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READY TO NAIL YOUR INTERVIEW?

CANDIDATE INTERVIEW PREP GUIDE

Interviews can feel overwhelming, but a little prep goes a long way. This guide is packed with quick tips to boost your confidence and help you leave a great impression. You've got this!



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Get to Know the Company

- What is the company's mission, vision, and values?
- How long has the company been in business?
- Who are their main competitors, and what sets them apart?
- What's their growth trajectory? (Look for press, revenue stats, funding rounds, or recent projects)
- Read Glassdoor reviews to understand employee satisfaction (be mindful of biases).
- Are there any recent news articles or press releases that give insight into the company's latest achievements or challenges?

Understand the Role

- What skills and experience are they seeking?
- What do you think the company values most in this role? (Based on your research)
- Is this a newly created role or a replacement position?



Know Who You're Meeting

- Who are the interviewers? (Check your meeting invite for names, then check LinkedIn or the company website to understand their roles, backgrounds, and connection to the role you're applying for)
- What are their professional accomplishments and areas of expertise?



What to Bring (For In-Person Interviews)

- Printed copies of your resume (bring extra for anyone you meet unexpectedly- yes, this is still important!)
- Business card (if applicable)
- Small notebook and pen for note-taking
- A professional bag to hold any materials you may be given
- Water bottle to stay hydrated
- A tissue in case you sneeze
- Confidence and a positive attitude

Answering Common Questions

Be prepared to answer questions about your skills, experience, and goals. Here are some examples:

- Why are you interested in making a move right now?
- What would your current employer say about you?
- Where do you see yourself in 5 years?
- What are your strengths and weaknesses?
- What technical skills do you possess?

Competency-Based Questions

These questions evaluate how you approach challenges, solve problems, and interact with others. Always use the STAR method (Situation, Task, Action, Result) to provide structured answers.



Competency-Based Questions

Examples:

- Tell me about a time when you made a mistake halfway through a project. How did you handle it?
- Can you describe a situation where you had to influence someone to change their behavior?
- Describe a stressful work situation and how you managed it.
- The key to success here is to focus on specific examples that highlight your problem-solving, adaptability, and teamwork. Be prepared for follow-up questions—the interviewer may dig deeper into your examples, so be ready to elaborate on your actions and results.

How to Handle "I Don't Know" Questions

If you don't know something, avoid saying "No." Instead, try this approach:

- "I haven't had experience with XYZ yet, but I've worked with ABC, which is similar. I'm confident I could quickly learn XYZ because I have a strong track record of picking up new tools and processes."

Ask Thoughtful Questions

Your questions help interviewers understand your interest in the company and role, and they also help you assess if the job is a good fit for you. Here are some examples of strong questions:

- What about this company are you most proud of?
- What do you find to be the most challenging aspect of this role? (This allows you to frame your experience as relevant to the challenge)
- How would you describe the company culture?
- How do you measure success in this role?
- What would you want this new hire to accomplish in the first 6 months?



Be Personable

People want to work with people they like! Share a bit about yourself—tasteful mentions of hobbies, family, or interests can help build rapport. Being personable can create a memorable connection with your interviewers.

Compensation: Be Transparent and Realistic

When discussing salary: If asked directly, be prepared to share a range, but also express flexibility depending on the overall package (e.g., benefits, perks, professional development).

Example response:

- “I’m currently earning \$X, and I’d love to see a bit of an increase for this role, but I’m primarily looking for the right opportunity and fit.”



Conclude the Interview on a Positive Note

Always end the interview by reinforcing your interest in the role and expressing enthusiasm for moving forward. Example closing statements:

- "Thank you so much for your time today. I’m even more excited about this opportunity and would love to take the next step in the process."
- "I’m really impressed with what I’ve heard today and would love to contribute to the team. What are the next steps?"

Don’t forget to send a thank you note within 24 hours to everyone you spoke with, reinforcing your appreciation for their time and interest in the role.



Remote interviews are the norm now, so it's crucial to prepare for them as thoroughly as in-person interviews.



Test Your Tech

- Test your internet connection to ensure it's stable.
- Check your video and audio equipment (camera, microphone, speakers/headset).
- Download the necessary software ahead of time (Zoom, MS Teams, Skype, etc.), and ensure you have an updated version.

Choose a Professional Virtual Environment

- Choose a quiet, well-lit space where you won't be interrupted.
- Be mindful of your background—make sure it's clean and uncluttered.
- If you're using a virtual background, choose something neutral and professional.
- Dress professionally from head to toe—you never know when you might need to stand up, and you want to look polished!



Body Language in Remote Interviews

- Sit up straight, and be mindful of your posture.
- Look at the camera when speaking, not the screen, to create a sense of eye contact.
- Smile and nod during conversations to show engagement.

Prepare for Technical Challenges

- Have a backup plan in case of tech issues—such as a phone number to reach the interviewer if the video call drops.
- If the connection is poor, remain calm and ask to rejoin or switch to audio-only if necessary.

Showcase Communication Skills

- Be clear and concise, as it can be harder to read non-verbal cues in remote interviews.
- Be mindful of any lag time—wait a moment before speaking to avoid talking over the interviewer.





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CONCLUSION

BUILDING YOUR CAREER WITH CONFIDENCE

Interviews are a two-way street. While it's your chance to showcase your skills, experience, and fit for the role, it's also an opportunity for you to assess whether the company and position are the right match for you as well. Remember to be confident, authentic, and to always prepare for your interviews.

BEST OF LUCK FROM THE LITTLE BIRDY TEAM

