

# PREPARING FOR YOUR INTERVIEW

Preparing for an interview is essential to gaining confidence and giving answers that highlight your skills. Below are some of my best tips and tricks to help you prepare:

## **Make a list of your skills**

When you're preparing for your interview, prepare a list of your best and most relevant skills beforehand. Skills-based questions are extremely common, so having your skill set fresh in your mind makes it easier to develop answers on the spot.

## **Use unique answers.**

Consider your most relevant skills and how they relate to the position. You can also review the job description again to see what skills the company is looking for. When asked about your strengths, incorporate those relevant skills to provide an impressive answer. When providing details you can give examples where you've shown these unique qualities.

## **Practice interviewing with a friend**

A great way to prepare for a potential job interview is to practice interviewing with someone you know. This will help you practice coming up with answers when you're put on the spot.

## **Greet the hiring manager warmly**

Making a good first impression during the interview is one of the first steps in securing a job. Giving the hiring manager or recruiter a warm smile and a firm handshake goes a long way to creating a good first impression.

## **Pay attention to your nonverbal communication**

Nonverbal communication is key for any interview. You should pay attention to your body language and listen actively. Making eye contact demonstrates confidence and shows the interviewer that you're paying attention to them. Similarly, you should also smile and nod when appropriate because it gives the impression that you're listening actively.

Otherwise, keep a strong posture that is straight and loose. This provides the perfect balance between being poised and relaxed. Make sure to keep your feet on the ground and your back against your chair. Keeping an even tone when you're speaking aids in giving a good first impression.

## **Think of relevant questions**

Most interviewers ask candidates whether they have questions about the job posting. This is the perfect opportunity for you to show initiative and your interest in the job.

## **Common questions in a Job interview**

To prepare for an interview, consider these questions commonly asked by interviewers:

- What are the advantages and disadvantages of these software programs?
- Provide an example of a time when you've multitasked effectively.
- What do you like about this field?
- What do you dislike about this field?
- What is your process for doing [task]?

- How much time can you dedicate to this position?

## **How to plan your answers in an interview**

Finding the right answers for interviews helps you secure the job you want.

Here are some tips to help you prepare your answers before a structured interview.

### **Be specific**

When you're asked questions about particular situations you experienced in the workplace, you should be specific. If you're asked to explain a time when you've shown leadership, be ready to provide a specific example of how you used that skill to thrive.

## **Give yourself some credit:**

When you're answering a question, always focus on your own achievements in the workplace. Don't be afraid to give yourself some credit and to own your hard work. Remember that you can talk about yourself in a way that is both confident and humble.

## **Stay positive:**

Whether you're speaking about a previous workplace or difficult situations and challenges you've encountered, stay positive. The interviewer will respond better to you if you're speaking positively about those experiences.

# Sample questions and answers for structured interviews

To give some context to interview questions, here are some examples of common structured interview questions. I also provide examples of a sound answer to those questions to help you prepare your own:

## **1. Provide an example of a time when you provided a customer with excellent customer service. How did the client react?**

Interviewers ask this question to provide you with an opportunity to reflect on your relationship with clients and exhibit your customer service skills.

Example: *"Last year, I worked as an executive assistant for John Doe International. During my time at the company, there was a customer who wanted to return one of our products but didn't have the receipt. According to my company's policy, we should have refused to let the customer return*

*her products. I convinced my manager to bypass the policy because I remembered her having bought the product. I offered her a refund or a replacement for the original product. The customer appreciated what I did so much that she told my manager about it."*

**2. Has there ever been a time when you've had to do something at work because of a policy that went against your values?**

Interviewers ask this question because the employer wants to know how you stick to your morals and values.

Example: "\*A few months ago, I was working in a private clinic as a social worker. I had a client who was showing signs of dementia. He was frequently falling without remembering how or why, was severely depressed, and couldn't remember major life events.\*

*My role in the clinic was to provide him with services that would maintain his autonomy as he aged. It surprised me to find that no one in the clinic wanted to provide him with more services to help with his depression. I tried to find him resources for a long time, but there were a lot of barriers within the institution that I couldn't bypass. So, I did my best to provide him with support until he saw his general physician. It took several months, but I did home visits every week until I could connect him with helpful resources. He's doing much better now."*



**3. Can you tell me a situation when you made a mistake and what you learned from it?**

This is an opportunity to reflect on how you've managed your mistakes.

