

101 Top Tips for

INTERVIEW

Success!

(c) Ian Morgan

WELCOME TO

101 TOP TIPS FOR INTERVIEW SUCCESS!



Competition for jobs is more intense than ever, and interviewing is a tough gig. We don't do it very often, there is a lot of pressure to perform, and it's not something we enjoy!



To help you become a star interview performer, I've compiled this handy guide. The Tips are mainly drawn from articles I've published over the last year on my dedicated interviewing advice website www.interviewbuddy.com.




I hope this guide is helpful and steers you towards interview success and the job of your dreams!

All the best for future success, Ian Morgan
ian@interviewbuddy.com

How to use this Guide



1. I've arranged my 101 Top Tips into sections, ranging from pre-interview prep, to answering questions, to what to do if it starts to go wrong! Sections are listed on the next page.
2. Feel free to flip through all 101 Tips, or go straight to a section where you know you need some help.
3. If a Tip relates closely to an article that I have published before on www.interviewbuddy.com, you'll see this button . Click it to refer back to the original article for a real 'deep dive' on the particular topic.
4. FEEL FREE TO SHARE THIS GUIDE WITH YOUR FRIENDS!

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GETTING
YOUR
MINDSET
RIGHT



GETTING YOUR MINDSET RIGHT

1. An interview is a massive event and can change your life - so take it seriously.
"Wing it" and you will get what you deserve - **failure!**
2. Think of your interview as a **performance** - get out there and 'wow' the audience
3. You have perhaps 30 minutes to deliver your very best - leave nothing on the table, you will regret it at your leisure if you do
4. Get comfortable getting out of your comfort zone, it is the only way you can grow - if you hate interviewing, practice hard with friends - or hire me 
5. Nerves are part of the process - they mean you are doing something important.
Recognise that and develop a technique to deal with them



GETTING YOUR MINDSET RIGHT


6. An interview is a sale - you are selling your time, effort, skills and services for a salary and benefits, and your task in the interview is to close the sale
7. Be **passionate** - about the opportunity, the business, the industry...
8. Don't sell your features (your CV covers those), sell your benefits (what you will do to improve the life of the hiring manager)
9. You need to find your interviewer's "**pain points**" - and then show them that you are the perfect solution
10. Be **persistent** and **persuasive**, but not pushy - the best salespeople close the deal without ever being obviously desperate

INTERVIEW PREPARATION



INTERVIEW PREPARATION



11. Thoroughly research the company - stock price, recent earnings announcements, strategy updates, speeches from the CEO etc
12. Thoroughly research any individuals you will meet at the interview - LinkedIn profiles can be hugely revealing
13. **Visualise** your interview in rich detail - this trick will help you fend off nerves and fill you with confidence 
14. Plan the journey to the interview location ahead of time

INTERVIEW PREPARATION




15. Rehearse your "elevator pitch" meticulously - 200-250 words explaining why you would be the perfect hire for the role
16. Prepare 3-4 penetrating questions that you want to ask
17. Bring a pen and smart notebook - pre-filled with your prepared questions
18. Bring some spare copies of your CV - and know its contents inside out
19. Arrive 10-15 minutes early, no more, no less

