
Job interview



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Tips & Tricks

Congratulations, you are invited for a job interview! This invitation was sent out based on your CV and motivation letter. In this brochure you will find information on how to approach a job interview.

Goal of a job interview

A job interview is a nice way to find out if an organization is suitable for you. The interviewer wants to know whether you meet the mandatory requirements and if there is a connection; whether you are a good match for the department and/or organization, and of course the other way around. Is the job everything you expected? And what are your thoughts on for example the organization and department culture?

Various kinds of job interviews

Every organization has its own style regarding interviewing. The job interview can therefore differ regarding procedures, location, and/or phase of the selection process. It can be conducted by one person, a committee, a conversation of ten minutes or it can take the entire day. Try to be prepared for any situation.

A personal conversation is the most common form of a job interview. However, it is possible that an organization chooses to conduct a case interview. In this type of conversation, the main goal is to check your ability to solve a case or problem. Furthermore, organizations can choose to conduct the job interview by phone, where you would have to make a good impression by using only your voice. Or the job interview could be conducted with the use of Skype or Zoom. Here, you have to make sure you use a calm background.

Keep in mind that there are often several application rounds. A job interview for a traineeship often starts with a meeting where multiple candidates are present and where the first selection will take place.

The interviewer

You will always be notified upfront on who will conduct the interview. If this is not the case, do not hesitate to ask. Ask whether there are more people present during the job interview and ask what their role in the organization is. A recruiter has for example another approach than a manager or expert.

Preparation

Look at the job interview as top-class sport. What do these athletes do before a game, how do they make sure they are in top shape? Top athletes have rituals. Use these kind of rituals to prepare for your game: the job interview. This ritual can make you 'score'. Think about what kind of preparation would be suitable for you and the job interview to ensure you are in top shape both mentally as physically. The following aspects could be useful for your preparation:

- Immerse yourself in the information concerning the vacancy and organization provided on their own website (if possible).
- Google the organization, department, field of interest, the interviewer, and yourself.

- Make use of LinkedIn to find out who works in the organization – do you perhaps know someone; ask how an interview proceeds and ask for tips.
- Investigate news articles about the organization, sector and your field of work.
- Think about questions that might come up during the interview.
- Read your personal profile (CV) and prepare how you can illustrate your written qualities in examples.
- If necessary, prepare an ‘elevator pitch’ or a case.
- Take your motivation letter and CV with you – think in advance why you would suit the vacancy.
- Think in advance about the questions you would like to ask the organization. Write these down and take them with you.
- Make sure you are looking neat and tidy – a fresh breath is always welcome.
- Plan your trip and leave on time. Prepare a ‘plan B’ in case of adversities, and/or delays.
- Make sure you have the contact information of the interviewer and/or organization.
- Make sure you are well rested before you go to the job interview.

General tips

- An interview is a two way traffic: be curious and ask questions.
- Try to relax and be yourself. This gives the interviewer the chance to get an example on who you are as an employee.
- Talk calmly.
- Speak the language of the organization.
- Keep your answers short.
- Keep your story simple – avoid complicated language.
- Show that you are also listening, for example by nodding your head.
- Try to see whether you have a connection.
- Be positive and friendly.
- Use the open questions as a way to pitch yourself (what, how, where, who, when)
- Be honest about your CV.
- If you do not understand a question, let the interviewer know.
- Do not be afraid to take a moment to think about a difficult question.
- Make notes in case you get another interview.
- Do not forget to turn off your phone!

Not advised during a job interview

- Interrupting the interviewer will not be appreciated. Let someone finish their sentences.
- Try to avoid a discussion with the interviewer.
- Do not initiate a conversation regarding the salary during the first interview; this is usually dealt with in the next interview. You can, however, already research the average height of the salary. This could be useful to know in case the interviewer does mention the salary in the first interview.
- Try to avoid socially desirable answers – no one is perfect.

- Being negative about your previous employer is 'not done'.
- People often talk too much if they are nervous, try to avoid this.
- Avoid talking about 'we' when they ask about your specific role within a project.

STAR(R) or STAR(E) method

Frequently used methods during a job interview are the STAR(R) or STAR(E) method. These are developed with the central thought that 'behaviour from the past is the best way to predict future behaviour'. With the STAR(R) or STAR(E) method an interviewer does not only ask for an abstract characteristic or quality, but also asks for the reasoning and evidence behind this behaviour: • S - ituation • T - asks • A - activities • R - esult • R - eflexion of E -valuation

After the job interview

If it takes a long time to receive a reaction on the interview, do not hesitate to take the initiative to make a phone call yourself. Make sure you do not sound desperate or impatient, but ask about the current situation of your job interview.

Hired or rejected

You got the job: congratulations! Ask what the next steps are and what is expected of you. Do not post your new job on social media right away, and be careful to whom you already tell the good news within your family and circle of friends. This also applies to quitting your current job, if you currently have one. The advice is to share the news as soon as you have signed your new contract.

What if you got rejected? Self-reflection does not hurt anyone. Why do you think it went wrong? Ask the organization, if possible, what they thought of you as a candidate for the vacancy. What were their thoughts on your CV and motivation letter? Or of the interview itself? Do they have any tips for improvement? Do they keep your CV for the future? Can you contact them again any time soon?

More information?

Would you like more information or do you want to check your CV/LinkedIn-profile? Check our website or make an appointment with the Career Service.

The Career Service is available every Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday for career advice.

W www.radboudumc.nl/Careerservice

T 06-15292392 of 024-3693811

E careerservice.rha@radboudumc.nl

f Career Service Radboudumc Health Academy

in Loopbaanoriëntatie Geneeskunde

in Radboudumc Career Orientation BMS Radboudumc

