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COOPERS INTERVIEW PREPARATION KIT

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# Interview-Tipps



**YES!** You got an invitation to the interview and have thus mastered the first important step in the application process: You have attracted the **attention** of your employer of choice.

At the interview, you should awaken their **interest** in you and your skills. It makes no difference whether it is a telephone or online interview or a personal meeting.

After meeting with you, the hiring manager should **desire** to recruit you for his or her team. And, of course, take **action** and send you a signed offer.

# Before the Interview



Feeling a little nervous when thinking about your upcoming interview? Do not worry, that is quite normal - and we all feel that way. Even if you have already mastered numerous interviews. After all, it is not every day that you are on the spot like this and, of course, there is a lot at stake – your next job!

To secure that job in the interview, you should invest time in a thorough preparation. It is not rocket science. Rather, it is about basics that deserve your attention:

## 1) Know your track record

- \* Take a look at your own resume and carefully review all of your previous positions. Pay close attention to your most recent position.
- \* Work out which of your experiences and skills can add value to the advertised position.

- \* A classic: Be aware of your strengths and weaknesses. It is advisable to have suitable examples at hand.
- \* Have an answer ready to the question of why you would like to work for this company in this particular position. Show your motivation!

## 2) Know the company

- \* Do your research on the company online. Find out as much as you can:
  - Market position, vision, goals of the owners, founders and/or managing directors, and number of employees.
  - Names of owners, founders and/or managing directors
  - Headquarters of the company
  - Sales and forecasts



- Contenders and competitors, top products/services, recently launched products/services.
- Look for the company in the news section so you are aware of current activities and can have a say.
- \* If you know your interview partners, study their profiles on LinkedIn, for example. It is a good icebreaker in the interview if you have already discovered some common ground.
- \* Ask around in your network if anyone has had experience with the company or knows any employees.

By the way: We know our customers very well and can provide you with most of this information before the interview.

### 3) Prepare questions

The interview not only gives the company the opportunity to get to know you better. It also offers you first-hand information. To get an accurate picture of your potential new employer, you should ask the right questions. For example:

- \* Is this a position that has just been established? If not, how has it developed?
- \* How big is the immediate team and how big is the department to which it belongs?
- \* How is success defined in the role or within the team?

**Important:** Ask questions that show that you have done your homework and studied the company. Do not ask the obvious that is on the home page. Better: incorporate your research and ask, for example, *„I read that your company is going to (...); what are the reasons for that?“*

### 4) Be prepared for questions

Generally, the ideal answer is brief, informative, and supported by an example.

Some of the classics are:

- \* Please tell us something about yourself and your personal situation.
- \* Why exactly are you interested in this industry and our company?



- \* Which part of the job description has appealed to you the most?
- \* What are the main tasks in your current position?
- \* Which tasks do you value most in your current position?
- \* What does teamwork mean to you?
- \* How do you handle conflicts within the team?
- \* How do you respond when you disagree with someone?
- \* Please give an example to describe the process and your course of action in a difficult situation at work.
- \* How do you cope with the stress of everyday life?
- \* How do you respond to failure typically?
- \* What do you think of your current employer?
- \* What do you dislike or do not appreciate in your current job?

- \* Why do you want to change jobs?
- \* What are your career goals?
- \* What are your goals for the next 5 years?
- \* What would your best friend/supervisor say about you?
- \* Are you willing to go on business trips?

Some companies rely on so-called brainteasers to break through the reserves of their candidates. You can read more about this on our Coopers Blog in the article [↗ Why Manhole Covers Are Always Round – Brainteaser in the Job Interview.](#)

# During the Interview



When it comes to the first interview: the stage is yours!

Of course, the company wants to validate your expertise and find out whether you are a good fit for the position. But always keep in mind: The company has invited you because of your knowledge and generally believes that you are capable of taking on the position.

In a personal meeting, it's all about just that - you as a person! The hiring managers want to find out who you are and whether you fit into the team and the corporate culture as a person.

Consider the following points.

## 1) Particularities of telephone/video call interviews

- \* Secure a quiet room.
- \* Check the mobile network or Internet con-

nection beforehand.

- \* Connect your device to the power cable or charge the battery in advance.
- \* Even on the phone, smile; the person you are talking to will notice it, even without seeing you.

## 2) During the interview

### Fine feathers make fine birds

It is best to ask your Coopers consultant about the dress code expected by the company and the interviewer. The dress code depends on the industry and the company culture.

In general, we recommend neat business attire. Men should wear a suit with a shirt - worn with or without a tie depends on the company. Ladies are best dressed elegantly, but never too revealing. We recommend a pair of suit trousers or a skirt, a blouse, and a blazer. Patterns and flashy colors are

usually not a good idea, as they may distract from the person.

**Generally speaking**, it is better to be too chic than too casual for an interview.

### Being on time

Nothing is worse than showing up late for a job interview. This also includes remote interviews.

