

Note: If reading is hard for you, you can talk to us instead. Call 6262 5400



Tip Sheet:

The interview process

Being interviewed for a job makes almost everyone nervous, no matter how much experience they have had or how long they've been working for. It is an unusual situation, and it's totally ok if you are feeling anxious about it.

Being as prepared as possible can sometimes help you to feel more in control and relaxed about it.

While we are in the Covid-19 pandemic it is less likely you will be asked to undertake a face-to-face interview. However, even if your interview is held over Skype, Zoom, or the phone, this Tip Sheet will give you some handy pointers.

What questions are they going to ask?

It is a really good idea to pre-prepare answers for questions like these including examples, and write them down. It's ok to take notes into the interview with you - just make sure they are neat and not on scrappy pieces of paper.

Even if they don't ask you these questions exactly, if you have plenty of examples you will feel more confident to adapt your answer. Some common interview questions are:

- What are your strengths?
- What are your weaknesses, and how will you overcome them?
- What qualities will you bring to our organisation?
- Why are you the best applicant/ why should we pick you?
- Can you provide an example of when you have faced a problem, and what you did to solve it?
- Do you have any questions for us?

What should I wear?

This is important. Many people think that what they wear or how they appear at an interview doesn't or shouldn't matter. It definitely does - sometimes as much what you say!

Unfortunately that might put you at a disadvantage, because you might not have access to clean and appropriate clothing. If that is the case, you could try:

- borrowing something from someone,
- visiting an op-shop to buy something appropriate if you can afford to, or
- contacting us to help with the purchase of an interview outfit (note: we can only do that for people who are signed up with us).

If you aren't sure what is appropriate, we have put together this list to help:

Appropriate:	Not appropriate:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Well fitting clothing • Clean clothing • Ironed/pressed clothing • Button-up shirt or blouse • Matching jacket and pants or skirt • Dress shoes (leather or leather-look lace-ups, low heels or slip-ons) • A tie • A belt (which matches your shoes) • A business-style dress, button down shirt dress, or a conservative wrap dress • A button down fine-knit waist or hip length cardigan (nothing chunky, long, cropped or casual) • Pantyhose (with no holes or runs) or matching dress socks • Freshly showered, clean hair, clean teeth and nails, deodorant 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hats, caps, or beanies • Running shoes/joggers/sneakers • Thongs/flip-flops/Birkenstocks/sandals/crocs • Very high heels • Ugg boots or slippers • Hoodies or puffer jackets • Jeans or denim • Low-rise/hipster pants • Sports socks • Backpack or fashion purse/handbag • Clothing which is either too big or too small • Crumpled, creased or unironed clothing. If you don't have an iron or don't know how to use one, try hanging your outfit on a clothes hanger in a very steamy bathroom, or ask someone to iron it for you

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Neat hairstyle with natural-looking colour ● Simple understated makeup, if you wear makeup ● A folder, or plain handbag or laptop bag 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Any clothing that is 'distressed' with rips or tears, even if they are a deliberate style choice ● Short skirts or shorts ● Maxi dresses or long skirts ● 'Going out' or clubbing outfits like cocktail dresses, even if they are good quality ● Revealing or see-through clothing ● Visible underwear or lingerie ● Heavy makeup ● Hair accessories ● Activewear, leggings or t-shirts ● Blunnies or other workboots ● Excessive jewellery or body piercings ● Visible tattoos (if this can be avoided) ● Brightly coloured/unnatural looking hair ● Dirty, untrimmed fingernails ● Chipped nailpolish, unmaintained gels or acrylics, nail art ● Perfume or cologne - this can irritate some people because of allergies, or it might be distracting ● Smelling of cigarette smoke - if you smoke try to have your last cigarette before you get ready and don't smoke again until after the interview - out of the sight of the interviewer
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We know, this list is very conservative and you might consider it boring. It's important to 'play it safe' for your interview process. If you are successful you can start to show your personality more, depending on the dress code of the organisation. But for now, it is best to go for a more corporate look, rather than risk losing the job based on your appearance.

Some bonus tips:

- Practice, practice, practice! It might feel silly at the time, but doing pretend interviews with friends or family really can help you to feel more prepared and confident
- Be prepared with neat notes and any questions you might still have
- Don't be shy about your strengths. Now is not the time to be humble
- Arrive about 10 minutes early so you appear keen and prepared, and can catch your breath and relax
- Smile and be friendly. Warmth and openness give people a very good first impression, so even if you are nervous try hard to show them you are happy to be there
- Don't slouch, don't cross your arms or legs, and don't cover your face with your hands
- Make eye contact with the interviewer. Sometimes there will be more than one, so make sure you look at and speak to everyone
- If you don't understand or forget what someone is asking you, ask them to repeat the question or ask it in a different way
- If asked, admit to your weaknesses, but always have a positive to follow up with or an example of how you have overcome your weaknesses in the past
- Feel free to ask questions about the job, workplace, or organisation. Try not to make it about your 'benefits' though, like "How many holidays do I get?", "Can I leave early to pick my kids up?", or "How much will you pay me?" Those questions are best left until after you have been offered the job
- Don't say anything bad about a previous job or employer. This gives the impression that you might talk like that about them one day
- Be enthusiastic about being there, and grateful for this opportunity to either get the job, or practice your interview skills

What if I need help?

Our team at Workskills is here to help and this is just a small sample of what we can do to support you gaining employment. In order to access our full range of support you will need to be assigned to us through Centrelink, so when you're asked to choose a jobactive provider, think of the Tasmanian company helping Tasmanians – Workskills.

If you are looking to access our service or just need some direction, contact our team at Workskills on **6262 5400** or emailing Employment@workskills.org.au