

Somerset Youth and Community Service

Preparing for Interviews



Aims: To prepare young people for job and college interviews

Learning Outcomes:

By the end of the session the participants will:

- Be able to list 10 ways to prepare for interview
- Have considered and selected the way they want to present themselves

Group size: 8

Time: 1 hour

Venue: Small room

Materials:

- Flipchart
- Marker pens
- What to wear handout
- A4 paper
- Pens
- Preparation checklist

Time	What	With
5 mins	Introduce the aims and outcomes of the session	
5 mins	Ask the group what sort of jobs they'll be applying for – answers could range from part-time to full-time. Tell them that, no matter what the job, the interview preparation is the same.	
10 mins	Split them into small groups, give them blank flipchart and ask them to list the things they think they could do to prepare for interviews. Ask them to feedback. The lists should include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finding out about the business • Sorting out the right interview clothes • Thinking about the questions • Knowing why you'd be good for the job • Check the interview arrangements • Be clean and tidy 	Flipchart and marker pens
15 mins	Spilt the group into three, give each two preparation areas and some A4 paper and pens. Ask them to come up with what they could do to achieve these. Get it group to feedback. Check the answers against the information sheet – you can give it as a handout if you like.	A4 paper, pens, Preparation Checklist
10 mins	Getting the clothes right – give out the 'What to wear' handout and, ask young people to say which jobs the people in the pictures would be properly dressed to be interviewed for. Suggested answers below: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Maybe a music shop, but probably no interview – too casual! 2. Something a bit trendy? Fashion shop? 3. Never dress like this! Unless you want to labour on a building site? Doesn't look clean or like you've made an effort 4. Office work, anything more formal – shows you've made an effort 5. Only a skater shop would be OK with this! 6. Maybe a dress shop? But generally no – too short and too low cut 7. Office work, anything more formal – shows you've made an effort 8. Cleaning job? Stable work? But generally no, too casual 9. No, never. Too low cut and looks far too casual 	



Time	What	With
10 mins	<p data-bbox="316 129 1235 168">10. Anything customer facing where you don't need a formal suit.</p> <p data-bbox="264 168 1257 315">What makes you most nervous about being interviewed? Ask the group this question and as they give answers, ask the rest of the group to come up with ways to minimise the worry. Common answers and coping strategies are:</p> <ul data-bbox="264 315 1257 1218" style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="264 315 1257 394">• Forgetting what to say – do practise questions beforehand, take some note cards just in case <li data-bbox="264 394 1257 542">• Not knowing the answers to questions / saying the wrong thing – find out as much as you can about the job beforehand and practise answers. Saying 'sorry, I don't know' is always an option. Never lie! <li data-bbox="264 542 1257 620">• Talking too quickly – remember to breathe! Practise answering questions beforehand and get someone's else's view <li data-bbox="264 620 1257 698">• Being late – always leave plenty of time for the journey and if you're not sure how long it will take, do a practise run <li data-bbox="264 698 1257 846">• Going red / stuttering / fainting / shaking – do as much prep as possible (this will make you less anxious) and remember, it's not the end of the world if you don't get this job! Everyone does this a bit and no-one will think less of you for it. <li data-bbox="264 846 1257 925">• Falling over – wear sensible shoes, or at least shoes you can walk in <li data-bbox="264 925 1257 958">• Accidentally swearing – apologise immediately, don't do it again. <li data-bbox="264 958 1257 992">• Sneezing / coughing – take a clean handkerchief and use it <li data-bbox="264 992 1257 1104">• Sweating – have a bath / shower, wear deodorant, have a handkerchief to mop your brow. Remember this is common in interviews and no-one will think less of you for it. <li data-bbox="264 1104 1257 1218">• Wearing the wrong thing – Think carefully about clothes beforehand and face it out! If it's really awful, apologise and say why you're dressed like you are. 	
5 mins	Recap this session, if you're going to follow with an interview practise session, let the young people know.	

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Preparation checklist

<p>Finding out about the business</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thoroughly read any information they've sent you • Do an internet search • Speak to someone else who works there • Ring and ask the contact name you have about the job and what they do • If it's a shop, go in as a customer and have a look around 	<p>Sorting out the right interview clothes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suit the clothes to the interview, e.g. smarter for offices, fashionable for clothes shops etc. If in doubt – be smart! Avoid jeans, trainers, short skirts and low cut tops • Look in your wardrobe well beforehand and check you them – you may be able to borrow of not • Try then on to check they still fit • Look in the mirror when you're sat down – things can look very different
<p>Thinking about the questions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read the job description • Think about the things you'll be doing • Write down the sort of questions you think they'll ask and note some responses • Ask someone else to come up with questions • Get someone to do a mock interview with you 	<p>Knowing why you'd be good for the job</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reread your application (if you did one) • Make a list of all your relevant experience • Think about your strengths and weaknesses • Make a list of why <i>you</i> would be good at this job
<p>Check the interview arrangements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Double check on the letter • If you've never been there before, visit the venue before so you know where you're going • Check what you need to take with you and find it all a few days beforehand • Gather any documents (qualification, passport) that you'll need in a pile, the night before 	<p>Be clean and tidy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make sure your clothes are clean and ironed • Have a bath / shower before you go and don't forget to wash your hair • Don't forget to brush your teeth! • Always have a wee before you leave for the interview • Don't eat stinky food (garlic!) the day before



Preparing for Interviews – what to wear?

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