

An interview can often feel like a high pressure situation. The truth is that the amount of work you put in *now* should have a direct impact on your level of confidence and performance at interview! Here are some more practical steps you can take:

1. Lay out Your Outfit - Most of us don't do this on a regular basis, but laying out your outfit the day before ensures you're not scrambling in the morning to come up with something appropriate. Plus, it's a great opportunity for final checks e.g. make sure your shoes match and that your clothes are not damaged and wrinkle-free.

2. Print Your CV - The recruiter / employer should have your CV to hand... but they may not. So, taking printed copies yourself will look organised. Plus there may be more than one interviewer.

3. Pack Your Bag - Next stop, pack your bag with all the essentials— preparation notes, a couple of copies of your CV, copies of certificates, ID (proof of right to work in the UK) and a portfolio if needed. It might also be an idea to make sure you have your bus / train fair or bus pass handy.

4. Know Where You're Going and How You're Getting There - Check on Google Maps to make sure you know the route—and check any emails from the company for important information on parking, confusing entrances, and anything else. If you realise it's a big building or company, allow an extra five to 10 minutes as you will probably have to report to security first. Write the directions down in your phone so they're ready to go in the morning as well as the name and contact number of the person you are meeting.

5. Research Your Interviewers - Make sure you not only know their names, but also their job titles and department. If you have time, try to do a quick Google search and some LinkedIn research (remember to browse anonymously).

6. Plan Your Breakfast - If your interview is in the morning, try and have some breakfast. This can only help you with concentration and stop those stomach noises. If you're being interviewed in the afternoon then obviously have some lunch, or at the least a small snack.

7. Prepare for the Worst-Case-Scenario - Unexpected things happen. It may start pouring with rain on your way to the bus stop, there may roadworks that is slowing traffic, and you may rip your clothes. While some things can't be prevented, they can be proactively planned for.

8. Create a "Cheat Sheet" - This can be a huge lifesaver when you're moments away from meeting the interviewer. Note down all the important details: who you're meeting with etc. Also have your examples written out (S.T.A.R. format), and the questions you want to ask at the end. Re-read and refresh what you can the night before and don't stress about cramming.

9. Set Your Alarm - Does this sound obvious? Maybe, but sometimes you need an extra reminder. If the alarm call is to wake you up in the morning, put it out of reach so have to physically get up to shut it off. Hitting snooze can't be an option! Being late is not an option either.

10. Get a Good Night's Sleep - Being tired, irritable or uncommunicative will only make nailing an interview more difficult. Get to sleep at a reasonable hour and avoid the usual distractions. Give yourself the best start you can.