine them.
- A minimum of ABB at A Level (or equivalent in Leaving Cert Points).
- A minimum 2.1 in a degree in Computing, Mathematics, Statistics, Data Science, Physics, Engineering or a similar quantitative discipline.
- Excellent communication skills to present findings and articulate their business benefits.
- Experience with Java, C/C++ and/or UNIX is beneficial but not a requirement.

Graduates will be deployed on Client Projects immediately, whilst undertaking our Capital Markets Training Programme. Our extensive Graduate salary plus package worth over £60,000.

Other information

Opportunity Type
Graduate - immediate start
Graduate - future start

Contract Type
Permanent

Contract Hours
Full Time

Remuneration
Competitive

Expected commencement
Immediate and future vacancies available

Website
Go to website

Posted 1 Oct 2020

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Global Graduate Options: Data Science

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First Derivatives plc
FD
DATA | TRADING | RISK

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Full Time

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Website
Go to website

Posted 1 Oct 2020

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A recruiter's shopping list

e.g. Global Actuarial Grad Programme

You'll need a head for figures, that's for definite. So we'd like you to have an A grade at A-level Maths (or an equivalent qualification), as well as a 2:1 in a Maths or another highly numerical degree. And because of this background, it goes without saying that you're analytical and methodical. Potential's massively important. We don't expect you to know everything about economic and statistical modelling just yet. But we do expect you to be a quick and keen learner, ready to make the most of the opportunities that will come your way. And rest assured, they will come your way – here in the UK and overseas.

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Interviews are like exams: Prepare!

