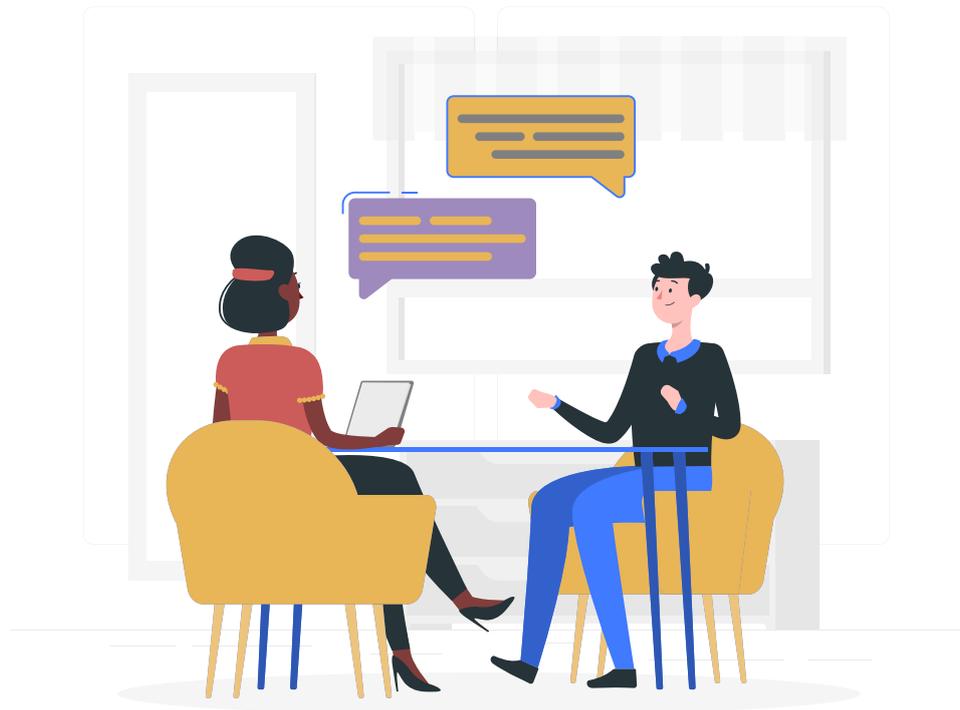
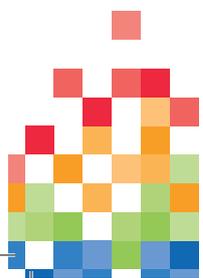


