Interview Prep Checklist

A Step-by-Step Guide to Get Ready Fast

Pre-Interview Research (1-2 Days Before)

Research the Company

- [ ] Visit the company's website and read their mission, values, and recent news
- [ ] Check their social media pages and LinkedIn profiles
- [ ] Research their products, services, and competitors
- [ ] Look up the company culture and recent developments
- [ ] Understand how your role fits into their organization

Know the Job Description

- [ ] Read the job posting carefully and highlight key requirements
- [ ] Identify the skills, experience, and qualifications they're seeking
- [ ] Match your background to the role requirements
- [ ] Prepare specific examples that demonstrate relevant skills

Research Your Interviewer(s)

- [ ] Look up interviewer profiles on LinkedIn
- [ ] Understand their role and background
- [ ] Check if they have any shared connections or interests

Prepare Your Answers (1 Day Before)

Master Common Questions

- [ ] "Tell me about yourself" - craft a 2-minute professional summary
- [ ] "Why do you want this job?" - connect your goals to the role
- [ ] "Why should we hire you?" - highlight your unique value
- [ ] "What are your strengths and weaknesses?" - be honest but strategic
- [ ] "Where do you see yourself in 5 years?" - show ambition and alignment

Practice Behavioral Questions Using STAR Method

STAR = Situation, Task, Action, Result

Prepare examples for:

- [ ] A time you solved a difficult problem
- [ ] A time you worked under pressure
- [ ] A time you showed leadership
- [ ] A time you handled conflict
- [ ] A time you made a mistake and learned from it
- [ ] A time you worked as part of a team
- [ ] A time you went above and beyond

Prepare Questions for the Interviewer

Write down 4-5 thoughtful questions:

- [ ] "What does a typical day look like in this role?"
- [ ] "What are the biggest challenges facing the team right now?"
- [ ] "How do you measure success in this position?"
- [ ] "What opportunities are there for professional development?"
- [ ] "What do you enjoy most about working here?"

Gather Your Materials (Night Before)

Essential Documents

- [ ] Multiple copies of your resume (at least 5)
- [ ] List of professional references with contact information
- [ ] Portfolio or work samples (if applicable)
- [ ] Copies of relevant certificates or awards
- [ ] Pen and notebook for taking notes

Professional Accessories

- [ ] Professional folder or portfolio to organize documents
- [ ] Watch for subtle time management
- [ ] Breath mints or gum (dispose before interview)
- [ ] Small bottle of water

Plan Your Appearance (Night Before)

Professional Attire Guidelines

Business Formal:

- [ ] Dark suit (navy, charcoal, or black)
- [ ] White or light blue dress shirt
- [ ] Conservative tie (men) or professional blouse (women)
- [ ] Leather dress shoes, polished
- [ ] Minimal, professional jewelry

Business Casual:

- [ ] Dress pants or knee-length skirt
- [ ] Button-down shirt or professional blouse
- [ ] Blazer or cardigan
- [ ] Closed-toe shoes (flats, low heels, or oxfords)
- [ ] Simple accessories

General Tips:

- [ ] Clothes are clean, pressed, and well-fitted
- [ ] Conservative colors (navy, black, gray, brown)
- [ ] Minimal fragrance or cologne
- [ ] Hair neat and professionally styled
- [ ] Nails clean and well-groomed

Day of Interview Logistics

Final Preparations

- [ ] Get a good night's sleep
- [ ] Eat a light, healthy breakfast
- [ ] Review your notes one final time
- [ ] Check the weather and plan accordingly
- [ ] Charge your phone and set to silent

Travel and Timing

- [ ] Know the exact address and parking situation
- [ ] Plan your route and test it if possible
- [ ] Account for traffic and allow extra time

- [ ] Aim to arrive 10-15 minutes early
- [ ] Have the interviewer's contact information ready

For Virtual Interviews

- [ ] Test your camera, microphone, and internet connection
- [ ] Choose a quiet, well-lit location
- [ ] Have a neutral, uncluttered background
- [ ] Join the meeting 5 minutes early
- [ ] Keep water nearby and extra copies of your resume on hand

During the Interview

Professional Behavior

- [ ] Maintain good eye contact and posture
- [ ] Offer a firm handshake
- [ ] Speak clearly and at an appropriate volume
- [ ] Be polite to everyone you meet
- [ ] Take notes during the conversation
- [ ] Ask your prepared questions when given the opportunity

Key Reminders

- [ ] Be authentic and enthusiastic
- [ ] Use specific examples to support your answers
- [ ] Listen actively to the questions being asked
- [ ] Thank the interviewer(s) for their time

After the Interview

Follow-Up Actions

- [ ] Send a thank-you email within 24 hours to each interviewer
- [ ] Mention specific points from your conversation
- [ ] Reaffirm your interest in the position
- [ ] Include any additional information promised during the interview
- [ ] Reflect on the interview and note areas for improvement

Waiting Period

- [ ] Be patient - hiring decisions take time
- [ ] Continue your job search until you receive an offer
- [ ] Follow up appropriately if you don't hear back within the stated timeframe
- [ ] Stay positive and learn from each interview experience

Quick Reference: What to Bring

✓ Multiple copies of resume
✓ Reference list
✓ Portfolio/work samples
✓ Pen and notebook
✓ Professional folder
✓ Questions for interviewer
✓ Identification (if requested)
✓ Breath mints
✓ Water bottle

Emergency Kit

Keep these items accessible for last-minute needs:

- Stain removal pen
- Lint roller
- Extra shirt or blouse
- Backup transportation money
- Umbrella
- Phone charger

Remember: Preparation is key to interview success. The more you prepare, the more confident you'll feel. Good luck!