**Employer**

Job / Role

You
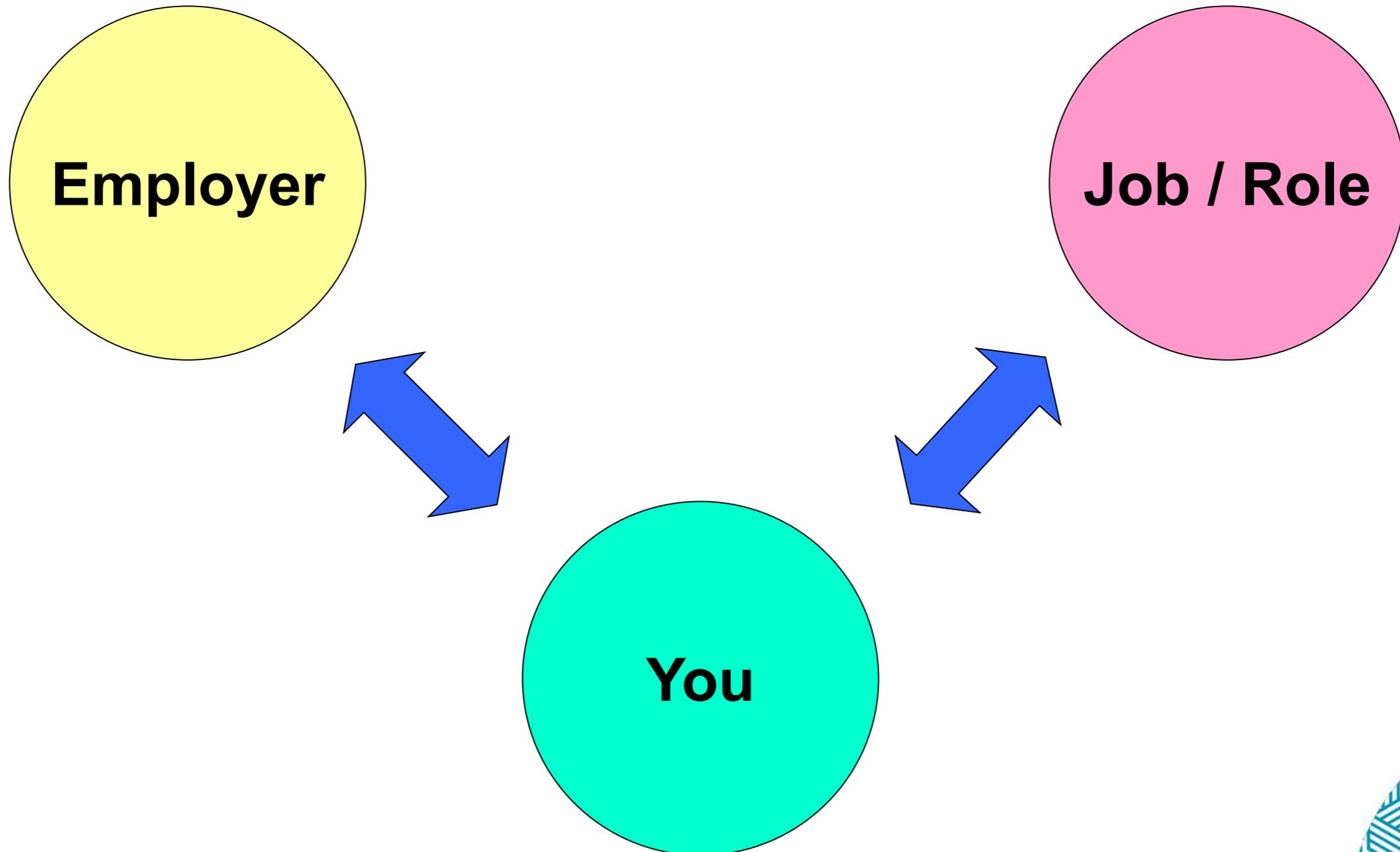
About the employer
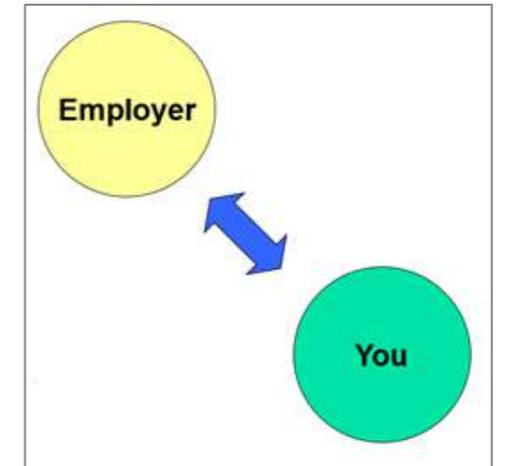
- Why do you want to work for us, *specifically*?

- What do you know about us?

- Tell me about a project/piece of work/product of ours that has impressed you.

- Who are our competitors? What sets us apart?

- What have you read about us of late that's interested you?

- From your research, what has surprised you or stood out about us?

- How do our values match yours?

- (Finance) what is our share price?

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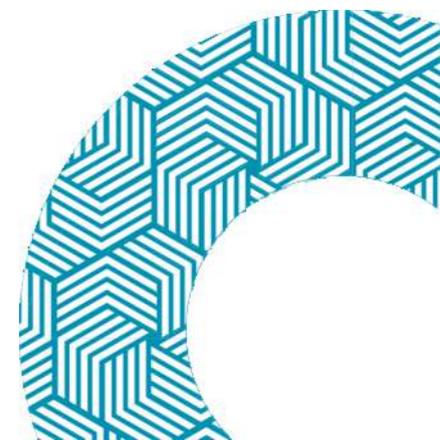
About the job

- Why do you want to in [role]?

- What do you know about [role]?

- What have you done to research the role/profession?

- What are the key challenges in the profession right now?

- What key skills do you feel are needed for a successful person in the role?   Give me an example of skills X.

