

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Different companies will ask different interview questions, though most follow a similar route. If the company has asked you to prepare a presentation for the interview, they will give you a brief of what they expect from it, and will then ask questions based on it. It is highly likely the questions in your interview will be aligned to your experience, education, and interests.

Do what you enjoy

The chances are that you will spend a large portion of your time working, so do something you enjoy. Spend some time thinking about topics, subjects or activities that interest you or that you are good at. People generally get more positive results if they do something they enjoy!

Potential general questions

- What do you know about the company?
- Why do you want to work for our organisation?
- What interested you about this job role?
- What is your greatest achievement/tell us something you are really proud of?
- What are your ambitions or where would you like to be in three years' time?
- What are your strengths?
- What are your areas you need to develop?
- How would you organise yourself to meet deadlines?

Behavioural questions

Behavioural questions are designed to explore your character and how you might react in certain situations. These are important as they test your fit with others in the organisation and ensure you are a team player.

Examples include:

- Tell me about a time when you had to work closely with someone with a very different personality to yours.
- Tell me about a time you made a mistake and what you did to rectify it.
- Tell me about a time you were under a lot of pressure at work or school – what was going on and how did you get through it?



The STAR method

This is a structured manner of responding to a behavioural-based interview questions by discussing the specific Situation, Task, Action and Result of the situation you are describing.

- **Situation:** Describe the situation you were in or the task that you needed to complete. You must describe a specific event or situation, not a generalised overview of what you have done in the past. Give enough detail for the interviewer to understand. This situation could be from work, education, volunteer or life experience
- **Task:** What goal were you working towards and what was your specific role in achieving it
- **Action:** Describe the specific actions you took to address the situation. Make sure you say “I did” rather than “we did” when describing these
- **Result:** Describe the outcome of your actions and don’t be shy about taking credit for your behaviour/successes. What happened? How did the event end? What did you achieve? What did you learn? Be as positive about this as you can be

Example:

“Claire, describe to us a time when you have led a team...”

SITUATION: I was chosen as the project lead for our group Biology project during GCSEs.

TASK: In Biology we had to carry out an investigation into the effect of antiseptics on bacterial growth. We used different household antiseptics and disinfectants to measure their effects on bacteria growing on an agar plate. My role was to assign different antiseptics to different class mates so that we had time to investigate all of them, and then compare our findings.

ACTION: I assigned each person an antiseptic and listed who was responsible for what. I then told each person what level of information we needed back from the results so that as a group we could analyse the effectiveness of each one, and compare them. We could then create our group report – each person wrote up about their own experiment and I combined them. During both lessons where we conducted the experiment, I made sure everyone in the team understood what they were doing and checked to see if anyone needed any help. Keith needed me to explain again what information we would need for the report and I went through it again.

RESULTS: We were the only team who managed to successfully test all of the antiseptics and disinfectants and report back in the same format. Other teams all measured different variables so their reports weren’t as clear as ours. We got a Grade 7 which was amazing!



The STAR method

Almost every interview will end with the chance for you to ask the panel questions. **DON'T MISS THIS OPPORTUNITY!** Most interviewers will expect you to ask them something - after all an interview is a two-way process. They need to know if are you the right person for them and you need to know if the organisation and job is for you.

Some good questions to consider are:

- Tell me about the company culture (broadly speaking, 'company culture' is the way they treat and support employees and colleagues)
- What are the development opportunities after the apprenticeship?
- How will you support me in successfully completing my apprenticeship?
- Can you tell me something about my induction?
- Is there anything else you would like to ask me? (be prepared the answer will probably be no, but it is great to ensure they have everything the need)
- What are the next steps?
- When do you expect to make a hiring decision by?