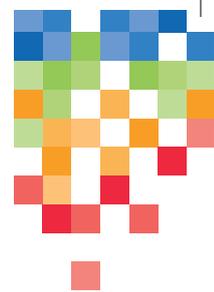
INTERVIEWS



A complete guide to acing any interview

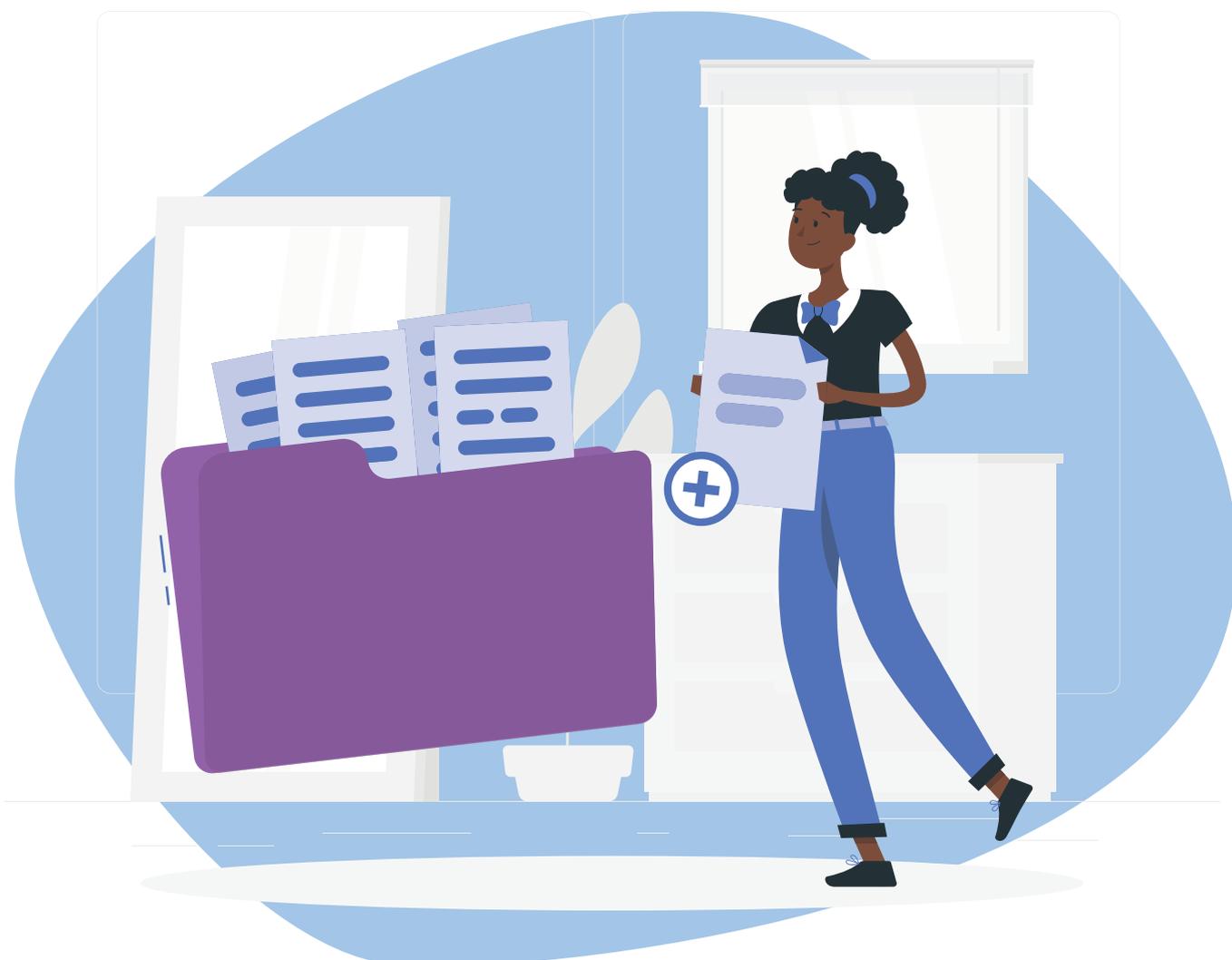
By  **wearedigital**





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What is an interview?

An interview is an opportunity for an employer to decide whether you are the person that they want to work for them, and if you are a good fit for their company by asking questions to find out more about you, your experiences, your skills and your career goals.

It could be one of the most important events in your life...

So how can you pull one off without being overcome by nerves or fear?? How can you show yourself in the most positive way you can?? What can you do to make yourself stand out (in a good way)!!?

An interview is two way - your chance to find out if the job or company is right for you and for the company to see if you are right for the role

Different types of interview



Initial Phone Screening



Competency Based



Unstructured



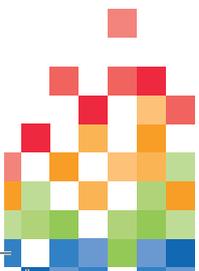
The Panel Interview

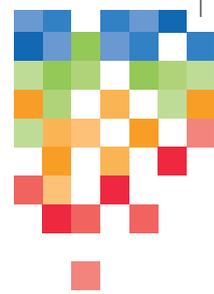


The Assessment Centre



Second Interview





Initial Phone Screening

This is usually a pre-interview call and might take place if there have been a very large number of suitable applicants. It is to help an employer reduce the number of suitable candidates that they go on to invite to a full interview. Questions are usually to go over certain details of your CV such as to expand on your previous employment or industry related skills.



- Prepare, prepare, prepare
- Have a copy of your CV and cover letter to hand
- Make sure you are somewhere that you won't be easily distracted
- Make sure you listen to the questions and try not to interrupt
- Be polite and professional
- Thank the interviewer for their time
- Ask what might happen next (if they haven't said) at the end of the call

Competency Based

Competency-based interviews use questions which aim to find out how you have used specific skills in your previous experience and how you approach problems, tasks and challenges. Also called behavioural or situational questions, they are often used in first interviews.

