

INTERVIEW LIKE A BOSS



They say it takes just seven seconds for someone to form a first impression – so make sure you leave a good one! When walking into a job interview, it pays to think about how you present yourself. From the clothes you wear to the way you talk, and how firm your handshake is.

It's important to know what you have to offer. What do you bring to the role/organisation? What are you passionate about? What makes you different? What do you do better than others? What makes you a good employee? And what are you not so good at? (knowing your weaknesses is good!)

Thinking about these things will not only help when answering questions, but it will help build your confidence too. Confidence is critically important and can be the determining factor to who gets the job. As cliché as it is – in order for others to believe in you, you have to believe in yourself.

PREPARE LIKE A CHAMP

Know your future

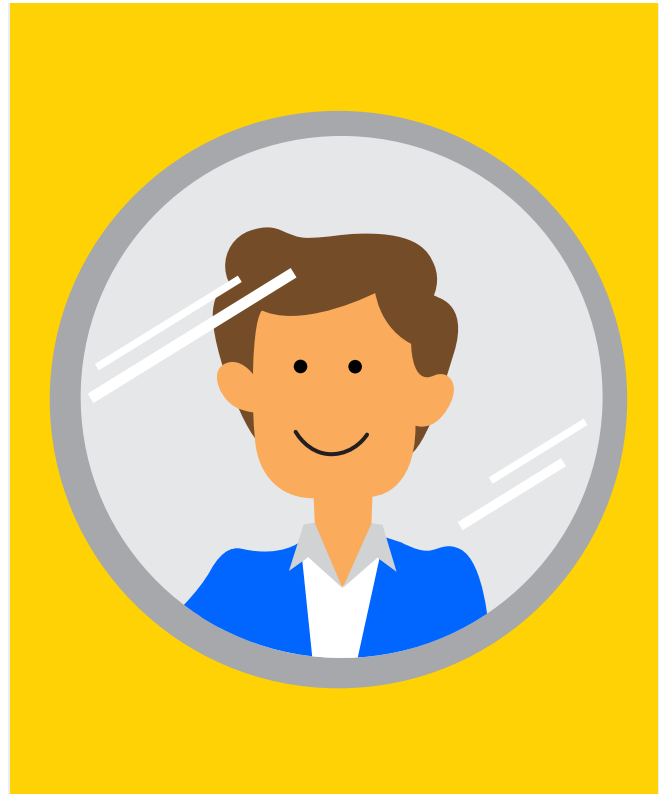
Where do you want to take your career, how does this role fit into that? Consider this as your opportunity to position yourself and gain a competitive advantage over other candidates. Express how your skills match, your enthusiasm for the job, and how you fit into the organisation's culture.

Positive self-talk

Pay attention to your inner voice and always try to flip the negative into positive. While past work experience may qualify you for specific job roles, employers are always seeking out achievers and motivated performers. If your past experience is limited, but you walk into your interview with optimistic, confident energy, people will notice.

If a previous role ended on a negative note (even if it wasn't your doing, eg a difficult manager) never elaborate on this. It will reflect badly on you. Never let the interview turn into a "he said she said" situation.

Don't limit yourself to the text on your CV. Lacking experience doesn't mean you should doubt your chances of getting hired. Channel your positivity, show how motivated and excited you are to learn, be energetic and resourceful, and employers will be excited to recruit you.



Do your research

Find out as much about the company and role as possible. Study the position description. If it's apparent you don't know anything about the company, it's an immediate turn-off to an employer.

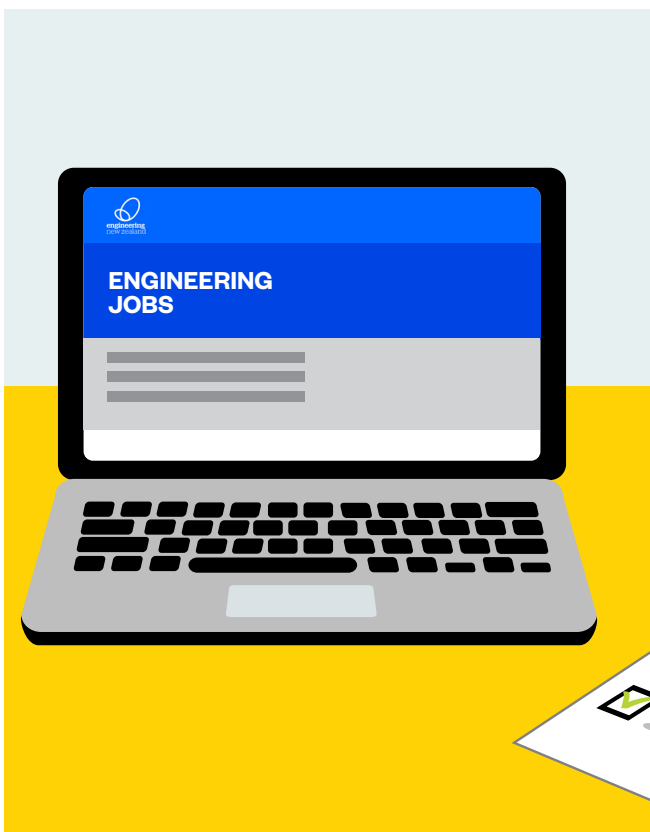
Plus, how do you know you're a qualified candidate for that position if you haven't done your homework? You don't need to memorise the entire profile of an organisation, but it's smart to spend time browsing their website and taking note especially of the "About Us" and "Values" section.

Utilise what's available

Take advantage of career service resources at your tertiary institution. They'll help with networking, applications, planning and preparing for your future work and life, exploring career possibilities, and interview preparation.

Prepare questions

Prepare some intelligent questions to ask about the company and the role. You should be interviewing the employer just as much as they're interviewing you. You both need to walk away convinced that the job would be a great fit. It's a good idea to have at least four questions prepared – just in case some get answered through the course of the interview. Avoid salary discussion unless they instigate it.

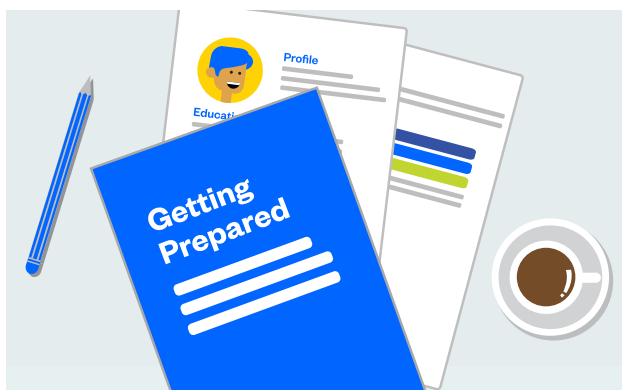


Get organised

Take an up-to-date CV with you, a copy of the job description, some notes of key points or questions you have, plus a notepad and a pen. It also looks good to arrive slightly early (five minutes or so) and be well presented.

15 common interview questions to prepare for

- Tell us a bit about you, your experience so far and your career goals.
- What attracted you to this role and this organisation?
- What are your strengths? How do they apply to this role?
- What are your weaknesses? How are you working on them?
- What frustrates you and how do you overcome this?
- How do you deal with difficult people?
- What experience have you had with miscommunication with someone else and how did you solve it?
- How do you organise your work to make sure you're effective and productive?
- How did the best supervisor you've ever had motivate you to perform well? Why did that work?
- When you had to do a job that was particularly uninteresting, how did you deal with it?
- What kind of environment do you enjoy working in?
- Tell us about a time when something you were working on didn't go to plan. What did you do about it?
- Tell us about your leadership skills and any experience in leadership positions.
- What can you do for us that other candidates can't?
- What salary/hourly rate are you seeking?



PASS WITH FLYING COLOURS

Engagement

When you meet the interviewers, look them in the eyes and smile as you shake hands. Body language is an important sign of engagement. Sit up straight and lean slightly forward towards your interviewers to engage them and show that you're interested in what they are saying. Eye contact throughout the interview is important. Make frequent, but not piercing, eye contact with the interviewer to demonstrate that you are listening carefully to what they're saying and remember to smile!

You will likely be interviewed by more than one person, so, try to look at them all as you speak. If you know who is interviewing you check out their LinkedIn profile. You will get an idea of their background and they will notice you have done your homework.

Listen

Answer the questions asked – it sounds obvious, but sometimes people can go off track. Make sure you direct your answer to the person who asked the question. Be attentive but remain relaxed. It can be helpful to reaffirm your understanding of a question/statement by summarising what they said in your own words – this will also help to solidify your own understanding. And if needed, this will allow the interviewee to clarify anything you may have misunderstood.

Enthusiasm!

If you're even slightly bored, it will show. Voice it when you think something sounds interesting! If the interviewer explains job responsibilities that excite you, feel free to let them know by saying "that sounds great, I've always wanted to do more of..."

Compliment the interviewer on what you like about the organisation and what attracted you to apply for the role. Don't let your enthusiasm dwindle at the end. Shake their hand and reiterate how much you enjoyed the interview and that you look forward to hearing from them.



FINISH ON A HIGH

Show your appreciation

Send an email to the interviewer, or through your recruiter, after to say how much you enjoyed meeting them and thanking them for their time. This will keep you at the forefront of their mind and reiterate your enthusiasm for the role.

Take note

Write down all the questions you were asked for future reference, noting which questions you may need to practise answering.

Follow-up

Re-approach the interviewer when the timeframe for a decision has passed. If you didn't get the job, ask for some feedback on why you weren't the successful candidate. Enquire about what you did well and what you can do better.

The reality is the majority of graduates will face some level of rejection when applying for jobs (and that's okay!). Take what you can from the interview – what questions did they ask that you could better prepare for? How can you come across more confident? What can you expect next time?

Practice makes perfect

Join one of our student Speed Interviewing sessions to practice your skills, while meeting new people and making connections. Our mock interviewers will give you practical tips to nail your dream job.

www.engineeringnz.org/speed-interviewing