INTERVIEW PREPARATION



20. Greet everyone politely including receptionists etc


21. Dress appropriately - so look at how people in the job that you want are dressed, and mirror them 

22. Details matter - shoes polished, hair tidy, tie done properly, teeth brushed (bad breath is a real turn-off!)

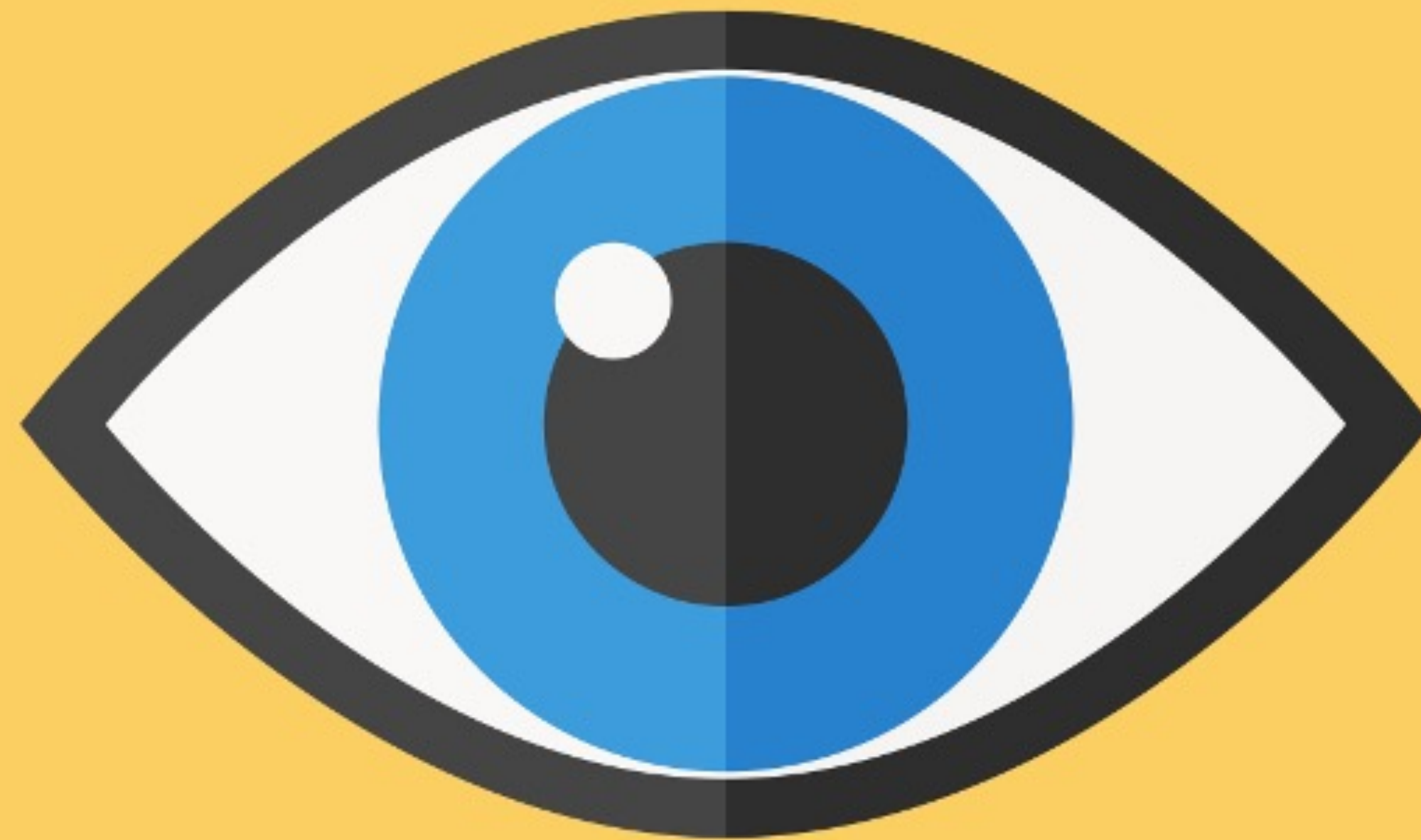
23. Take slow deep breaths to calm your nerves

INTERVIEW PREPARATION

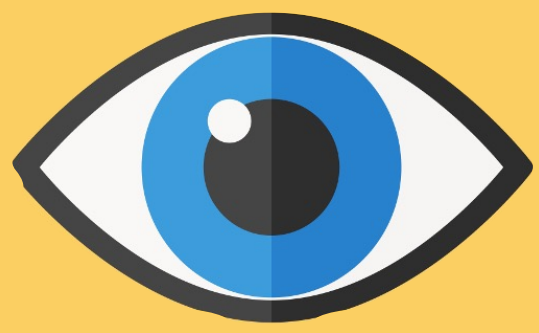


24. Think **positive thoughts** while you wait ("I deserve this job, I'm going to nail it") - gets you in a confident mindset
25. Stand rather than sit as you wait to go in - "Power Posing" is a great technique proven by researchers to improve confidence and your ability to make a strong impression! 
26. Ensure your palms aren't clammy - have a tissue on hand and dry them if necessary just before you go in!