Why would an employer use a competency-based interview?

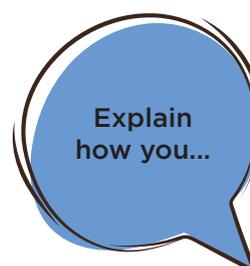
Often they are used when previous experience in an industry is not seen as essential, for example an entry-level or graduate position.

They may also be used to practically test how candidates would react in given situations. So rather than concerning themselves with past achievements, they place emphasis on predicting how an individual would behave in a certain scenario.

The tasks could range from oral and written communication to planning, organisation and problem-solving.

Competency based questions and behavioural questions are usually 'open questions' designed to let you talk and to see how you have acted / might act in specific situations, and to see if you have the right experience, skills or knowledge for the job. These require the candidate to give real examples as an answer. If you don't have much work experience you could relate to learning / volunteering / life experience.

Examples could be:



The **STAR** method is a structured way to reply to these type of interview questions by discussing the specific situation, task, action, and result of the situation you are describing.

Situation

Setting the scene eg where were you working/when was this

Task

Explaining what you did

Action

What did you do? (Key part of **STAR**)

Result

What was the outcome? (Keep it positive)

Example: "Tell me about a time when you have had to overcome an obstacle (at work)"

S - While I was working at Better Save they got new automated tills

T - I was trained but still struggled at first using the new system

A - I asked my manager if I could spend the day working at the till to practice

R - By the end of the day I was quicker than I was on the previous system

Unstructured

An unstructured interview or non-directive interview is an interview in which questions are not prearranged. These non-directive interviews are considered to be the opposite of a structured interview which offers a set amount of standardized questions.

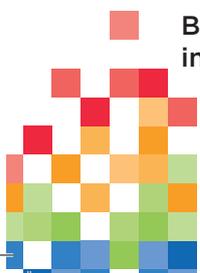
How to Succeed in Unstructured Interviews

<https://www.indeed.com/career-advice/interviewing/unstructured-interviews>

Preparation - Questions



Be honest and show your true personality. Focus on your strengths. Address specific topics the interviewer is looking for.



The Panel Interview

A panel interview is a conversation with two or more members of a hiring team. The panel might include your potential supervisor, a human resources representative or other decision-makers. In a panel interview, each member has an opportunity to ask you questions about your experience, qualifications and goals.

Panel interviews reduce the risk of making a bad hire. The panel's goal is to make the best hiring decision possible given the information available about the position and the finalists.



The Assessment Centre

Assessment centre interviews are a series of exercises commonly used by employers to test skills which are not assessable from the traditional interview alone. An assessment centre usually lasts a whole day but can last anything from half a day up to several days of testing and assessments.

Assessment centres are a great way for employers to evaluate how you respond to different situations, tasks and tests. Assessors can observe first-hand how you behave and work within a team, how you approach assignments and how you apply your skills and knowledge during a variety of activities.

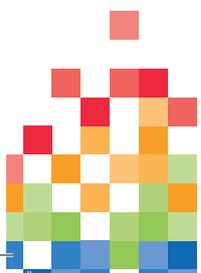


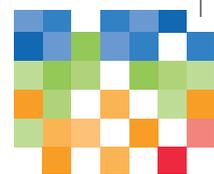
Second Interview

Sometimes for senior or more competitive roles you might be asked back for a second interview. This is usually when a shortlist of possible candidates has been drawn up and the employer wants to compare these candidates more closely. Questions might be more detailed and focused on what you would do in specific situations. In some cases you might be asked to give a short presentation or to do a practical exercise.



- **Congratulate yourself** for getting invited back – you obviously impressed first time round!
- **Reply back** that you're delighted to be asked for a second interview saying that you're still really keen to work for their company.
- If it hasn't been mentioned, ask if there is anything you need to prepare.
- If you have been given a brief or instruction of something that you have to prepare for this interview, read through it carefully and leave yourself plenty of time to **prepare and practice**
- Now is the time to really **stand out** – for the right reasons!
- **Don't forget** - this is also the time to make sure that this job or workplace really is for you, so think of any additional questions about the position or company you want information on





How will my interview take place?



