CAREER READINESS • STUDENT WORKSHOP

OWN THE INTERVIEW

How to conduct yourself in an entry-level job interview

CONFIDENCE • PREPARATION • PROFESSIONALISM

A practical guide for students and first-time job seekers

01 • START HERE

What makes a strong entry-level candidate?

You do not need years of experience to make a strong first impression.

CONFIDENCE

Communicate clearly. Believe in the value you can bring.

WILLINGNESS TO LEARN

Show curiosity, initiative and openness to feedback.

PROFESSIONALISM

Be respectful, prepared, reliable and honest.

Your goal: help the interviewer see your potential — not pretend you know everything.

Employers often look for attitude, communication, dependability and the ability to learn.

Preparation starts before you arrive

A little research and planning can reduce nerves and help you answer with purpose.

01	**Research the organisation**	Know what it does, who it serves and its products or services.
02	**Study the job description**	Identify the main duties and skills the employer is seeking.
03	**Prepare your examples**	Think of moments from school, volunteering, projects or attachments.
04	**Plan your logistics**	Choose professional clothes, plan your route and arrive 15–20 minutes early.
05	**Pack what you need**	Carry copies of your CV and relevant certificates or documents. Put your phone on silent.

Tip: Prepare two or three real examples that show your skills in action.

The first few minutes matter

Aim to look composed, approachable and ready to engage.

WHEN YOU ARRIVE

- Greet the receptionist politely
- Be courteous to everyone
- Keep your phone away
- Wait calmly for your turn

WHEN YOU ENTER

- Knock if the door is closed
- Smile and greet the panel
- Offer a handshake if appropriate
- Wait to be invited to sit

WHILE YOU SPEAK

- Sit upright and stay attentive
- Make natural eye contact
- Speak clearly and at a steady pace
- Listen without interrupting

Body language should reinforce your message: calm, respectful and engaged.

How to answer interview questions

Use a simple structure: make your point, give an example, explain what you learned.

TRY THE STAR METHOD

S Situation — briefly describe the context
T Task — explain your responsibility
A Action — say what you did
R Result — share the outcome or lesson

NO FORMAL WORK EXPERIENCE?

Use examples from:
- Class assignments and group projects
- Student leadership or clubs
- Volunteering or community work
- Personal projects, sports or caregiving

Be specific. A genuine small example is stronger than a big claim with no evidence.

Questions you are likely to hear

Do not memorise a script. Practise natural answers that sound like you.

Tell me about yourself	Give a 30–60 second summary: your background, strengths and what you are seeking.
Why should we hire you?	Connect your strengths to the role. Emphasise reliability, initiative and readiness to learn.
What are your strengths?	Choose two or three relevant strengths and support each with a brief example.
What is one area you are improving?	Choose a genuine, manageable development area and explain what you are doing about it.
Where do you see yourself in five years?	Show that you want to build skills, grow in responsibility and contribute.

Keep most answers focused: around 30–90 seconds, depending on the question.

A strong answer to “Tell me about yourself”

“I am a recent graduate in [your course], and I am interested in building my career in [field]. Through my studies and projects, I have developed skills in [relevant skills]. I am organised, willing to learn and comfortable working with others. I am looking for an opportunity where I can apply what I know, gain practical experience and contribute to the team.”

Make it your own: replace the brackets and include one real example or achievement.

Questions you can ask the employer

When asked, “Do you have any questions for us?”, use the opportunity thoughtfully.

01 ASK

What would success look like in the first three months?

02 ASK

What are the main priorities for the person in this role?

03 ASK

How is training or onboarding provided to new employees?

04 ASK

What qualities help someone do well in this team?

Choose one or two questions that you genuinely want answered.

What can weaken your interview?

Small habits can distract from your skills and potential.

AVOID

- Arriving late or unprepared
- Interrupting or speaking over others
- Giving long, unrelated answers
- Speaking negatively about others
- Checking your phone
- Exaggerating your experience

DO INSTEAD

- Plan your journey and arrive early
- Listen fully before responding
- Keep answers clear and relevant
- Stay respectful and constructive
- Keep your phone out of sight
- Be honest about what you know

If you do not know an answer, be honest — then explain how you would find out.

09 • FINISH STRONG

Leave the interviewer with a positive impression

THANK THEM

"Thank you for your time and for explaining more about the role. I appreciate the opportunity to interview."

RESTATE YOUR INTEREST

"I am very interested in the opportunity and would be glad to contribute to the team."

CONFIDENCE • PREPARATION • HONESTY • CURIOSITY

You are not expected to know everything. Show that you are ready to learn, contribute and grow.

Let’s practise: your 60-second introduction

Pair up. One student is the interviewer; the other is the candidate. Then switch roles.

1 • INTRODUCE

Name your course or background and the type of role you want.

2 • GIVE EVIDENCE

Share one example from school, a project, volunteering or leadership.

3 • END WITH PURPOSE

Explain what you hope to learn and how you can contribute.

Peer feedback: Was the answer clear? Relevant? Confident? Genuine?

Remember: practise to sound natural — not rehearsed.

YOUR FIRST JOB INTERVIEW IS A CONVERSATION.

Prepare well. Be respectful. Give real examples.
Show your willingness to learn.

BE READY | **BE CLEAR** | **BE HONEST** | **BE CURIOUS**

THANK YOU

Questions & discussion