

What to research before a job interview

Research in preparation for a job interview means finding out everything you can about the employer and the job. You can look up the employer online to read about what they do. You can also do an online search for the job title to find out about similar jobs.

Doing your research will boost your confidence and help you ask good questions during the interview. Employers are usually impressed with potential employees doing this research – it shows you're serious about wanting a job with them.

The benefits of researching a job interview

Researching a potential employer before a job interview has lots of benefits. It can help you:

- Get to really know the employer
- think of answers to common interview questions
- think of questions for the employer
- show you have initiative and enthusiasm.

Research is also a good way to find out about an employer's values. Values are the core principles that guide the employer's actions.

If you're going to work for an employer, it's important that their values fit with yours. Knowing what their values are can help you decide whether you'll take the job or not, if it's offered to you.

What to research before a job interview

Some things you can find out about an employer before a job interview include:

- what they do
- who their customers are
- who their competitors are
- where they're located, and whether they have more than one location
- the name of the Chief Executive Officer or head of the organisation
- what their values are (sometimes called vision and mission)
- recent press releases or news reports.

Finding out what people are saying online about the employer can also be useful. You can search for:

- customer reviews
- employee reviews
- social media mentions.

Ways to research before a job interview

Research the employer's website

The employer's website is a good place to start. Many company or organisation websites have an 'About' page that tell you all the key facts about them.

You'll usually be able to find out about their mission and vision on the 'About' page. This will tell you about their values. You'll also be able to find out about what they do, how they do it, and where they're located.

Check to see if there are any press releases or media releases on the employer's website. This will tell you what they've been doing recently.

Research news items about the employer

You can find out if the employer has been in the news lately by typing 'news' and the employer's name into a search engine.

Researching news items gives you other people's views of the employer. This can sometimes be more useful than the employer's own views about themselves.

Research similar employers

You can also research similar organisations or businesses to understand the wider market. Do an online search to find out about other companies or organisations that offer a similar product or service.

Research similar position descriptions

A position description or job description is a list of all the duties that someone performs in their job. Do an online search for the job title. A good way to find out what's involved in the job you're going for is to find similar position descriptions.

How to use your job interview research

Use your research to show you understand:

- what the job involves, and then demonstrating how you have the experience to do it well
- what the employer does, and then demonstrating how you can meet a need they have
- some of the problems the employer might face, and then demonstrating how you can help solve them
- what their values are, and then demonstrating that they match your own values.

'Demonstrating' means to use examples from your own experience to show how you have put something into practice in the past.

If you're offered the job, remember that your research could also help you decide if you want to work for this employer.