Remote Video



Face-to-Face



Group

Remote Video Interview

Currently during the COVID-19 pandemic, this is the most common way for an employer to hold and interview.

This is done via a video conferencing platform such as Skype or Zoom. You will be told which one in your invite so you may have to download it if you do not already have an account. This may be with one or more interviewers - you should also be told this before your interview.



HELPFUL TIPS

- **Prepare** for a remote interview as you would for any interview (see guidance following)
- **Make sure you have the right technical set up** - usually a device with a camera and a mic
 - If you haven't used the platform before try and have a practice with a friend
- **Choose your set up carefully** - somewhere you hopefully won't be interrupted
- **Check your background** - make sure there's nothing too distracting in the background - like loads of washing or lots of clutter
- A bright lamp behind you might make you look very shadowy - keep light in front of you if you can, such as in front of a window
- **Test your equipment** before your call
- **Dress the part!** You may be sat at home but still make sure you look clean, smart and tidy
- **Remember** - you can have your CV / questions to ask / some facts handy to refer to but make sure you are not just reading pre written answers straight from your notes as it will appear unnatural and you will not have any eye contact with the interview

Face to Face (in-person) Interview

Restricted in certain industries at the moment due to COVID-19.

These are usually held at the workplace, usually with one person – sometimes more depending on the job role.



HELPFUL TIPS

- **Prepare** as you would for any interview (see guidance following)
- **Check the location of the interview** e.g. on Google maps and pre-plan how you are going to get there and how long it might take to make sure you get there in good time
- **Have a few questions** ready to ask that about the company or about the job
- **Be nice to everyone** you meet there, for example the receptionist. Sometimes the interviewer may ask them for their opinion!
- This is a good chance for you to get a feel of the company. Have a look round. What does the environment feel like? Can you imagine yourself there?

Group Interview

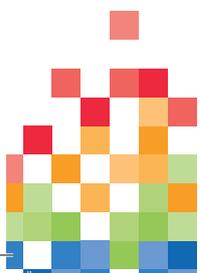
Restricted in certain industries at the moment due to COVID-19.

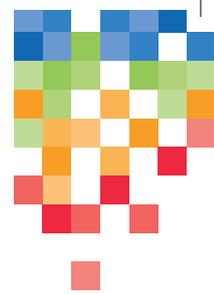
These are when several candidates are interviewed at the same time by one or more interviewers. Groups allow hiring managers to compare the personalities and skills of different candidates and to observe how they interact with other people. There might be group exercises to work on or interviewees might be asked various questions as a group or individually. You will be advised if it is a group interview. These often happen when a lot of staff are need at one time.



HELPFUL TIPS

- **Prepare** for a group interview as you would for any interview (see guidance below)
- **Arrive early**
- **Practice listening** – so you don't interrupt when others are talking
- **Plan an introduction** – you might be asked to introduce to the group so try practicing a short sentence about yourself e.g. 'Hi, I'm Dave Lyon, from Manchester. I've worked in sales before for two years and really enjoyed the buzz I got from it and I am excited to find out a more about this position today'





Key Questions

Practice answers to some commonly asked questions

Popular questions include:



Different Question Types

Personality

To find out more about you as a person and whether you are a good fit for the company e.g.

- What are you passionate about?
- Why do you want to work for us?
- How would you describe yourself?

Behavioural

To find about more about your character, and how you might approach different situations or challenges at work:

- Have you ever made a mistake? How did you handle it?
- Give me an example of a goal you have achieved and how you got there?
- Tell me about a time when you have had to work as a team

Competency

- Describe a situation in which...
- Give an example of a time you handled conflict in the workplace
- How do you maintain good working relationships with your colleagues?
- Tell me about a big decision you've made recently
- What has been your biggest achievement to date?

Preparing for the Interview

Being prepared is key...

“There are no secrets to success. It is the result of preparation, hard work, and learning from failure.”

Colin Powell (*retired army general*)

“Fail to prepare; prepare to fail!”

