

How to ace the interview

So, you've been called in for an interview – eek! Want to know how to walk out of it feeling confident, relieved and downright amazing? Then follow these steps.

Spend time doing your homework by researching the company

Online research has never been easier, so use it to your advantage. Being well prepared increases your credibility and makes you a memorable job candidate.

What do you know about the company? Look at their website, LinkedIn profile, have they been in the news recently? Do you know anyone who works there now or maybe worked there before? Ask around within your network – inside knowledge can be helpful when preparing for the interview.



Reread the job description

Reread the job ad and **mirror the language** they use to show you are a natural fit. Be sure to think of examples that will highlight your suitability for the role.

Make a list of the skills and experiences that are required for this job. Then **prepare specific examples** of occasions when you have displayed those skills. A useful process for this is to use the STAR technique. If you follow this simple process, then your examples are easier to articulate.

- S** – describe the event or **situation** you were in
- T** – explain the **task** you had to complete
- A** – give a detailed description of the **action** you took to complete the task
- R** – close with the **result** of your efforts

NOTE: Refer to the STAR matrix resource included at the end of this resource that will help you develop examples. Remember to practice your examples before your interview!

Find out more about the interview

Do you know who will be INTERVIEWING you? How many people will be in the interview? What type of interview will it be? What can you expect? Find out what you can before the interview, and you will be better prepared, more comfortable and more confident.

Give serious thought and consideration to specific examples for questions like “tell us a bit about yourself”, “tell us about a time you were successful”, “tell us about a time you had to deal with a difficult situation”. If the question starts with “Tell us about...” then always use the STAR technique, they are looking for specifics, so be as specific and detailed as you can be.

Ask questions

At the end of your interview, you are likely to be asked if you have any questions. It's a great idea to have some well thought out questions on hand.

Some **good interview questions** for you to ask include:

- What is the reason you are recruiting? Is this a new position or replacing someone?
- Can you describe the most important qualities of the person you are looking to hire?
- What do you think the next steps are from here?
- How is performance be measured in this role? In the team?

If you get to the end of the interview and your questions have been answered then say, “I did have a list of questions at the start, but all of them have been addressed through our chat, so thank you”. This is a much better response than “No, I don't have any questions”.

Keep your LinkedIn profile current

Make sure your LinkedIn profile is up to date and reread the resume you submitted. Don't be caught out by not knowing your own background! Your LinkedIn profile and other social media profiles will likely be looked at before your interview.

Follow up after your interview

Finally, follow these **follow up actions** post-interview:

- Immediately after the interview, do a brain dump and make as many notes as you can. This will make it easier to debrief, with a friend, mentor or career coach.
- And the key point – which will make you stand HEAD and SHOULDERS above the competition is to FOLLOW UP AFTER THE INTERVIEW. Your first follow up should be by email. Send it individually to each person who was at the interview – do not send as a group email. The subject line should be your full name and the name of the company. i.e. Joe Bloggs and ABC Company. In addition to expressing your thanks, the letter gives you a chance to reiterate your interest in the role and contributing to the company. It does not need to be long – 3 or 4 sentences is plenty.

Are you looking for more resources that will make your job interview easier?

Head to www.mycareermymove.com.au for more free resources and be sure to check out our [Starting Out](#), [Starting Over](#) and [Starting New](#) online career coaching programs that will help you stand out as the ideal candidate.

STAR MATRIX

	<i>Working Example</i>	<i>Example 1</i>	<i>Example 2</i>	<i>Example 3</i>
The Situation What was the problem or opportunity? Briefly describe the situation but be specific with details.	When I was the office administrator for Sharp Pencil Marketing Solutions, we were working to a tight deadline to deliver a customer project.			
The Task What needed to be done? Describe the task you were faced with.	As the office administrator it was my responsibility to ensure the documents were printed, collated and presented in the company format within the deadline. About halfway through the final collation of documents, the printer jammed.			
The Action? What did you do? Be specific (step by step)	I very quickly isolated the problem and involved the necessary support to ensure the printer was fixed so that the remainder of the printing could be completed and compiled.			
The Result? What was the result/outcome? Again, percentages, specifics and qualified results all add weight to your action.	As a result of my quick action the project was delivered on time.			

	<i>Example 4</i>	<i>Example 5</i>	<i>Example 6</i>	<i>Example 7</i>
The Situation? What was the problem or opportunity?				
The Task What needed to be done?				
The Action? What did you do?				
The Result? What was the result, with the metrics?				