



Get **Fit** for your **App**renticeship

Interview

For many the interview for your apprenticeship will be the first interview you have ever experienced, and that's completely fine. Employers know that young people applying for apprenticeships have limited interview experience and, on the whole, want to get the most out of you, but there are things you can do to help yourself be best prepared and stand out.

What do employers want?

At the end of the day employers have jobs to fill. There is a business need which has led them to hiring an apprentice. Different employers will want different things, but all employers are looking for:

- ✓ The right attitude
- ✓ The right aptitude
- ✓ Fits in with the team
- ✓ Turns up to work
- ✓ Works hard
- ✓ Adaptable



STAR Technique

Interviews are often competency based, which means employers are looking to see if you meet a certain level of skill or knowledge in various areas such as team work, communication, leadership, decision making, etc. To help answer questions in these interviews you should answer in the following way:

- S – Situation** Think of this section as 'setting the scene'. Provide the interviewer with a bit of background about the question and give them some context. Try and be specific and include names and dates, wherever appropriate, to help add credibility.
- T – Task** Build on the background you've given and outline the task at hand. Specifically, how did the situation relate to you? What were the major tasks you needed to undertake to resolve it? Include how important or difficult the situation was to overcome, as well as any constraints you came up against.
- A – Action** What did you actually do to resolve the situation? Outline the steps you took to ensure a successful outcome, without being tempted to take all the credit. The key to effectively incorporating the 'approach' part of your answer is to identify what skills the interviewer really wants to see and reinforce them throughout.
- R – Result** Finally, it's time for the pay-off. What was the outcome of the situation? Remember, everyone loves a happy ending and recruiters are no different. Make your happy ending quantifiable, and you'll really have nailed your answer.

Interview

Power Words

There are a number of words employers look for that make it easier for them to link what you are telling them to the competencies they are looking for. Try and use some of the words below:

- ✓ Plays a key role in
- ✓ Managed
- ✓ Achieved
- ✓ Delivered
- ✓ Proposed
- ✓ Competent
- ✓ Confident



Remember the most important thing is an interview is about you, use **I** not **we**.

Dealing with nerves

You are going to be nervous, it's natural. What you say will determine if you get the apprenticeship or not, but it's important to manage your nerves as much as possible. The best way to keep calm is:

Be prepared Make sure you know where the interview is, what time it is and that you arrive 15 minutes early. Dress smartly – no jeans, t-shirts, polo shirts or trainers.

Research It's crucial you know what the company does and what apprenticeship you are being interviewed for. Have an idea of what you think the job will be like, as they might ask you. The more information you know the better.

Rehearse Practice using **STAR** with somebody asking you questions. If you've run through your answers beforehand you'll more easily be able to answer in a structured way.

Common questions from employers

- ✓ What do we do?
- ✓ Tell us about yourself
- ✓ Why do you want to work here?
- ✓ What would you bring to the job?
- ✓ Why should we employ you?
- ✓ Have you any questions for us?

Top Tips

- ✓ Know yourself (strengths and weaknesses)
- ✓ **Research** the job and employer
- ✓ Keep your answers around 1–2 mins max
- ✓ Focus answers on experience – **STAR**
- ✓ Use **POWER** words
- ✓ Be confident – look confident – **rehearse**
- ✓ Remember – employers **need** you!



Main project partner:

