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Getting Prepared

Interviewing for our next career move can challenge the very best of us. Perhaps you're out of practice, maybe you've only interviewed once or twice before, or you'd simply like a few tips for overcoming those nerves. The following advice is designed to help you prepare and make your best impression.



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Preparation is your friend

Interviewing really is a two-way conversation, and as with any other important meeting you will give yourself the best chance by controlling the things you can. Preparing for an interview will allow you to shape your plan, find out the things you need to make an informed decision, and will help you feel confident and present in the meeting. It will also give you the best chance of making a positive impression on your new manager and team. And remember, this is your chance to interview the hiring manager to make sure the role would be the right fit for you.

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What to prepare?

- ✓ Know who you're meeting; LinkedIn is a great starting point for finding out more about your interviewers and their background, you may even have some shared interests and networks.
- ✓ Be informed; keeping up-to-date with the industry, the business and the team will allow you to ask relevant questions and provide informed answers. Use your networks and colleagues, look at the intranet, annual reports and social media accounts to familiarise yourself.
- ✓ Know what to ask; preparing questions will take pressure off coming up with those articulate questions on the spot. In some interviews, you may want to ask these at the end, in some throughout the meeting. Missed out on asking one? Follow up with an email!
- ✓ Your stuff; being prepared also means having your stuff in order. Digging through your bag for a crumpled-up CV will not help in making a good impression. Make sure you're tidy, composed and orderly – have a pen, a note pad and a few clean copies of an up-to-date CV on hand in the interview.
- ✓ Prepare your answers so you're ready to talk through examples when you've demonstrated Westpac Group values.
- ✓ If you have any accessibility requirements, please let your Talent Acquisition Specialist know.

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My Interview Day checklist

- ✓ I know the time, address and interviewer name
- ✓ I know how to get there, and how long it will take me
- ✓ Contact details for my recruiter and interviewer saved on phone
- ✓ I've researched my interviewer(s) and have an idea of who they are and what they do
- ✓ I've read up on the business and am across important topics
- ✓ I've studied the Position Description and understand the nature and purpose of the role
- ✓ I have practiced relevant examples, and feel I can cover anticipated questions
- ✓ I have prepared questions, and will bring these with me
- ✓ I have printed up-to-date copies of my CV – just in case



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Example Questions to ask

1. Can you describe a typical day in this role please?
2. Who is the main customer, and how does the team contribute to them?
3. What can I expect from the first 3 months in the role?
4. What qualities are you looking for in a team member?
5. How is this job important to the team – how does it contribute?
6. What are the business unit goals and priorities for this year?
7. What does career progression look like in this position?
8. What does success look like in the role?



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Preparing for the big day

Now that you've covered the basics it's time to develop your plan for the big day. You can usually anticipate the general direction of the meeting with a little bit of foresight, research and practice. This will help you in deciding your approach and will give you the best opportunity to showcase your capabilities, experience and motivations for the role.

If you were the interviewer - what would you want to know, and what would you ask?



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Tips

- Remember - you wouldn't be there unless you are seen as a genuine contender
- Clarify and qualify questions asked - this will help you provide relevant and succinct answers
- If you feel flustered - take a breath, don't feel pressured to fill the silence, and ask for a repeat of the question

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Breaking it down - figuring out what questions might be asked

The job - what's required?	What can you bring?
Customer Needs	Who's the customer, what are their needs, and how can you help?
Capabilities required	What do you demonstrably have, and what do you not have? How can you bridge that gap?
Business Unit objectives	What does the team need to deliver, and what achievements and skills do you bring that can help them?
Role remit & responsibilities	What experiences and skills have you acquired that will ensure you can deliver on this?
Transferable skills	There's rarely a like-for-like, what skills (technical and soft), aptitudes and passion can you combine to problem solve?
Motivation	What is it that drives you? Why does this opportunity fit in with your career aspirations and personal interest? What will your legacy be?

