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Furniture & Interiors
Education, Skills & Training Alliance

INTERVIEW GUIDE
TIPS AND ADVICE

PREPARING FOR YOUR INTERVIEW

- A successful interview requires preparation, and the following tips can help you feel confident and ready:
 - Research the company and the apprenticeship: Take some time to learn about the company and the apprenticeship you are applying for. Check out their website and learn about what they do and what the apprenticeship involves. Knowing more about the company and the role will help you better understand what they are looking for in a candidate.
 - Review your CV or application: Your CV or application will likely shape some of the interview questions. Review your CV or application again, and make sure that you can speak to the details you have shared. Bring a copy of your CV or application to the interview.
 - Practice answering interview questions: Practicing answering interview questions can help you feel more prepared and confident. Consider some of the questions they might ask and practice answering them. There are sample questions later in this guide.
 - Review the job description: Look at the job description again and try to get a sense of what kind of candidate they are looking for. Think about how your skills and experiences align with what they are seeking.
 - Make a list of your interests, strengths, and weaknesses: Make a list of your interests, strengths, and weaknesses, and prepare examples to back up each one. For example, if they are looking for an organised person with good attention to detail, think about examples of times when you have been organised, such as preparing for your GCSEs or A-levels.
 - Dress appropriately: Dress appropriately for the interview and the workplace.
 - Arrive on time: Arrive on time for your interview. Plan your route and give yourself plenty of time to get there.
 - Stay calm: Finally, remember to stay calm. Take deep breaths and try to relax. The interviewer wants to get to know you, so be yourself and show them why you would be a great fit for the apprenticeship.
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INTERVIEW TIPS

- Don't be afraid to ask an interviewer to repeat a question if you need to, think of it as a formal conversation and you can always take a few moments to think before replying to a question.
 - Answer all the questions with a full answer rather than just yes or no. Expand on your answers!
 - Pay attention to how you speak and your body language. The company will want an apprentice who can communicate clearly so try not to mumble or speak too quickly. Crisp and clear is the way to go! Try and make good eye contact with the interviewer when you talk to them. Make sure your arms are uncrossed, your shoulders are back and you are sitting up.
 - Perhaps most importantly, don't forget to SMILE!
 - Come to the interview with some questions about the company and the apprenticeship. This is a good way of showing that you are genuinely interested in the role. Some questions you could ask are:
 - What would a typical day be like?
 - Are you considering offering successful candidates a position after the apprenticeship programme?
 - Be confident! Even though you might be nervous, try and let your personality shine through. Be polite, friendly and enthusiastic.
 - If you get nervous just take a deep breath and try to slow down your speech.
 - Shake hands with your interviewers when you meet them and at the end of the interview. A good firm handshake does wonders
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SAMPLE QUESTIONS TO PREPARE FOR

- What motivated you to apply for this apprenticeship?
 - What unique qualities and experiences make you the ideal candidate for this apprenticeship?
 - Where do you see yourself in the future and how does this apprenticeship fit into your career goals?
 - What research have you conducted about the company you are interviewing with?
 - How have your past experiences in school, college, or previous jobs helped you develop important skills?
 - How do you handle pressure and stressful situations?
 - Can you provide an example of a time when you dealt with a challenging customer or colleague?
 - As an apprentice, you'll be working full-time while studying for a qualification. How do you plan on managing your workload?
 - Can you describe a time when you worked independently and demonstrated initiative either in your studies or in a previous job?
 - How do you work as part of a team and what do you believe are three crucial qualities of a good team player?
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THINGS TO REMEMBER

- keep in mind that you are young and may not have a lot of experience. However, the employer is looking for enthusiasm, potential, and a willingness to learn. They also want to get to know you as a person, so be professional and polite.
 - Remember that the interview is a conversation, not just a one-way evaluation. Take the opportunity to ask questions and learn more about the company and the people who work there.
 - When it comes to dressing for the interview, we suggest a smart-casual look. Wear a shirt or top, tie, smart trousers or skirt, and appropriate shoes. Avoid jeans, tracksuits, t-shirts, or trainers/canvas shoes. The goal is to look professional and fit in with the company culture.
 - Punctuality is crucial. Plan your route to the interview in advance and arrive at least 10 minutes early to avoid being late.
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