

career contessa

CHECKLIST
**PREP FOR
A JOB
INTERVIEW**

No frills and zero frets—just five
simple steps to seriously
dominate your next job interview.

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Step 1: Study Yourself

☐ CHECK YOUR RESUME (TWICE)

Go through each role and summarize what you did. Make sure to list your accomplishments and results.

☐ KNOW YOUR EXPERIENCE LIKE YOU KNOW YOUR COFFEE ORDER

You shouldn't have to think about it, and you should know exactly how your skills relate to the job. Print the job description and write down how you're qualified for each task listed.

☐ GET READY TO ELEVATOR PITCH

Run through your personal pitch, out loud. (If you don't have one, we've got a worksheet for that in our Resource Library.)

☐ COMPLETE THE TABLE BELOW:

MY KEY STRENGTHS	1. 2. 3.
MY AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT	1. 2. 3.
HOW I WOULD ADD VALUE	1. 2. 3.
WHY I WANT THE JOB	1. 2. 3.

Step 2: Company Research

☐ **RESEARCH THE WHY**

Read the company's mission statement, research how the company makes money, and suss out their business model ("About" pages are great for this).

☐ **AND THE WHAT**

Get to know the company product(s) and, if possible, test them.

☐ **AND THE WHO**

Take to the website and Google to learn about the leadership team, particularly the people you might meet at your interview.

☐ **GET TO KNOW YOUR INTERVIEW CONTACT**

Look up your interviewer(s) on LinkedIn and establish any common connections (hint: if it makes you uncomfortable you can turn on incognito mode so they can't see, but they might appreciate knowing you're thoroughly researching).

☐ **FOLLOW THE COMPANY ON SOCIAL MEDIA**

(LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat...)

☐ **READ BETWEEN THE JOB DESCRIPTION LINES**

Check into office culture and read employee reviews (try Glassdoor).

☐ **READ RECENT PRESS**

About the company but also its leaders.



Step 3: Prepare Answers For The Most Common Questions

- ☐ **Tell me about yourself...**
- ☐ **Describe a challenge or conflict you've faced and how you dealt with it.**
- ☐ **How did you come across this role and why are you interested in it?**
- ☐ **What do you know about our company and why do you want to work here?**
- ☐ **Why are you leaving your current role?**
- ☐ **Tell me about...**
Anything on your resume.
- ☐ **Tell me about a time when...**
You accomplished something huge, you worked with a difficult person, you made a mistake and what you learned from it, you worked with a team, you solved a problem.
- ☐ **Why should we hire you for this role?**
- ☐ **What's your biggest strength/weakness?**
- ☐ **What are your salary expectations?**
- ☐ **Where do you see yourself in [X] years?**
- ☐ **Why are you interested in our industry?**
- ☐ **How do you evaluate success?**
- ☐ **What gets you out of bed everyday?**
- ☐ **Do you have any questions for me?**
This will get asked (trust us). You should ask some questions specific to what you discuss in your interview, but it helps to have a few prepared in advance, in case you find yourself stumped. Fill in your questions at right.

QUESTIONS FOR YOUR INTERVIEWER

Remember that the best questions are ones where you can't find the answers online. Your questions should show you are engaged, interested in the company, and have already done quite a bit of research.

1.

2.

3.

4. **CC Freebie:** What can I expect in terms of timing and next steps for the interview process?

OTHER RESOURCES

To find company-specific interview questions, [research on Glassdoor](#).

We've given a few insider tips on how to answer some of these questions [here](#). It's also helpful to understand the [S.T.A.R.](#) method for giving answers:

Situation

The interviewer wants you to present a recent challenge and situation in which you found yourself.

Task

What did you have to achieve? The interviewer will be looking to see what you were trying to accomplish in the situation.

Action

What did you do? The interviewer will be looking for information on what you did, why you did it and what the alternatives were.

Results

What was the outcome of your actions? What did you achieve? Did you meet your objectives? What did you learn from this experience and have you used that lesson since?



Step 4: Prepare For Logistics

The Day Before The Interview...

☐ **KNOW THE TURF**

Look up your driving route and figure out the parking situation.

☐ **PICK YOUR INTERVIEW OUTFIT**

Choose an outfit that matches the company culture and dress code, but also one that suits your personality. Be sure to wear comfortable clothing and shoes (you'll thank us later).

☐ **PACK A BAG WITH...**

- ☐ Copies of your resume
- ☐ Your original cover letter
- ☐ Hard copy of questions for your interviewers
- ☐ Business cards
- ☐ An iPad or print portfolio to show off your work (if applicable)
- ☐ Pen and paper
- ☐ Water and a snack
- ☐ Mirror

The Day Of The Interview...

☐ **ARRIVE 15 MINUTES EARLY**

But no earlier.

☐ **MAKE EYE CONTACT**

With everyone you meet, including whoever you ride up with in the elevator (you never know who they might be).

☐ **MAKE SMALL TALK**

With your interviewers.

☐ **GIVE A FIRM HANDSHAKE**

We know you've got it in you.

Step 5: After The Interview

- ☐ **SEND A THOUGHTFUL, PERSONALIZED THANK YOU NOTE**

Within 24 hours to each interviewer reiterating your interest and fit for the company and job.

- ☐ **RECAP YOUR INTERVIEW**

Take notes on what you did well, what you wish you did differently, and your overall impressions.

- ☐ **FOLLOW UP**

Every 10 days to 2 weeks (unless given a different timeframe) to see where you stand.

NEED SOME EXTRA GUIDANCE?

Our mentors can help you prepare for your job interview in a 50-minute personalized session.
Hire a Mentor at: careercontessa.com/hire-a-mentor