

# INTERVIEWS

Interviews are all about getting to know you as a candidate. They help confirm information about you and assess how well you'll fit the role and company culture.

## Preparation

1. **Check the format/details of the interview.** Will it be a panel interview, one-on-one or group discussion? Will it be in person or online? Consider asking the duration of the interview and who is on the panel.
2. **Read your application and the job ad.** You may need to further elaborate on experience or skills you have mentioned. Interview questions can often be inspired by the job advertisement, so review the skills and experience they are seeking.
3. **Research the company.** Explore their website, recent news articles and social media profiles to get a well-rounded view of their operations, values, and reputation. Pay attention to their mission statement, recent achievements, and any upcoming initiatives, as these can provide valuable talking points during the interview.
4. **Prepare responses to potential questions.** Focus on experiences where you have utilised skills outlined in the job description to accomplish similar tasks.  
  
Reflect on your uni subjects/assignments, placements, work experience, study abroad, volunteering, student clubs and part-time work. Some sample predictable questions are listed at the end of this info sheet.
5. **Practice your interview answers** with friends or use [Big Interview](#), record and review your responses to interview questions. Big Interview also has resources to demonstrate what a good response sounds like.
6. **Prepare a list of questions** that you want to ask. Questions that will help you take your understanding of the position/organisation further. Some sample questions are listed at the end of this info sheet.
7. **What to wear.** Aim for a professional and polished appearance that aligns with the industry and company culture.

8. **Dealing with nerves.** Practice some strategies to help you cope with any [nerves or anxiety](#) on the day e.g. [deep breathing](#), visualisation, releasing tension by tightening and releasing muscles in your feet or hands.

## Types of Interviews

- **Individual** – Conducted by one person, typically the hiring manager or member of the HR team.
- **Panel** – These involve multiple interviewers, usually from different departments or levels within the organisation. Try to maintain eye contact with all panellists.
- **One-way interviews** – These are often used as a screening tool. Candidates record their responses to pre-set interview questions using a video platform or specialised software. They are usually timed (e.g. 1 – 3 mins), and in most cases you have one chance to record your responses to each question.
- **Group** – Organisations undertake group interviews to observe how well you interact with others and assess your teamwork and communication skills.
- **Phone/Virtual** – Companies often use these methods to allow for remote assessments.

## First Impressions

When you enter an interview the focus is on developing a rapport with your interviewer/s. Interviewers understand that you might be nervous. Greet them with confidence, and be mindful of your body language and eye contact. Interviewers will often engage you in small talk to help ease your nerves and gauge your ability to mingle – be sure to participate in this process or even initiate it.

## Forming Responses

Listen carefully to the question and make sure you understand what the interviewer is asking. If you're unsure, don't hesitate to ask for clarification.

The **STAR (L) model** will assist you in telling a story about your past experience that is easy to follow and covers all the important information. This is particularly helpful for *behavioural type questions*, eg. Tell me

about a time when you demonstrated (a skill) ...

**S:** explain the **situation** you were in

**T:** describe the **task/problem** that arose from that situation

**A:** detail the **actions** you took to solve the problem

**R:** provide details on the **result** that was achieved

**(L):** explain what you **learnt** from this situation and what, if anything, you would do differently next time.

### Example Interview Questions

Below is a list of commonly asked interview questions.

- Tell me about yourself. (This is an invitation to share your elevator pitch.)
- Why do you want this job? Why do you want to work for this organisation? (Show a good match with your career).
- What skills will you bring to this position? (Answer keeping in mind the selection criteria and your strengths).
- What would you consider your strengths and weaknesses? (Speak of weaknesses you have overcome).
- What have you learned from your previous experiences? How have they prepared you to work for this company?
- Outline an example of when you were unable to achieve your objective. What did you learn from this experience?
- What do you consider to be your greatest accomplishment?
- Give me an example of a problem you have encountered and how you solved it. (Behavioural question, use STARL model)
- Describe a situation where you handled multiple tasks at the one time. (Behavioural question use STARL model).

### Practice

All JCU students have free access to use **Big Interview** – an online training portal to learn, practice and improve interview techniques and build confidence.

**Big Interview includes:**

- A video and written training program covering all interview techniques.
- Virtual mock interviews for all experience levels in over 20 industries.
- A database of thousands of interview

questions with tips on how to respond.

- The ability record your practice responses, rate and share your video interview recording for feedback (if you wish).

Login to [Big Interview](#) with your JCU email address.

### Book an Appointment

You can also book an Interview Preparation appointment with the Careers Team, to get tips on how to prepare and/or do a mock interview. Appointments are available in person, via Zoom or phone. Book online 24/7 via [CareerHub](#), or phone 1800 246 446 (option 5).

### Your Questions

Below is a list of sample questions that you might like to ask at the end of the interview.

- What level of support is there for new graduates working within your organisation?
- What types of training and professional development does your organisation offer?
- Is there a chance for promotion in the future?
- What do you like most about your job and working for this company?

### After the Interview

Reflect and review your performance and the interview process. Take a few notes on the questions asked, what went well and what you would do differently next time.

Follow up with a brief thank you email restating your strengths and commitment.

If you are unsuccessful, contact the employer for some feedback on your performance, then make a firm commitment to move on and concentrate your attention on your next job application.