- What will you enjoy most about the role…. And what will you find most challenging about it?
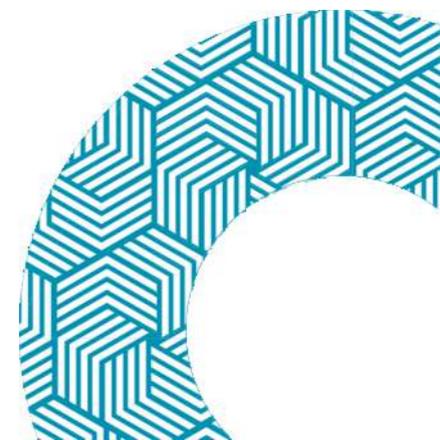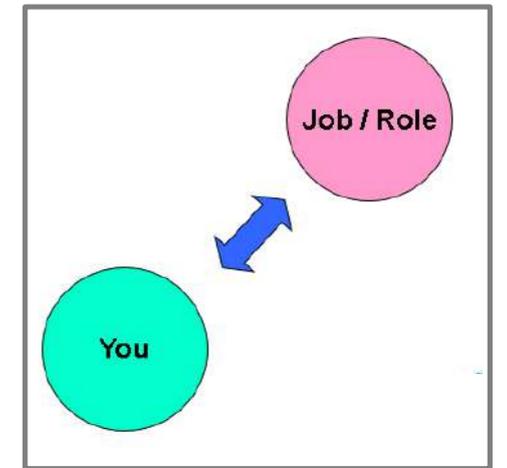
About you

You
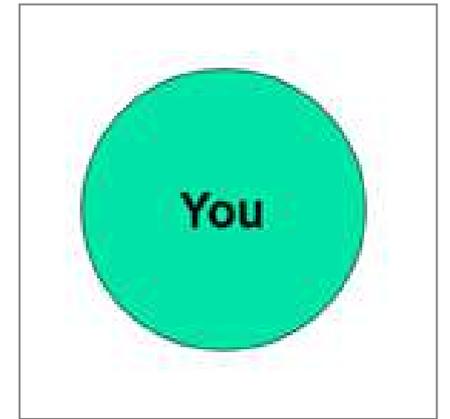
- Tell me about yourself!

- What has been your most relevant experience?

- Tell me more about your education / summer job / volunteer work etc.

- How will this job fit in with your career plans?

- Where do you see yourself in X years?

- What are your strengths / weaknesses?

- How would you deal with [situation X]?

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Don't assume they have (all) read your CV!

"Hallo Matthew,

Thank you very much for your help last week as I prepared for the interview with Llais y Goedwig. I had the interview yesterday and it went quite well.

However, it suddenly became obvious towards the end of the interview that they had not looked at my CV! *Just as they were wrapping the interview up, the lead interviewer summed up by saying they were happy with all my community experience, but would like to know how I would address my lack of woodland experience. I started listing projects I hadn't mentioned on my CV, and then elaborated a little on the experience I had listed, and that was when I realised they weren't aware of any of this.*

Obviously I can't go back and give a better answer (if only!)…"

Edinburgh graduate via email, 25/11/15

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Competency based (v. common)

"Give me an example of a time when you…."

Why are they asked used?

- Past performance indicates future potential

- Fair: everybody asked the same (comparable)

Common themes:

- teamwork

- communication skills

- leadership

- working under pressure

…but think about *specifics* of job you've applied for

A structure: CARL (similar to STAR)

Context – set scene, outline issue/example.   (10-20%)

Action – what did **you** do/steps were taken?   (60-80%)

Use verbs!   *emailed, designed, modelled, analysed, discussed, suggested…*

Result – what happened; outcome?   (10-20%)

Learning – retrospective view; what did you learn?   (follow-up)

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Question: *Describe a time when you've contributed successfully to a team?*

