

Interview Prep Plan

7-Step Interview Prep Plan

1. Research the organization.

This will help you answer questions — and stand out from less-prepared candidates.

- **Seek background information.**

Use tools like Vault, CareerSearch or The Riley Guide for an overview of the organization and its industry profile.

Visit the organization's website to ensure that you understand the breadth of what they do.

Review the organization's background and mission statement.

Assess their products, services and client-base.

Read recent press releases for insight on projected growth and stability.

- **Get perspective.** Review trade or business publications. Seek perspective and a glimpse into their industry standing.
- **Develop a question list.** Prepare to ask about the organization or position based on your research.

2. Compare your skills and qualifications to the job requirements.

- **Analyze the job description.** Outline the knowledge, skills and abilities required.
- **Examine the hierarchy.** Determine where the position fits within the organization.
- **Look side-by-side.** Compare what the employer is seeking to your qualifications.

3. Prepare responses.

Most interviews involve a combination of resume-based, behavioral and case questions. We encourage you to meet with us to practice telling your story in the best possible way.

4. Plan what to wear.

- **Go neutral.** Conservative business attire, such as a neutral-colored suit and professional shoes, is best.
- **Err formal.** If instructed to dress "business casual," use good judgment.
- **Plug in that iron.** Make sure your clothes are neat and wrinkle-free.
- **Dress to impress.** Be sure that your overall appearance is neat and clean.

5. Plan what to bring.

- Extra copies of your resume on quality paper
- A notepad or professional binder and pen
- A list of references
- Information you might need to complete an application
- A portfolio with samples of your work, if relevant

6. Pay attention to non-verbal communication.

- **Be mindful.** Nonverbal communication speaks volumes.
- **Start ahead.** Remember that waiting room behaviors may be reported.
- **Project confidence.** Smile, establish eye contact and use a firm handshake.
- **Posture counts.** Sit up straight yet comfortably. Be aware of nervous gestures such as foot-tapping.
- **Be attentive.** Don't stare, but maintain good eye contact, while addressing all aspects of an interviewer's questions.
- **Respect their space.** Do not place anything on their desk.
- **Manage reactions.** Facial expressions provide clues to your feelings. Manage how you react, and project a positive image.

7. Follow up.

Many interviews end with "Do you have any questions?"

- **Bring a list.** You may say, "In preparing for today's meeting, I took some time to jot down a few questions. Please allow me to review my notes."
- **Be strategic.** Cover information not discussed or clarify a previous topic — do not ask for information that can be found on the organization's website.

In your opinion, what makes this organization a great place to work?

What do you consider the most important criteria for success in this job?

Tell me about the organization's culture.

How will my performance be evaluated?

What are the opportunities for advancement?

What are the next steps in the hiring process?