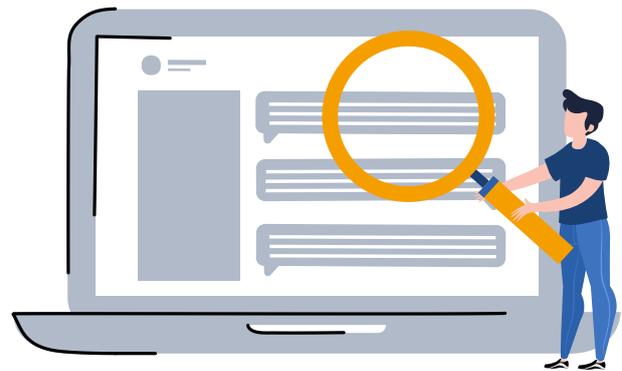
Spending time preparing for your interview in advance will help you to feel more relaxed, confident and ready for your interview. This means you are more likely to come across as articulate, motivated and professional. If you are underprepared, you may come across as uninterested, that you are just trying to blag your way through and that you don't really care about the outcome.

SO, WHAT CAN **YOU** PREPARE?

Research the company

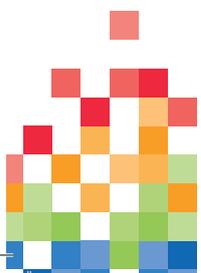
Why?

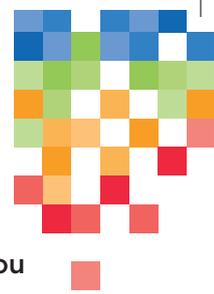
- A business likes to think you are interested and keen for working for their company and not just because it's a job.
- It shows resourcefulness - that you have taken some time to learn about their business and their values
- The interviewer might ask what you know about their business
- Even if you are not asked directly, If you can talk about something that you've learned or that you admire about their business at your interview, this may set you apart from other candidates who have not done any research
- Examples - “I noticed that you have lots of excellent reviews on Google / Trust Pilot or “I read that you won an award for your environmental policies which is something I'm really passionate about”



How to research

- **Google the company or name of the business** and see what comes up in the search results. Look under the News tab at the top of the search page
- **Have a look at their website** if they have one - including the 'about us' page which might give you information on what the business is about; why they set up; their ambitions etc.
- **Check their social media pages** - these can give you a good feel for the type of organisation it is and any current or recent news or developments





What kind of information should you be looking for?

- Company values, goals and aims
- Any recent news about the company
- Their competitors
- The products and services they provide
- The people who might be interviewing you

Prepare Yourself Mentally

Body Language/Nerves

<https://www.theguardian.com/careers/careers-blog/10-quirky-tips-beating-interview-nerves-job>

Key Tips/Reminders

- Re Read CV
- Take CV
- Job Description
- Listening
- Asking Questions



Things to Avoid

<https://www.indeed.com/career-advice/interviewing/what-not-to-do-in-an-interview>

Be arrogant	Fidget	Cross your arms
Avoid eye contact	Show a lack of accountability	Be defensive
Be late	Check the time	Come unprepared
Be too early	Answer the phone	Look bored
Lie	Act desperate	Be rude
Dress inappropriately	Look angry	Eat

Mock Interview

What is a mock interview? A mock interview is a practice interview that allows the interviewee to create effective responses, work on nonverbal communication skills and become familiar with interview settings. A mock interview can recreate any interview environment, such as in-person, phone or group interviews.

How to prepare for a mock interview

- Choose the right mock interviewer
- Choose a professional setting
- Be early
- Bring the necessary items
- Dress smart and sharp
- Prepare your answers to common interview questions, but don't memorize them



Following a Job Interview

Follow up.

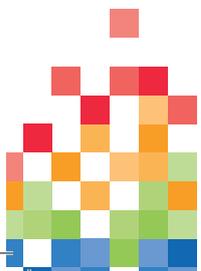
You want your interviewer to remember you. So sending a follow up message will help you stay at the top of their mind.

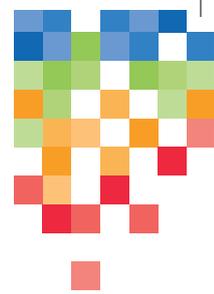
Send a thank you note.

The simple act of thanking your interviewer makes a big impact.

Write Key Points.