Context	I am on the committee of the University's Photographic Club. We arrange an exhibition of students work every year. Last year due to a lack of co-ordination we found ourselves behind in getting the venue set up.
Action	I **arranged** a meeting to discuss the problem and **booked** a room, **sending** out a reminder email. I **devised** a systematic plan with, splitting the work needed into chunks. We **discussed** the plan at the meeting and after some **negotiatin**g and minor changes, each committee member **agreed** to take on specific jobs. I **suggested** and then **organised** a follow up meeting after a week to review progress.
Result	We co-operated and communicated more effectively and worked in a smarter way and this meant we caught up and managed to open the exhibition on time. We had over 500 visitors on the day!
Learning Inspiring futures	• Even what seems like minor events need proper planning • Somebody needs to take a lead and ensure that the work is allocated and being done • Monitor progress!
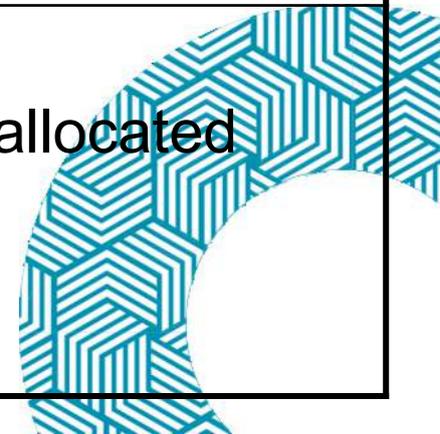
Matching yourself to the job

Skill / Competence	Evidence
Communication	• Joining sports team(s) / student society(ies) • Voluntary fundraiser – dealing with public • Shop/bar work – customer service
Team working	• Gap year expedition – team member • Group project – university • Hot Air Ballooning Club – launching balloon
Problem solving	• Events organiser – Charity Ball • Photographic Club Committee Member • Engineering project(s)
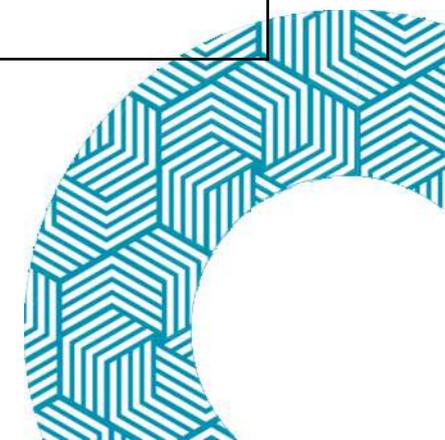
Strength-based *NEW(ish)!*

- An alternative to competency-based (to counter students' prep.)

- Strength:

  "An activity carried out on a regular basis, that is performed well and energises the individual doing so."

  (EY, Big 4 Professional Services firm)

  *"pre-existing capacity for a particular way of behaving, thinking or feeling that is **authentic** and **energising**…and enables **optimal** functioning, development and performance"*

  (Prof Alex Linley, CAPP, 2007)

- Fair: everybody asked the same (comparable)

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Sample strength-based questions

- What do you do well?

- What activities energise you?

- When do you feel that you are most like 'yourself'

- What makes a good day for you?

- When are you at your best?

- How can you capitalise on your strengths more?

How can you prepare?

You can start to identify your strengths by asking yourself...

- What are you good at?

- What comes easily to you?

- What do you learn quickly?

- What did you find easiest to learn at school or university?

- What subjects do you most enjoy studying?

- What things give you energy?

- Describe the features of a successful day you've had

- When did you achieve something you were really proud of?

- What sort of people do you work best with/around?

- What things are always left on your 'To Do' list and not finished? (these are probably weaknesses: things you dislike doing!)

https://www.ed.ac.uk/careers/students/undergraduates/make-it-happen/interviews-assessment-centres/types-and-formats-of-interview

Then… evidence with an example using CAR(L)

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Situational / Behavioural

You are working late and alone in the office and a client calls to say that they haven't received the order that was promised to them that day. Everyone else has left for the day. What do you do?

Consider a situation where you and a co-worker are jointly working on a project. You divided up work in a manner you both agreed to. However, your co-worker fails to do his or her share of the work. What would you do?

- Not always looking for the 'right' answer but how you think/talk through a problem!

- Like SJTs, take your queues from researching the organisation *e.g. initiative vs hierarchical*

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Difficult Questions?

