

Tips on how to perform well at an interview

An interview is a nerve-racking experience for anyone. Even the most experienced of directors can get butterflies when it comes to an interview situation. So, don't think you are alone if you are shaking with nerves before you head into that interview.

Here are our top tips on how to successfully complete an interview...

Research:

Take some time before your interview to research our company – a good place to start is the [BAE Systems website](#). The hiring manager will want to see that you have a genuine desire to work for us. If you are able to demonstrate that you have done your homework and can ask insightful questions, this will help your application.

Read your CV:

This may sound obvious, however, if you have tailored your CV to fit a specific opportunity, you will need to recap on what you did or didn't include. During the interview you may be asked to discuss something you have included, and you do not want to be caught out by not knowing the detail accurately.

Body language:

Try to sit with good posture, occasionally leaning in or nodding to show you are listening and engaged (but don't overdo it!). Gesticulating with your hands is fine, but bear in mind that it can become distracting if done too frequently. Keeping your arms uncrossed and occasionally displaying your hands palms up can indicate openness and honesty. And don't forget to smile!

Stay calm and take your time:

During the interview, try to remain as calm as possible. If you are unsure of the answer or your mind has gone blank, ask for a moment to think rather than answer with something irrelevant. Don't feel embarrassed to ask the interviewer to repeat the question if needs be.

Think about how to format your answers:

The most common interview format these days is 'competency based'. Here, you will be asked a question and will be required to provide a specific example to demonstrate a time you have used a particular skill. The best way to structure your response is using the STAR format. A competency based question usually starts with, 'Give me an example of a time where...' or 'Tell me about a time when...'

S – Situation – Begin by setting the scene. Describe the situation/problem you were faced with. If you cannot think of a work situation (which is always best to use), use a time at college/university, if you volunteered somewhere or perhaps even a personal achievement if it demonstrates the skill in question.

T – Task – What did you have to do? Did you make a plan? If it was a group task, remember to talk about your specific involvement. The interviewers are interested in *your* part played, not your teammates.

A – Action – Explain the actual steps you took to resolve the problem. Did you stick to the plan or were there further challenges to overcome? Again, remember to use 'I' and not 'we'.

R – Result – Tell the interviewers what the outcome was. If it was a success, try to talk about who benefitted from the positive outcome – perhaps you can mention feedback you received at the time. If the outcome wasn't a success, don't worry. If you can identify where things went wrong and can explain what you would do differently next time, this shows your ability to learn and develop.

Top tip: think of some key skills you might be asked about at interview (e.g. time management, team work, leadership, problem solving). Try to think of as many scenarios as possible ahead of the interview and break them down into the STAR format. When it comes to the actual interview, having examples already to-hand which you can adapt as necessary will make you feel a lot more at ease and can help keep the conversation flowing.

Keep it professional:

When answering questions, remember to keep the answers to the point and professional. The interviewers do not need to know the specifics about your

commute, for example, only that you have considered it and have plans in place. The final part of the interview usually involves an open forum for you to ask questions. Make sure you have some to ask – it's always best to have a couple in case some have already been answered during the interview.

Remember to thank the interviewer for their time when you leave.

Practice at home:

If you have not had an interview in a while, then practising at home is a great idea. Ask a member of your family or a friend to ask you a few questions. There are lots of example questions you can find online. Remember, practice makes perfect!

We hope this helps. Good luck for your interview!