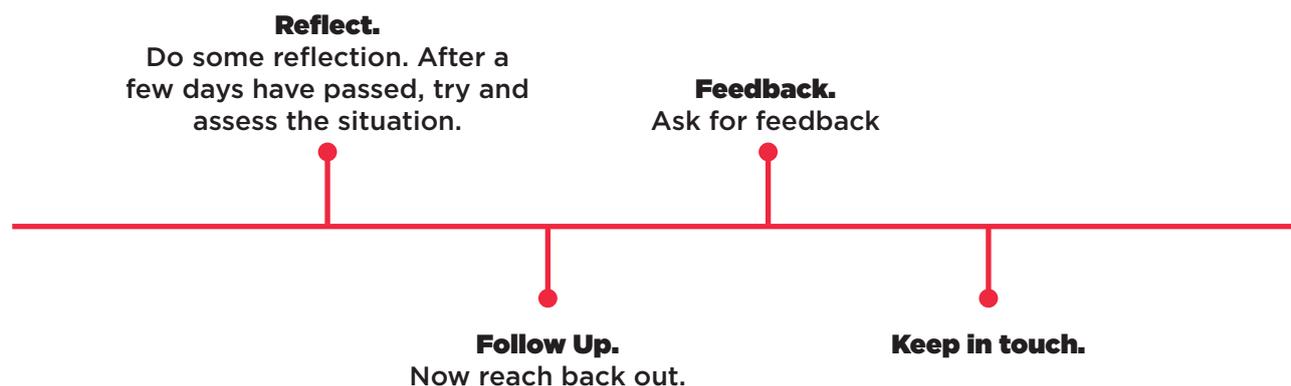
Write down key points from the interview.





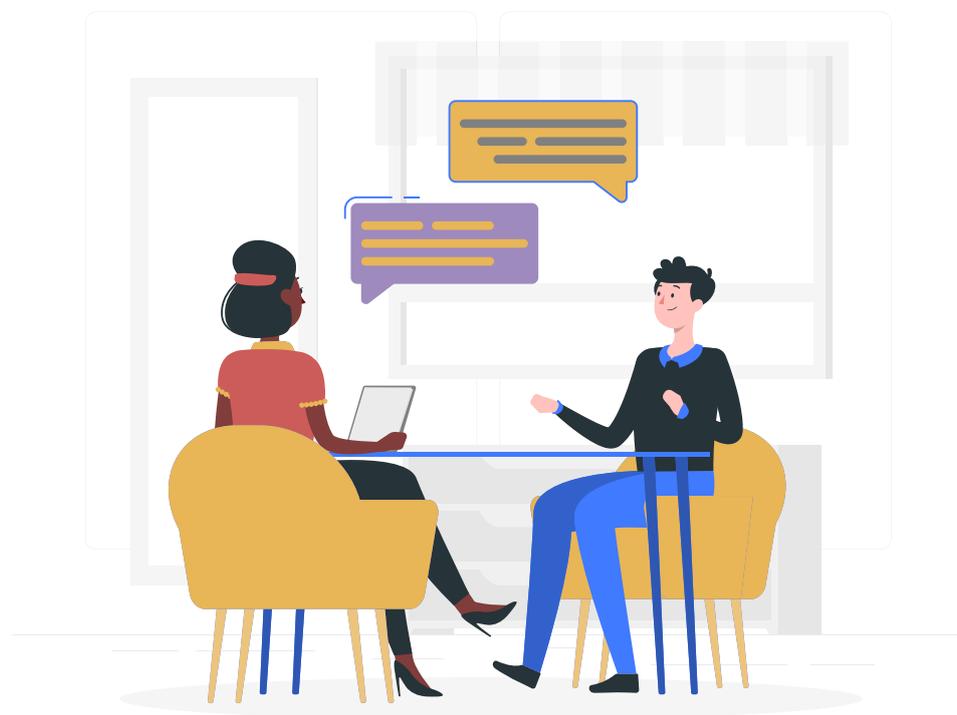
What if I don't get the job?

Positive affirmation, use interviews as a learning curve, all experience is good experience.



Useful Links

- www.prospects.ac.uk/careers-advice/interview-tips/how-to-prepare-for-an-interview
- www.indeed.co.uk/career-advice/interviewing/how-to-prepare-for-an-interview
- www.reed.co.uk/career-advice/interview-techniques/preparing-for-a-job-interview
- www.glassdoor.co.uk/blog/guide/how-to-prepare-for-a-job-interview



Good luck in your interviews!