- Your weaknesses

    - Choose **one** that's **not** key to the job!

    - What have you done about it?

    - Are there any (opposite) positive aspects to it?

- About the industry – do your research!

- General knowledge – keep up with the news!

- Technical knowledge?

So… none of these are so difficult – if you prepare!

Technical Questions

Designed to explore your:

- *Relevant* technical knowledge – how much do you know?

- Ability to **apply** this knowledge in a practical way

- Technical **motivation** – what are you interested in and why?

- Approach to **problem solving** – your analytical and reasoning skills

- Ability to **communicate** – your ideas to others

Might often be based on a project/piece of coursework

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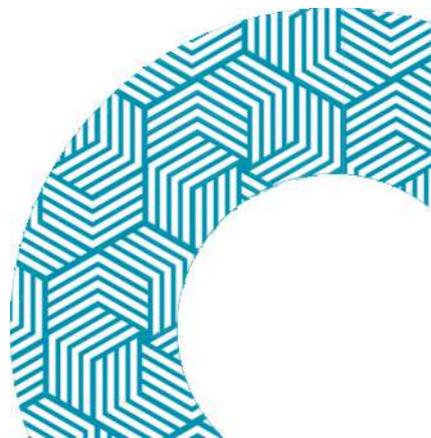
Answering questions

- **Listen** carefully > answer the question you've been asked

- **Think** before you speak – take a moment

- Seek **clarification** if necessary

- Have **evidence** to support your claims

- Use CARL (or STAR) **structure** to help!

- Talk about **your contributions**

- Describe **positive** outcomes

- Be enthusiastic

- Be specific

- Be honest… but how candid?

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How to behave

- First impressions count:
  Dress, smile, handshake, body language
- Relax! The interviewer is not an axe murderer
- Speak slowly and clearly
- Be succinct, but avoid yes/no answers
- Be aware of:
  Balance of exchange/silences;
  Eye contact; voice level
- Be interested, enthusiastic and enjoy it!
- Have questions ready
- Leave a positive impression:
  Thank interviewer, smile, handshake
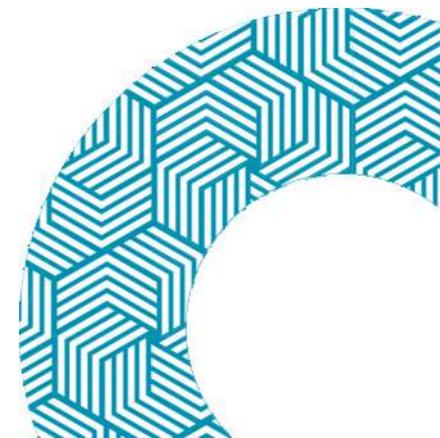
Your questions

It's **okay to a**sk about:

- Who you might be working with / the team

- How your section relates to the rest of the business

- Projects on the go / what you might be doing / for whom

- Developments in the business

- Salary range – if this hasn't already been stated (?) and not at first interview. (N.B. Should not be your only question!)

Avoid asking questions which:

- Have already been answered on their website

- How much holiday you will get, parking…

rg recruitment grapevine

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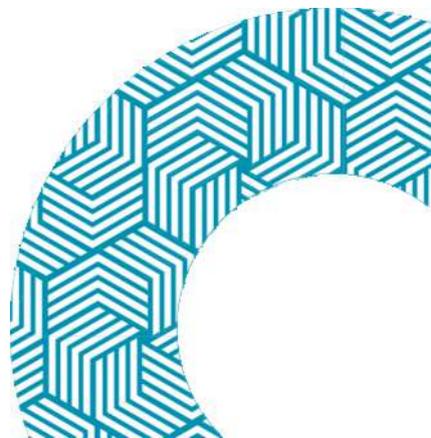
Commuter swears at passenger on way to job interview, to find man is the interviewer

Published: Fri, 20 Feb 2015 10:49am GMT

in 96   🐦 36   f 36   8+ ➕

Matt Buckland
@ElSatanico   ⚙ ➕ Follow

Karma - the guy who pushed past me on the tube and then suggested I go F myself just arrived for his interview...with me...

