

Preparing for interviews

Once your resume has caught the attention of an employer, you may be asked to meet for an interview. Congratulations! An interview is your chance to present yourself, highlight your experience and let the employer know that you are the right person for the job.

What to expect

- There may be one or more interviewers.
- Interviewers will often sit at one side of a table to face you.
- Pen and paper are often provided for notes.
- Sometimes the questions will be given to you just before the interview.
- Interviewers will understand that you may be nervous. They want to learn more about you and why you are interested in the job.

Getting ready

- **Research the organization** – Know what the organization does, its values, history and any recent news about it. This will help you show your interest in working there.
- **Review the job requirements** – Go through the job description and the skills required to see how you can relate them to your own skills and experience.
- **Plan your stories** – When you've reviewed the job description, choose your skills that are most important for the employer to know about. For each, think of one or two example situations that demonstrate the skill.
- **Practice** – Check out the lists of sample interview questions in Appendix 5. Get a friend to help you practice, or recite your answers in front of a mirror. Practice will increase your confidence.
- **Prepare some of your own questions** – Asking a couple of good questions at the interview can help show your research, initiative and interest in the job. It can also help you decide if the job and the organization is the right fit for you.
- **Prepare references** – Ask three people to be references and bring the list to the interview. Find out more on the next page.



References

When you come to the interview, bring a list of three references on a sheet of paper. A reference is someone who can comment on your personality and how you work. They should also be able to confirm some of the skills and accomplishments you've included in your application.

Provide each reference's name, title, phone number and email address. Ask before you use someone as a reference. This lets the reference know the kinds of jobs you're applying for, so they're prepared to give you the best reference possible. You can ask the reference if it would help to send them the job description and your resume.

Who makes a good reference?

- Past or current supervisor
- Supervisor from a past or current volunteer, project or other extracurricular activity
- Someone you've done odd jobs or babysat for
- Teacher
- Coach
- School counsellor

Interview tips

- Arrive 10 minutes early.
- Wear something comfortable but that fits the position and shows you take the interview seriously.
- Use confident body language during the interview. For example, sit up tall and avoid fidgeting. It's important to make eye contact and smile when appropriate to show your enthusiasm. It can also help you relax and give you a boost of confidence.
- If you blank on a question, take a deep breath! It's OK to ask the interviewer for a minute to think about your response. That shows you think before you speak. You may also ask them to clarify a question if you're not sure you understand it correctly.
- After the interview, send a thank-you note or email to the employer. This allows you to express your appreciation, mention anything important that you didn't cover, and remind the employer you're a good fit for the job.
- You can ask the interviewer for a feedback call if you don't get the job. This can help you perform at your best in future interviews. It also lets them know that you take the process seriously and want to learn and improve.
- Be yourself!

Visit [WorkBC.ca/jobs](https://www.workbc.ca/jobs) for more information on resumes, interviews, and using networking and social media in your job search.