The First





Impression



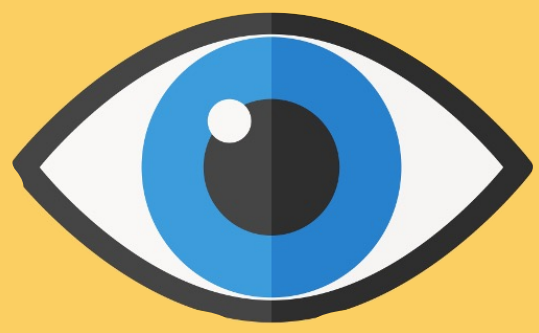
The First Impression

27. Walk upright and confidently to greet the interviewer

28. Smile as you introduce yourself - you want the interviewer to like you, right?! 

29. Make *friendly eye contact* - avoiding it looks like you have something to hide 

30. The handshake - make it crisp and firm, but don't linger or try to break any bones

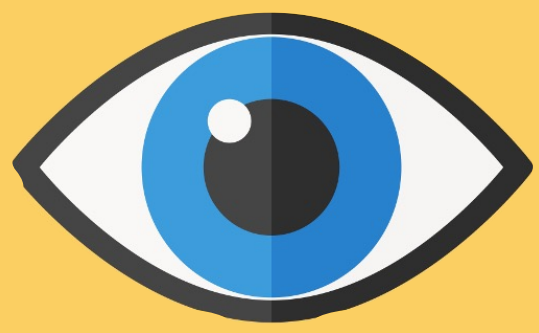


The First Impression

31. Greet with confidence and a little question ("Hello, I'm Ian Morgan. How are you?") - helps break the ice 

32. Memorise their name - ask again if you didn't hear it well - and repeat it back to them

33. Take a seat only when invited to sit - shows manners and respect



The First Impression

- 34. Sit upright but relaxed and facing the interviewer squarely - don't slouch, or slump
- 35. Keep your hands apart and resting lightly in your lap - you want your posture to be 'open' as this signals trust
- 36. **Be positive** in any initial small talk eg if asked how your journey was say "Absolutely fine, thanks" rather than "Terrible traffic" - no-one likes a complainer

HANDLING QUESTIONS

GENERAL TIPS





HANDLING QUESTIONS - GENERAL TIPS

37. Keep answers short and precise - don't waffle

38. Never make stuff up - stick to points that you can argue effectively

39. Never, ever lie - it usually shows, and guarantees you won't get the job offer

40. Use stories to **illustrate successes** - they resonate much more than simple facts

41. Use the **S.T.A.R. model** - Situation, Task, Action, Result - a solid and tested framework for explaining achievements


How to Answer

"Tell me
about
yourself"



How to Answer "Tell me about yourself"



42. This is your moment to give your crucial "elevator pitch" - keep it under 2 minutes long (200-250 words) 

43. Fill it with **achievements** - real accomplishments where you have contributed to something lasting and worthwhile in work, sport, education, in the community etc

44. Include your **passions** - what really fires you up and motivates you in your career

How to Answer "Tell me about yourself"



45. Refer to your **principles and values** - which should align with the values and culture of the company you are applying for

46. Highlight your **unique skills and qualities** - helps you stand out from the crowd


47. Don't put in irrelevant rubbish - "My dog is called Alfie and he won 3rd prize at a talent show" does not make you a compelling candidate!