↩ 🔁 ★ •••

We've all found ourselves in awkward situations, where we perhaps said something we shouldn't have to the wrong person.

And a grumpy commuter who was on his way to a job interview may have inadvertently found himself in the most regrettable situation possible when after swearing at a man on the train, he discovered that the fellow passenger was the head of recruitment – and his interviewer.

Matt Buckland, Head of Talent at venture capital firm Forward Partners, was on a busy, delayed tube train when it pulled into Monument station in the City of London on Monday morning.

http://www.recruitmentgrapevine.com/article/universities-to-help-tackle-digital-skills-shortage-issues

Related Stories

Universities to help tackle digital skills shortage issues

3,500

Recruitment campaign creates 3,500 new positions in Birmingham

Latest | **Most Read** | Most Commented

Late mentoring for women hampering diversity efforts

Thu, 22 Jan 2015 9:00am GMT Executive Search

Britain's bosses must begin mentoring female staff at a much more junior level if it is to see an improvement in gender diversity...read more ›

< 259 Shares

Over a third of UK employees to quit if denied pay rise in 2015

Fri, 6 Feb 2015 10:49am GMT Recruitment

More than one in three UK workers (39%) will look for a new job if they don't

Online interviews

- Treat as you would face-to-face

- Check the tech…
    - Software requirements?
    - Connectivity to internet (WiFi vs Ethernet?)
    - Close other programmes… BUT do you want to show projects?
    - Sound/camera/them?
    - Practice/check with a friend?
    - Do you have an email/phone **back-up**?

- Consider their experience of you:
    - Who is calling whom?
    - Lighting?
    - Clothing?
    - Background (incl. noise)?
    - Try to look at the camera (post-it reminder?)

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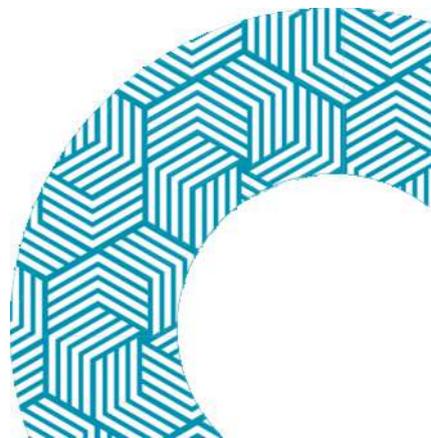
Three steps to success

1. Preparation

2. Your interview performance

3. Review
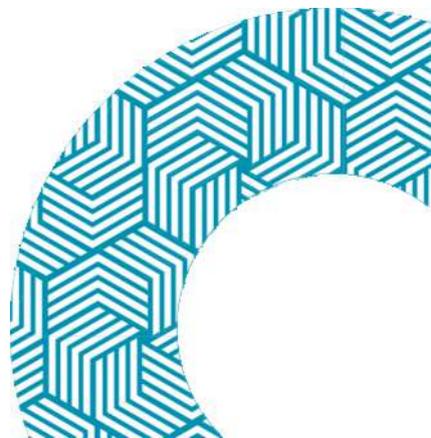
An expert's view

Laszlo Bock
Senior VP, People Operations

Google

Writing on LinkedIn, 15/03/15

Predict the future. *You can anticipate 90% of the interview questions you're going to get… it's an easy list to generate. "Why do you want this job?" "What's a tough problem you've solved?" If you can't think of any, Google "most common interview questions." Write down the top 20 questions...*

Plan your attack. *For EVERY question, write down your answer. Yes, it's a pain to actually write something. It's hard and frustrating. But it makes it stick in your brain. That's important. You want your answers to be automatic…*

Prove yourself. *Every question should be answered with a story that proves you can do what you're being asked about. "How do you lead?" should be answered with "I'm a collaborative/decisive/whatever leader. Let me tell you about the time I …." Always tell a story or have facts to prove you are what you say you are.*

Practice.

