

## **Job interview tips**

**You've made it through the CV rejection pile and now you only have one chance to shine. Job interviews can be daunting, but follow these tips and the job's as good as yours.**

### **Before the interview**

**Ring them up. Really!**

**If you ring up before your interview and ask more about the position, the company, and the skills they're looking for then not only are you getting insider tips, you're guaranteed to stick in their mind.**

**"Young people aren't used to using the phone and hide behind the internet," says Charlie Ryan, the Recruitment Queen. "But if you phone ahead you're instantly setting yourself apart. Straight away the interviewer's thinking 'that's the one who rang, they must be keen and organised'."**

**It's tempting to tweet or email, but employers are still mostly old-fashioned folk who like hearing an actual voice on an actual phone.**

### **How to dress for a job interview**

**Even if the job isn't 'businessy', make sure you dress to impress. "It's always better to be overdressed than underdressed," says Charlie. "Nobody ever didn't get the job because they were dressed too smartly."**

**This means a suit for guys – you may even get some money to help you buy one if you're claiming Job Seeker's Allowance. Make sure your top button is done up, you're wearing a tie, and your facial hair is groomed. As for girls, no short skirts, bulging cleavage, or knee-high boots. Smart and understated with tasteful jewellery is the safest bet.**

### **Do role-play beforehand**

**Get a mate to ask you standard interview questions, such as 'where do you see yourself in five years?' and 'what makes you perfect for this job?' and practise answering them aloud.**

**Make sure everything relates back to the job description and person specification.**

**Without practice, you're likely to panic and babble and not do yourself justice.**

### **Think of examples**

**Saying, 'I'm a really creative person' doesn't make it true. But saying, 'I'm really creative. I have a photography blog I update three times a week' will make an interviewer trust you. If you're really a 'team player' you'll need to demonstrate it. What kind of team? And what did you actually do that made you such a great teammate?**

**Before the interview, make a list of the questions you might be asked and work out how you'd respond with examples.**

### **During the interview**

**Make sure you speak properly**

**This means no slang, no random off-topic chatter, and definitely no swearing. Even if the interviewer talks like Dick Van Dyke on LSD, this doesn't mean you can. "You've got to use adult business language in interviews," says Denise Taylor, a career coach. "They want to know they can trust you to meet business contacts and speak appropriately."**

**Think about your body language – make eye contact and look alert and interested.**

**Ask yourself, why do I want this job? Why would I be good for this company?**

**OK, so you're desperate for money and a job, ANY JOB. But your desperation will roll off you in big sweaty radio waves and the interviewer will smell it. Your mindset going into an interview is really important, and you can control it.**

**"Most people go into an interview thinking 'I hope I get it', but an interview is a two-way thing," says Charlie. "Go in wanting to find out what the position will offer you as much as the other way round. It will noticeably increase your confidence, as well as making you seem more interested in the role and the company."**

**Ask interesting questions at the end**

**When the inevitable 'do you have any questions?' part of the interview crops up, don't just ask the old-faithful: 'what are the opportunities for promotion?' Instead, have a few interesting ones up your suit sleeve. Go on the company's website, find a quirky thing they do and then ask more about it in the interview. It shows you've done your homework.**

**And the no-brainers...**

**If you do the following, and don't get the job... well... don't come crying to us about it.**

- **Don't be late. Public transport WILL let you down. This is inevitable so leave 10 million hours to get there. If you arrive early, camp out at a coffee shop, or take a walk to clear your head.**
- **Don't lie. They will find out. You will get in trouble. You won't get the job.**
- **Don't slag off your last boss or colleagues. Even if they're Hitler and Stalin's love child, it doesn't make you look good. If asked why you left your last job, try saying "I loved it there, but felt ready to take on a new challenge". Not, "My therapist said fantasising about poking cocktail sticks into my boss's eyes was unhealthy and it's best for their safety and mine that I leave."**

**From The Mix By Holly Thompson**