How to Answer "Tell me about your greatest weakness"





How to Answer "Tell me about your greatest weakness"

48. Be open about a weakness that you have today - as long as it is not critical to the role you are applying for! 

49. Show you are aware of its impact and how to manage it - with examples

50. Take the opportunity to **highlight an offsetting strength** - this cleverly turns the conversation into a positive

How to Answer Puzzles / Brainteasers



How to Answer Puzzles / Brainteasers



51. These questions are rarely about getting a specific answer - mainly the point is to test your **capacity to think creatively** and break down problems under time pressure 

52. Write the question down (you brought your notebook, right?) - and clarify that you have understood it correctly

53. Break the question down into separate tasks - easier to find an answer step-by-step

54. Verbalise your thoughts - 'shows your working' & thought process which is usually more important than a specific answer

How to Answer Puzzles / Brainteasers



- 55. Draw diagrams as you go, using a whiteboard or flip chart if available - helps you visualise the problem and work towards the answer
- 56. Ask questions throughout to check your progress - helps ensure you are on track
- 57. Don't give up or give a random guess - creative thinking and problem solving can't be turned on like a tap, stick at it and a good answer often emerges from the fog as you work through



How to Answer Behavioural Interview Questions



How to Answer Behavioural Interview Questions

58. These questions are designed to test how you have handled yourself in the past in certain situations - by far the best way to answer them is with 'success stories' centred around your contribution

59. Use the S.T.A.R. method to give your answer - a solid approach where you sequence from problem to solution with you in the starring role

60. These questions usually look for evidence of **teamwork, collaboration, leadership, interpersonal skills and problem solving** - so ensure you prepare some success stories showcasing these qualities



How to Answer Behavioural Interview Questions


- 61. Use recent examples wherever possible - highlighting something you did 5 years ago is not particularly helpful as you should have matured/improved a lot by now anyway
- 62. Ensure the qualities that you choose to highlight map well into those that the hiring manager is looking for - there is no point being great in an irrelevant skill
- 63. Your success story should take no longer than 1-2 minutes - keep it concise and packed with relevant details.
- 64. Use action-oriented words and hard facts ("...and as a result I delivered a 32% ramp up in sales...") to **tell your story with impact**

**Asking
powerful
and
impactful
questions**



Asking powerful and impactful questions



65. Great questions help you stand out and understand the role better - weak questions make you look lazy 

66. Ask open questions - monosyllabic replies don't help deepen your understanding

67. Ask something specific about business or company strategy - particularly if it is unusual compared to what competitors are doing

68. Highlight your knowledge of the company/industry with an unusual question - e.g. the impact of some newly developed technology which could disrupt the market

