Impressing at Interview

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Today we will ..... Walk through the Interview Journey
1. Predicting the questions
2. Doing research
3. Preparing answers
4. Practicing

& cover tips
Step 1: Predicting the Questions
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In groups spend 3 minutes thinking of examples of interview questions

As many as you can
Step 1: Predicting the Questions

Types of Question:

- Motivation: why this job & company?
- Competency: evidence of skills
- Biographical: your experience
- Strengths-based: what comes naturally to you?
- Technical: your specialist knowledge
- Sector awareness: what’s going on?
- Situational: what would you do if...?
Step 1: Predicting the Questions

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Step 1: What are employers looking for?

• Can you do the job? – *Ability*
• Will you do the job? – *Motivation*
• Can I work with you? – *Fit*
Step 1: EXERCISE on Predicting the ACTUAL questions

Based on the job advert take 3 minutes in groups to come up with as many interview questions as you can in these categories:
- motivational
- competency
- sector awareness
Step 2: Doing your Research
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What sort of questions might you get on the sector?

What about on the company?

TIP: go beyond the obvious
Step 3: Prepare Your Answers
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What sort of biographical questions might you get?
Step 3: Prepare Your Answers

What might you say in answer to “Tell us about you”

Tips: Think about what you can offer
Use a structure:
- academic grades
- skills with evidence
- passion for role
Step 3: Prepare Your Answers

What might you say about your weaknesses?

Tips: Not anything important in the role
Have a strategy to manage it
Use something obvious
Step 3: Prepare Your Answers

Competency Questions:
- Use a specific example
- Describe what YOU did: “I” not “we”
- Prepare one or two examples for every skill the job requires
- Use the structure: CAR: Circumstances, Actions (70%), Result (include feedback)
- Try to include 3 things in the results
Step 3: EXERCISE on competency questions

Have a look at the competency answers:

1. Score each on a scale of 1 to 3

2. List 3 aspects of the answers that you liked.
Step 4: Practicing
Step 4: Practicing - EXERCISE

In 2s/3s using: questions you came up with earlier & some biographical questions, take it in turns to have a go at answering questions.

5 minutes per person including feedback – so try 2-3 questions of different types

Sheet for additional ideas for competency questions.
Hints & Tips

✓ Give yourself **thinking time** (repeat, comment, “Can I have a minute?”)

✓ Think of the “**punchline**” before you talk

✓ Make sure you **answer** the question

✓ Seek **clarification** (“Are you looking for an example of...?”)

✓ Ask for **feedback** (“Is this example useful?”)

✓ When in a hole, **stop digging** (“Sorry, I’ve got a bit lost. May I start again?”)

✓ Think of questions to ask them
Be a Striker, not a Goalkeeper
How we can help you

Book a mock interview: call 020 7882 8533/or in person in WG3

Use our online mock interview software: www.careers.qmul.ac.uk/students/resources
Summary

- Steps to effective interview preparation
  1. Predict the Q’s based in the JD
  2. Research organisation and sector
  3. Prepare your answers
  4. Practice!

- How to effectively present evidence of your skills (CAR)

- Support available through Careers & Enterprise