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Interviewing techniques

Whilst interviewers' style, experience and approach may vary, most interviews are conducted using 'Behavioural based Interviewing' techniques. Behavioural based questions tend to start with 'tell me about a time when'. These questions are a great tool for Hiring Managers to understand your approach to problem solving, but also a fantastic way for you to structure your examples. The key to a good answer is context, clarity, relevance and highlighting your contributions - it goes like this:

- S** Think of a Situation relevant to what the interviewer is asking you about where you were able to produce a positive outcome. Remember to include the 'who', 'what', 'where', 'when' and 'how'.
- T** Describe the Task you were responsible for in that situation. Keep it specific but concise. Make sure to highlight any specific challenges you faced.
- A** This is where you describe your course of Action. How did you go about problem solving and completing the task? Focus on your contributions and highlight the qualities you possess that enabled you to create an outcome (such as customer service, initiative, teamwork, leadership, communications or technical abilities).
- R** Share the Result of the situation, and how you specifically contributed to reaching that outcome. What did you accomplish? What did you learn? What were the results of your actions?

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What about those curve-ball questions?

Not all questions adhere to a standard format. You may encounter a Hiring Manager that is more inquisitive around your personal motivations or is assessing against specific stakeholder or team requirements. Whilst the questions might be straightforward it's easy to come undone. If this happens in your meeting consider these three steps to regain balance:

1. Ask for a repeat of the question
2. Ask clarifying questions, or ask the interviewer to offer some context
3. Take your time, there's no need to ramble - you will only distract yourself



Some examples of non-behavioural questions

Situational/Scenario based questions focus on what you would do in a particular situation and relate to specifics within the role. Think of a relevant (not identical) situation you have encountered, explain how it is relevant and elaborate. Examples;

- You have been asked to share your knowledge of processes to a team in another area. How would you communicate your knowledge to this team to ensure that it was understood?
- You are working with a person who consistently makes errors in their work. How would you ensure that the quality of the end product is up to standard?

Motivational & Cultural Questions are the interview equivalent of 'what's your favourite food' - you probably know but it's hard to choose. There's no right or wrong here, so follow your gut. Be honest and take the opportunity to offer some insight to who you are, and what you value. Examples;

- What are the most satisfying aspects of work to date? What is the least satisfying?
- What are your short-term/long term career goals?
- In your opinion, what makes a good leader?
- Describe the work environment in which you will most effectively be able to contribute.
- What do you describe to be your most "natural" ability?



Tips

- Make sure to practice a few key examples - they're great as fall backs. Maybe role-play an interview with a friend.
- Be forthcoming with information
- Avoid 'yes' and 'no' answers
- Offer context
- Breathe through your nose - it will help you stay calm

Section 3: Bringing it all together

You know what to expect, you have examples and questions prepared, and you can articulate why you should be considered. Now all that remains is to shake some hands, trust yourself and put your best foot forth - after all that's what it's all about.

Rules of Engagement

On the day

- Use the checklist!
- Be 5 minutes early
- Have a final read of your own CV
- Make sure you're dressed for the occasion
- Take a deep breath, and picture yourself getting that offer

In the meeting

Do's:

- Greet your interviewers with a firm handshake
- Maintain regular eye contact
- Be friendly, sincere and approachable - this is your opportunity to build a relationship
- Be your authentic self - it goes a long way in establishing trust
- Feeling nervous? That's absolutely fine - but try to limit fidgeting, slouching or chewing nails
- Ask questions that reflect preparation and logical thinking
- Express interest in the business unit's needs
- If you don't understand a question, politely ask the manager to rephrase the question

- Read the room - observe the interviewer's reactions and course correct as required
- Discuss the role and team environment, this is your chance to find out information to make an informed decision about your career

Don'ts

- Leave your mobile on
- Criticise past or present employers - there is such a thing as too much honesty
- Don't get too familiar, read the room, exercise a bit of restraint

After

- Ask what the next steps are, and then thank the interviewers for their time, and the opportunity to meet with them
- Contact your Talent Acquisition Specialist with feedback on how you felt the interview went and any questions you may have
- Feel free to follow up directly with the Hiring Manager for any outstanding questions
- This is your opportunity to reconfirm remuneration expectations and employee benefits
- If you feel genuinely excited - feel free to express this



Resources to use

- A trusted colleague or mentor – you've got people in your corner!
- Your Talent Acquisition Specialist – lock in a chat, they will be more than happy to offer advice and guidance
- Online – places like SEEK and LinkedIn offer incredible resources and insights
- This guide – we want you to succeed, and have the best experience.