

# Interview Techniques

How to prepare for virtual, phone and face-to-face interviews.

## Understand the interview format

It is important to be clear on how the interview will be carried out.

Will it be over the phone or using video through Zoom or Microsoft Teams or face-to-face?

Many of you will not have done an interview before, don't panic- these interview techniques are here to help you.

# Practice using your technology

- ▶ Make sure you test your sound and picture quality. It's important that the interviewer can hear and see you clearly.
- ▶ If it's a virtual interview avoid having bright lights or windows in the background- this can make it difficult for the interviewer to see you. Always try and have the source of light in front of you.
- ▶ Devices- use the one with the best camera. This may be your phone so make sure it is propped up so it doesn't slip.
- ▶ If you have headphones or headset, try using these to see if they make a difference to your sound quality.
- ▶ Test your microphone quality.

# Prepare your interview set-up

There are a few simple things you can do when setting up:

- ▶ Make sure you are in a quiet place and there is no noise in the background
- ▶ Make sure you have a tidy background
- ▶ Switch off your email and social media notifications, and put your phone on silent- you don't want any messages popping up during the interview
- ▶ Close any tabs you have open on your computer- you don't want to be distracted

# Prepare for interview questions

Think about any talking points and questions you may want to ask.

## Questions you may be asked?

- ▶ Why do you want to come to this sixth form/college?
- ▶ Tell me about yourself?
- ▶ Why have you chosen to study (subject )A levels/ this course?
- ▶ What are your strengths?

# Questions you may be asked?

- ▶ What are your weaknesses?
- ▶ What achievement are you most proud of?
- ▶ What would you consider your long term goals are?
- ▶ Can you tell me a time when you worked as part of a team?
- ▶ Have you any questions you would like to ask?
- ▶ What extra-curricular activities are you involved in?

# Questions you may ask?

- ▶ **Make sure you ask about 2/3 questions**
- ▶ What happens next?
- ▶ When may I hear if I have a place?
- ▶ Thank you and Goodbye.

# So I've made it to the interview, How can I prepare?

- ▶ Preparation for the interview is absolutely crucial for success. **After all, if you fail to prepare, prepare to fail!**
- ▶ **How confident are you** in an interview situation? Ask yourself this question, and based on your response you can do some things to build up your confidence. Ask a parent, friend or sibling or Mrs Hale to give you a **mock interview**. You may find this sort of situation - doing it with someone you know- much more unnerving than with someone who is unfamiliar to you. So it is good preparation. **Practice your fluency**, saying a few lines in front of a mirror, or in the shower or something. It sounds stupid, but if you are not confident doing this will have huge rewards.
- ▶ **Don't be afraid to sing your own praises!** In the interview you are trying to sell yourself and your potential. **Do not be self-conscious** about saying you are good at something, if you have achieved something special, etc. if you want the interviewer to know something , then tell them! Be confident, but avoid coming across as a know it all.

# On the day of your virtual or phone interview

You've done all the preparation. Here are a few tips to make sure it all runs smoothly on the day.

- ▶ Make sure your phone, laptop or tablet are fully charged
- ▶ Dress smart and wear something you feel confident in. Your school uniform.
- ▶ Make sure you're sitting somewhere where you won't have any distractions or interruptions
- ▶ Have a pen and paper ready to take notes
- ▶ Think about eye contact, look directly at the camera



# On the day of your virtual or phone interview

- ▶ The more prepared you are, the more relaxed you'll feel- this confidence will come over in your voice
- ▶ Don't rely on reading notes, the interviewer will know from your voice and lack of eye contact
- ▶ There can sometimes be a short delay with technology, wait a moment to make sure the interviewer has finished what they are saying before you respond so that you don't interrupt them
- ▶ If you do have any technical problems on the day, apologise and tell the interviewer. They may be able to help you to sort out the problem

# Telephone interviews

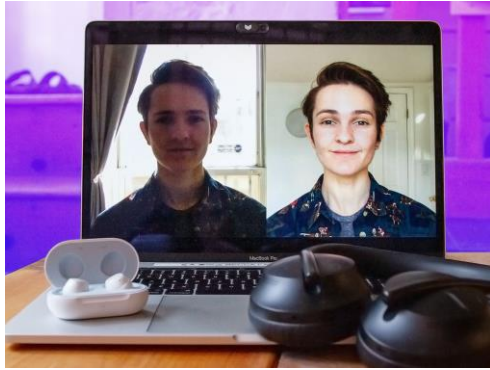
## How to prepare:

- ▶ A confident phone manner doesn't always come naturally to all and some students may feel uncomfortable talking over the phone, but with the appropriate preparation this shouldn't affect your performance.
- ▶ Find a quiet place, you want to keep background noise to a minimum to avoid having to ask the interviewer to repeat themselves or shout to have them hear you
- ▶ The best place is an empty room with the door closed. That way, you're guaranteed a quiet space
- ▶ Check you have good signal. Many of you will use your mobile phones, so make sure you have a strong signal on your phone beforehand

# Telephone interviews

- ▶ When using your mobile phone, make sure to hold it so the internal microphone will pick up your voice without any trouble
- ▶ Make sure you are comfortable.
- ▶ Decide if you'll be more comfortable sitting or standing for the interview. If you're nervous, you may find that pacing slightly while you talk can calm you down.
- ▶ Have a pen & paper to make any notes.

# DO's and DON'T's



# Some clips to help you prepare for your interview

- ▶ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gD7W7sbaLsA>
- ▶ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uDUfUFr6Un4https>
- ▶ <https://www.prospects.ac.uk/careers-advice/interview-tips>
- ▶ <https://www.prospects.ac.uk/careers-advice/interview-tips/video-interview-tips>
- ▶ <https://www.prospects.ac.uk/careers-advice/cvs-and-cover-letters/create-a-great-video-cv>

# Face-to-Face Interview

## Types :

- ▶ With one person
- ▶ A panel interview with 2 or more people this can sometimes include a presentation

## At the interview:

- ▶ make sure your phone's turned off
- ▶ use breathing techniques to calm yourself - try to remember, a few nerves are normal
- ▶ smile and greet your interviewer confidently
- ▶ ask for some water if you need it

# Face-to-Face Interview

## During the interview:

- ▶ be polite and use the right language and tone for a formal situation
- ▶ listen carefully to questions and think before you begin your answers
- ▶ if you do not understand a question, ask the interviewer to repeat it or explain further
- ▶ be positive about your experiences - if you've faced difficult situations, show what you learned from them

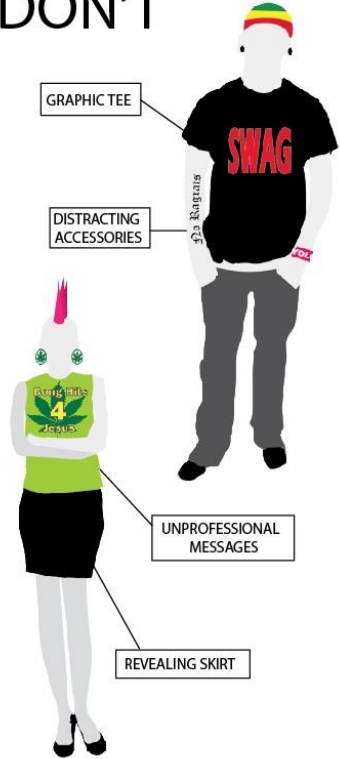
# Face-to-Face Interview

- ▶ tell the truth - do not exaggerate or come across as over-confident
- ▶ ask a couple of questions when you're invited to do so
- ▶ at the end, thank the employer for their time and tell them that you are looking forward to hearing from them
- ▶ When you leave the interview, try to write down some of the harder questions you were asked - this can help you to prepare for future interviews.

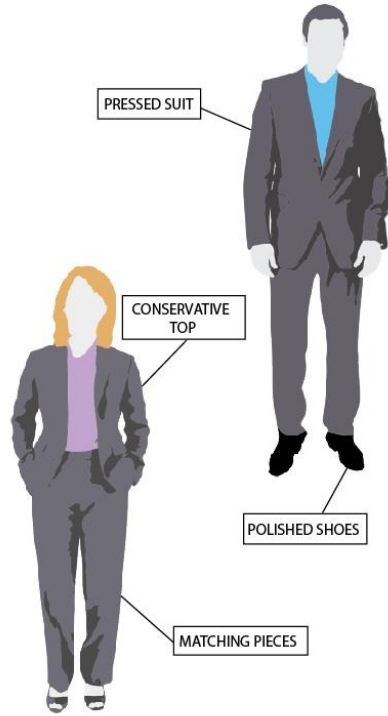


# DO's and DON'T's

## DON'T



## DO



## IT'S WHAT YOU DON'T SAY THAT COUNTS!



# Check list

- ▶ Sensible headphones ( if required)
- ▶ Make sure the light is not behind you
- ▶ Smart dress code (school uniform)
- ▶ Pen & Paper
- ▶ Some questions prepared
- ▶ Tidy work area
- ▶ Glass of water
- ▶ Quiet space

You can do this  
Good Luck!

