

How to Prepare for an Interview

- Arrive for your interview at least 5 – 10 minutes early. If you're unsure about location and live close, make a trial run so you know how long it will take to get there; remember, traffic is heavier at the start and end of the workday. Punctuality is important. Do not speed to get to the interview on time; instead, leave with time to arrive.
- First impressions have a high impact. Take care with the way you dress and groom yourself to show that you take the opportunity seriously. Wear wrinkle-free clothing and NO JEANS. For most jobs, business casual is suitable. That means a nice pair of pants with dress shoes and a collared shirt for guys; a tie is a nice touch! Girls can do with or without the collar but should wear a nice blouse and pair it with nice pants or a skirt of appropriate length. Hair should be neat, and avoid excessive cologne, makeup, or jewelry. Take off your outdoor coat and DO NOT CHEW GUM. Bring a notepad to jot down questions, points to remember, and the interviewer's name.
- The receptionist, secretary, or staff member who greets you may not be your interviewer. However, you can bet that the interviewer will ask about their impressions of you. Sit up straight, look them in the eye, smile, and converse respectfully with them.
- Greet the interviewer with a firm handshake, warm smile, and look them in the eye. Make note of their name to use during the interview. Address the interviewer as Mr. or Ms. unless invited otherwise.
- Turn your cellphone off and resist the temptation to peek.
- Exude energy, enthusiasm, and a positive attitude. When sitting, avoid slouching and lean slightly forward like you are eager to hear the interviewer. Do not cross your arms.
- Take inventory of your strengths prior to the interview. Be prepared to describe situations where you have used your assets to get things done. Draw upon academics, school activities, sports, and volunteer work for examples, especially if you have not held any or many jobs.
- Review common questions and answers for interviews. Practice answering questions with a friend or family member so you can speak confidently during your interview. Do not be intimidated if you do not have qualifications for a job. Express a genuine eagerness to learn the job. Answer questions by restating the question in your answer. Always answer with complete sentences and avoid slang.
- Be prepared to say why the internship interests you. You can reference things like tasks, work environment, and what you hope to learn. Everything being equal in terms of qualifications, interviewers will pick the candidate who seems most interested.
- At the end of the interview, do not be afraid to ask questions. Focus on issues like the nature of the work and when you might expect to hear from them.
- Effective follow up after your interview can separate you from the other candidates. After leaving, write a thank you note expressing gratitude for the interview and stating briefly why you think the internship is a good fit. A card is great with legible handwriting, but email is acceptable. This is not required.
- Be ready to let the interviewers know your availability for the internship. During which term do you have time in your schedule to complete the hours necessary for the internship? If you have a tight schedule full of classes and extracurricular activities, how will you manage to complete the internship? Meet with your school guidance counselor prior to the interview to consider these questions so you are prepared with an answer. If you will be completing your internship in the summer, know your vacation and extra-curricular schedule so placement can be determined.
- If anything changes from the time you completed your application, let WLC know immediately so we can communicate with you as effectively as possible regarding the status of your internship. That includes availability for the experience, address, phone number, cellphone carrier, email, etc.