*Example: In my previous job, I worked as a cashier for a local nonprofit organization. Every night, I was the one who would close the store and count the cash register. One night, I closed up and everything went as usual. The next morning, though, my boss called me because the key to the cash register was missing. I looked everywhere and couldn't find it in my things, but I couldn't remember putting the key back in its usual drawer. Luckily, the company had a spare key in the office and nothing was stolen. From that day on, I always double-checked that everything was in the right place when I closed the store.*

# **OTHER TYPICAL INTERVIEW QUESTIONS & ANSWERS**

1. Question: Tell us more about yourself.

Answer: I am a hardworker, passionate, consistent and disciplined.

2. Question: Why do you think you are the best candidate for the job?

Answer: I am a very committed worker, I love challenges and I have the will to succeed. I am a motivated person. I have the ability to learn fast which will facilitate the training period.

3. Question: Why did you apply for this position?

Answer: I applied because I am looking for a job. I want to advance my career /experience in a position that allows me to grow as a person and employee.

4. Question: What are your strengths?

Answer: I can work under a lot of pressure, I am an amazing problem solver, I am a persistent person and I don't give up very easily. My dependability is also an amazing part of me and I can make decisions under pressure (good decision making skills)

I can be able to work with little/no supervision, willing to learn new things, easy to adapt, friendly, reliable, expressive and punctual

5. Question: What is your biggest weakness?

Answer: I can be too committed to my work and don't spend enough time with other social activities. I work too hard. I care too much about my work.

6. Question: Do you prefer to work independently or as a team?

Answer: They are both my favorites and I am also a very great team player

7. Question: How do you handle stress or pressure?

Answer: I work well under pressure because I prepare for it before it comes. I try to stay calm as possible and focus to get the job done. I

prioritize my responsibility so I have a clear idea of what is needed to be done, that helps me to effectively manage pressure

8. Question: What is your salary requirement?

Answer: I am expecting to get a job offer that is realistic and reasonable

9. Question: Where do you see yourself in 5-10 yrs?

Answer: My long term goals include being involved in a growing company where I can continue to learn and contribute as much value as I can. Once I gain additional experience I would like to move through the ranks of the job. I would like to see myself as an expert of my job description.

10. Question: What is your ideal job?

Answer: Would be challenging but secure

11. Question: Preferred working hours?

Answer: I am flexible

12. Question: What do other people say about you?

Answer: They find me interesting and approachable

13. Question: Why is teamwork important?

Answer: As people, we think differently and in those different views we can get the views that can benefit the project. It teaches you how to solve work problems, work hard, handle stress and become a good thinker.

14. Questions: Do you have any questions?

Answer: Yes, How much time do I have?

Do you see my skills contributing to this company?

Do you think I'm qualified for this job?

How soon could I start?

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# Care assistant interview questions and answers

## 1. What do you think a care assistant does?

With this question, the interviewer is assessing your knowledge about working as a care assistant. If you don't have previous experience as a care assistant, prepare for your interview by carefully reading the job description. Remember to check the company's website for more specific information about what they expect from care assistants.

Example: 'I understand that working as a care assistant involves helping clients, who are often elderly, to live their best possible life by assisting with their immediate needs like washing, dressing and going to the toilet. It also includes providing basic medical care like giving clients medication or monitoring temperature and blood pressure.'

## 2. Why do you want to be a care assistant?

This question is designed to test whether your personality is suited to working as a care assistant. If you are interviewing for a more senior care position, you may be asked why you chose this career. Either way, your answer needs to show the interviewers the reasons you are suited to care work. If you have a personal story that highlights this, it could be a good opportunity to show your human side by including it.

