



PLANNING & PREPARATION

- **Location and Timings** (make sure you have directions and leave plenty of time to find your way there and settle in to the environment)
- **Know your CV** (be clear on the facts as well as your achievements)
- **Job Content** (make sure you understand what the role involves)

BRILLIANT INTERVIEW PREPARATION

1. Have a good night's sleep:

If you arrive exhausted your eyes and body language will probably show it. You won't be quite as sharp as you could be and you may well compensate by coming across as over-anxious. Get a decent night's sleep!

2. Make the interview your day's sole priority:

This doesn't mean getting over-excited or obsessed about it, but rather preparing properly. Think about your day, your departure time, the possible questions and how you will present yourself.

3. Dress right:

Not the same thing as dressing smart or dressing for a night on the town, but more a case of dressing in a way that is consistent with the organisation and what you know about it.

4. Eat right:

It's usually worth avoiding too much high fibre food (like bran and other cereals and most fruits and vegetables), and to think in terms of binding, starchy carbohydrates like pasta, which will store up your energy reserves. Also think carefully before snacking on a Mars Bar and gulping down a caffe latte because the "rush" from sugar and caffeine might speed you up too much, too quickly.

5. Arrive in good time:

There's nothing more agitating than finding yourself in a tailback with five minutes to go. So plan your route and give yourself at least half an hour's leeway. If you get there too early, have a glass of water, settle yourself and get used to the environment you are in.

DURING THE INTERVIEW

1. Be prepared to talk

Avoid yes/no answers and expand as often as possible. Don't, however, over-communicate; it can be tempting to talk too much. Don't talk yourself out of a job trying to fill silences left by the interviewer! Take your cue from the interviewer and, if you are not sure that they have heard enough, ask if they would like you to continue.

2. Ask for clarification if you need it

This not only helps you to answer the question asked but also demonstrates confidence and control.

3. If you need a moment's thinking time

Take a sip of water if available - this will provide you with an opportunity to think about your answer.

4. Use examples from several different experiences

Rather than concentrating on just one aspect of your life, try to talk about experiences in different organisations or roles to show how flexible you can be.

5. Be positive

Don't use the word 'but'. Many people play down good experiences, saying things like: 'yes, I have worked as part of a team but that was only in a bar at weekends'. A more positive summary would be: 'I worked in a busy bar at weekends with three other staff and we needed to work well as a team in order to keep the queues down and keep our motivation up'.

6. Be yourself

If you adopt a new persona for the interview, the result is likely to be insincere and transparent. Even if you are offered the job, you may find later that it's not right for the 'real' you.

7. Remember that honesty is the best policy

If it is discovered at a later stage that you have been dishonest, you could be dismissed. Admitting to a period of poor motivation during your A-levels shows more integrity than blaming someone else for your grades. Don't feel that you should cover up incidents like this; rather present them as positive learning experiences.

8. Don't take them too seriously

All interviewers are just ordinary human beings and often the best way to get through is to relate to their humanity. So don't take it too seriously!

9. Prepare for surprises

It's easy to prepare for standard questions - "Why do you think we should employ you?" "Describe your strengths/weaknesses?" "Why do you want to work for Turning Point?" so think about it – and be well prepared.

10. Questions to ask

It's always a good idea to think of a few questions in advance. Ideally have these written down to show that you are organised.

Good luck !