For on-site appointments, find out in advance how to get to the company, where to park, which entrance to use, and who you will speak to first (write down the name and position of the person).

Plan enough extra time so that a traffic jam, a missed train, etc. will not throw you off schedule. Ideally, you should arrive 5 to 10 minutes before the scheduled appointment; no earlier and no later.

If you still cannot make it on time, please call us immediately - we will inform our client right away and will try to get you to your interview as soon as possible.

### The first impression counts!

And you only get one chance at it!

It is obvious, but with all the excitement, it is easy to forget:

- Turn off your phone (and no vibration).
- Be friendly to everyone and give them a smile, whether it is at the reception or in the hallway.
- When you must wait: Look around, browse through the company brochures, and show your interest in the surroundings. After all, this could soon be your new workplace.
- Greet the person you are talking to politely with a smile and a confident handshake. Always maintain eye contact.

There may be an awkward silence before the conversation begins. Usually, your host will break the ice and find a casual way to start the conversation. If not, you may take the initiative and talk about informal topics, such as the premises, the company brochure, or the classic, the weather.





**Tip:** Keep mentioning the name of the person you are talking to as this strengthens the connection.

### \* Body language

Body language is an essential part of human interaction. A look is worth a thousand words, as the saying goes. Make sure your verbal and nonverbal communication are in harmony to give your words appropriate meaning.

Remember, you were invited to the interview because of your qualifications. In other words, your interviewer already has confidence in you for the job. Therefore, you should now convince him or her that you are the best choice, both professionally and personally.

5 helpful tips for a convincing non-verbal communication:

- Maintain eye contact as much as possible in order to establish a connection.
- Stand and sit upright, as this signals openness. Avoid crossing your arms or legs.
- Concentrate on your tone of voice: do neither speak too shrilly nor too softly.

→ Smile. It is relaxing and creates sympathy.

→ And if you have no idea at all where to put your arms, simply mirror the posture of the person you are talking to. On the one hand, this is appropriate, and on the other, mirroring contributes to the personal connection.

### \* Ask questions

It is important to ask questions at the end of the interview as this shows your interest and that you have listened carefully.

Candidates often hold back their enthusiasm because they fear it will cause them problems when negotiating their salary. But we recommend the opposite: **express your interest openly!**

From experience, we can say that companies are looking for candidates who really want to work for them. Enthusiasm and passion for the job can tip the scales in favor of getting the job. Therefore, show your enthusiasm in your questions, your answers, and in your general demeanor. Show the hiring managers that you are their best choice.

If you manage to do so, then you will also have good cards in the salary negotiations.





However, this does not mean that you have to silently accept all of the employer's demands. Even with sincere interest, you should clearly express your wishes and conditions.

### \* The salary

The salary is a touchy topic, especially for permanent positions. Therefore, heed our advice, which we have compiled from many years of recruiting:

- Remember: most companies want to make you a fair offer.
- The days of 20% to 25% raises are over, unfortunately.
- Confidently state your salary expectations. Important: You should set the anchor! Use a crooked number, as it automatically acts as a justification. It doesn't have to be a concrete salary demand, you just have to drop a number to set the anchor.
- Inform yourself in advance about the current market and company situation so that your salary demands are realistic.
- Generally, the gross annual salary is negotiated, not the net salary.

- Look at the big picture! Usually, your salary consists of several components such as salary, bonuses, additional insurances and non-monetary benefits. Think about what is important to you in advance.

Of course, you can also talk to your Coopers consultant in advance about the remuneration. This will give you more understanding and security for the salary negotiations with the company. We are very happy to support you in this important matter.

On the Coopers Blog you can find the article [↗ Negotiation 101 - Mastering the Negotiation.](#)

**Tip:** Remember to take your own notes during the interview. They will provide valuable information when you are invited for further interviews.

# After the Interview



**Phew, you made it.** Hopefully, you leave your interview with a good feeling.

If so, confirm this impression to both your Coopers consultant and the company.

## Feedback to Coopers

Call or email us to keep us in the loop and to discuss the next steps together. It is helpful for us to know what your impression was, whether you could imagine working for the company, who you talked to, etc. We play the role of a mediator as we also discuss the interview with our customers. We are happy to emphasize your enthusiasm for the job during that conversation.

## Feedback to the company

Write a friendly and brief e-mail to your interviewer on the following day. Thank them for their time and attention, and reiterate your interest in the position.

Patience is a virtue. Waiting for an important decision is not easy for anyone. But do not press

the company by frequently asking for updates!

**Better:** You have us! If a time problem arises, for example because you have other application processes going on at the same time, inform your Coopers consultant. We talk to our client and guide the decision process accordingly. The application process is an exciting journey for many candidates. We understand that you have many questions and face uncertainties. That's why we are there for you and guide you step by step.

With us you are **in good company**.

[↗ Feel free to contact us at any time if you have questions.](#)

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