Example: 'When I was younger, I had a close family member with a degenerative disease, who I was involved in caring for. Although it was very sad, I learned a lot about taking care of others and how much this person got out of my care, which also made me feel fulfilled. I realized then that I wanted a career based around helping people.'

3. Imagine your patient has a heart attack. What would you do?

With this question, the interviewer wants to know that you are able to stay calm during a stressful situation, and also that you have some awareness

or training in procedures for emergency situations. It's important to break down your answer into specific steps.

Example: 'The first step would be to call for emergency medical care. If the patient was conscious, I would give them aspirin unless there was an allergy noted in their records. If they had a prescription for nitroglycerin, I would administer this. If the patient was unconscious, I would proceed to CPR until help arrives.'

#### 4. What do you know about safeguarding policies?

Questions about safeguarding are very common care assistant interview questions. If you aren't familiar with this topic, it's a good idea to do some research before your interview. In your answer, offer a definition of safeguarding policies, and tell the interviewer how this would affect your work as a care assistant.

Example: 'Safeguarding policies are in place to protect a client's health, wellbeing and human rights, as outlined in the Care Act of 2014. As my work as a care assistant would mean working with vulnerable adults, I



would learn to recognise signs that someone is not living in a safe environment, such as not having somewhere clean to sleep or access to food and water, or if there are any physical signs of abuse or neglect. If I suspected this to be the case, I would speak to the person to see if they reveal anything, and report my concerns to my manager or the relevant authority.'

5. Imagine a patient doesn't want you to come into their room. What would you do?

As well as testing your reaction to a specific situation, this question is designed to see whether your personality is suited to working as a care assistant. In your answer, you need to give information about your approach to care work more broadly.

Example: 'It's important to me to show empathy to my clients, and to allow them to maintain their dignity and make choices for themselves. However, I also have a duty to provide my clients with the care they need. In this situation, I would say to the client, "I hear what you are saying. I will come

back and check on you in 20 minutes". I would then inform a nurse of the situation and ask their opinion before going back to my client.'

6. How would you maintain confidentiality in your work as a care assistant?

This kind of care assistant interview question is very common, as patient confidentiality is crucial in the health care sector. You need to show that you are able to create a trusting environment for your patients.

PS: If you haven't worked as a care assistant before, you could draw on previous professional or personal experience and tell the interviewer about a time you had to maintain confidentiality.

Example: 'Maintaining confidentiality for my patients is a vital part of my work as a care assistant. I never disclose my patient's medical information to anyone, unless my patient has given me written consent to do so. I take pride in creating a trusting environment for my patients, so they feel comfortable sharing sensitive information with me. This helps me to develop strong, trusting relationships with my patients.'

7. Tell us how you would handle caring for a patient with Alzheimer's disease.

The interviewer may ask you questions to test your knowledge of common conditions. If you aren't familiar with these already, it's a good idea to look them up before your interview. In this case, as well as your knowledge about the disease, you need to show that you are adaptable in your work, as patients with Alzheimer's disease can sometimes be unpredictable.

Example: 'I know that patients with Alzheimer's disease can often become confused about their whereabouts or situation, which can make them angry or upset. As a care assistant, I would be tolerant and understanding with my patients, especially on their bad days. I would also need to monitor the progression of the disease to make sure that my care is adapted to my patient's specific needs.'

8. How do you deal with situations that make you sad or angry?

Although working as a care assistant can be very rewarding, it also involves situations that can be upsetting to professionals as well as to patients and their families. With this question, the interviewer is once again testing whether your personality and experience are suited to a career as a care assistant. You need to show that you are able to deal with your emotions so that they don't negatively affect your work. Ideally, you should back this up with an example.

Example: 'When I first began working as a care assistant, I lost a patient, which made me very sad. I didn't talk about my feelings and lost sleep over it, which affected my work. Over the years, I have learned how to deal with my emotions when it comes to my patients.'

Although I remain positive and caring with my patients, I also know that I need to take care of myself and acknowledge my anger and sadness by attending a weekly support group. I am still sad when a patient dies, but I am also happy that I was able to give them the best possible care when they needed it.'