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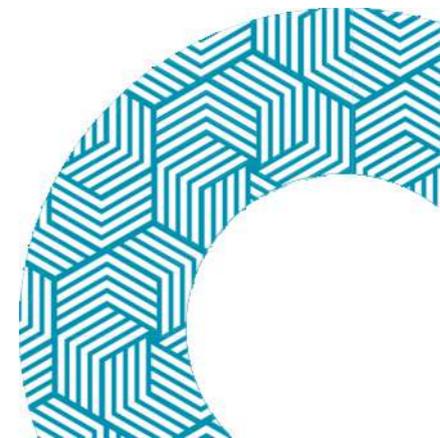
The Telegraph

18 November 2014

The **most common mistakes made by candidates** through Quora, the global question and answer network:

1. Showing off

2. Failing to do your homework

3. Making up answers

4. Forgetting your manners

5. Asking no questions

6. Apologising unnecessarily

7. A bad handshake

8. Failing to explain what you will bring to the party (i.e. What can you offer the organisation? Why should they consider you?)

9. Moaning about your current employer

10. Using 'yes' or 'no' answers

11. ...Unless the interviewer requires a 'yes' or 'no' answer

12. Trite or practiced answers

13. Dressing sloppily

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34 CRUCIAL TIPS FOR YOUR NEXT
JOB INTERVIEW

COMMON NONVERBAL MISTAKES MADE DURING JOB INTERVIEWS

In a survey of more than 2,000 hiring managers, **33%** claimed to know whether or not they would hire someone within 90 seconds.

67% Fail to make eye contact

47% Have little knowledge of the company

38% Don't smile

33% Have bad posture

33% Fidget too much

26% Have a weak handshake

21% Play with their hair or touch their face

21% Cross their arms over their chest

9% Use too many hand gestures

STATISTICS SHOW THAT FIRST IMPRESSIONS ARE DETERMINED BY:

55% The way you dress, act, and walk through the door

38% The quality of your voice, grammar, and confidence

7% The words you choose to say

THINGS THAT HAVE AN IMPACT ON FIRST IMPRESSIONS

70% of employers claim they don't want applicants to be **overly fashionable** or **trendy**

65% of hiring managers say clothes can be the **deciding factor** between two similar candidates

BRIGHTLY-COLORED CLOTHING IS BAD

October 2014

TOP 10 MOST COMMON INTERVIEW MISTAKES

1 Over-explaining why you lost your last job

2 Conveying that you're not over losing your last job

3 Lacking humor, warmth or personality

4 Not showing enough interest or enthusiasm

5 Inadequate research about a potential employer

6 Concentrating too much on what you want

7 Trying to be all things to all people

8 "Winging" the interview

9 Failing to set yourself apart from other candidates

10 Failing to ask for the job

? 4 QUESTIONS MOST LIKELY TO BE ASKED

1 What was your experience like at...?

2 Why do you want to work for us?

3 What do you know about our company?

4 Why did you leave your previous job?

✓ 4 MOST IMPORTANT INTERVIEW TIPS

1 Learn about the organization

2 Have a specific position in mind that you'd like to fill

3 Review your qualifications for the job

4 Be ready to briefly describe related experience

.org

Other Assessment Methods

- Psychometric Tests

- Presentations

- In-tray exercises

- Group exercises

- Case studies

- Social events

N.B. Check Careers Service website for workshops and information centres for help with these!

The Assessment Centre

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Jamie's Journey: Improve your body language

Internationally renowned body language expert India Ford explains her seven steps to interview success.

Posted by Martin Hofschroer on Sep 9, 2016 | 7 comments

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IMPROVE YOUR BODY LANGUAGE
#MILLIONPOUNDJAMIE

#MillionPoundJamie Episode two: The makeover

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Questions?