Asking powerful and impactful questions



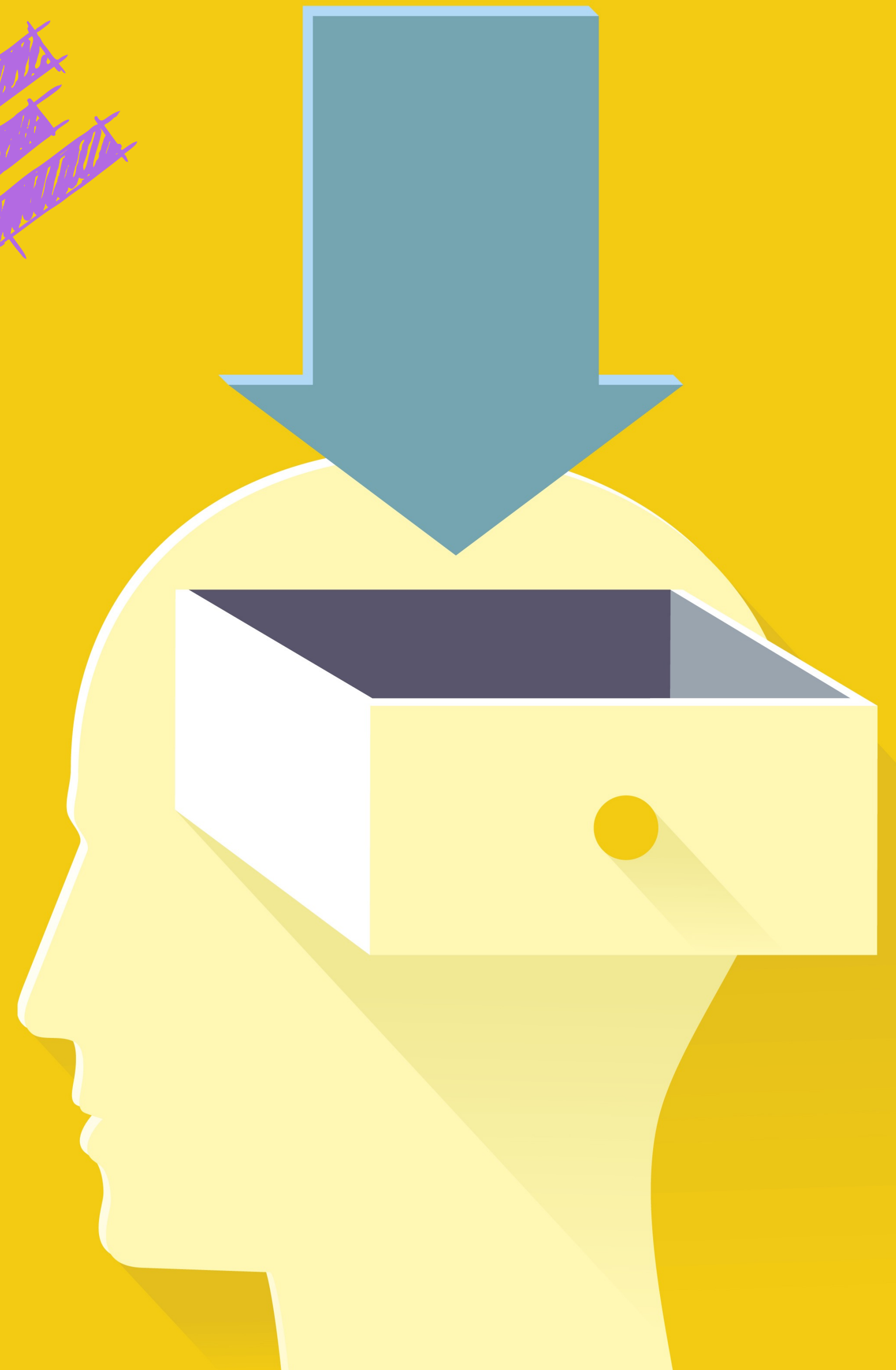
69. Ask questions which **showcase your breadth of knowledge and intellect** - but without showing off! 

70. Listen **intently** to any answer, take notes and ask follow-up questions to drive a deep two-way conversation

71. Never say "I have no questions - you've covered everything thanks" - it's foolish to believe you know everything about the role

72. Never ask banal questions like "what are the working hours", "how much holiday do I get?" - low quality and a wasted opportunity

MEMORABLE



BEING MEMORABLE



73. Many highly qualified hopefuls are chasing every job, and **competition is intense** - make sure your interview is memorable to help really stand out from the crowd 

74. Be **Motivated** - show that you have plenty of hunger and desire to land the job

75. Be **Energised** - fill the room with your energy, rather than sitting still like a robot

76. Be **Mature** - to show that you are ready to step up and take on responsibility and be able to advance quickly

BEING MEMORABLE



77. Be **O**ptimistic - share how you can bring something new and exciting to the firm

78. Be **R**ealistic - demonstrate you are ready to do the hard yards before you can take on juicier responsibility

79. Be **A**rticulate - speaking clearly and effectively highlights intellect, a capacity to persuade and a comfort with presenting or public speaking

BEING MEMORABLE



80. Be **B**old - take a risk and say something challenging or controversial to provoke a lively debate, though be sure of your facts before you start this up!

81. Be **L**ikeable - people rarely hire people they don't like, so be warm and friendly and the interviewer will more easily see you as a team player and fitting into their world

82. Be **E**ntertaining! - an amusing story or well-judged joke that raises a laugh goes a long way to persuading a future boss that you will fit in well

Closing Strongly




Closing Strongly



83. Remember that **an interview is a sale** - and the close is all part of sealing the deal

84. Check if there is anything that the interviewer would like to clarify - gives you a chance to address any misgivings they may have

85. Ask "How did I do?" - if you are confident the interview has gone well, this is a bold move and challenges the interviewer to confirm that you have done well 

86. Ask about next steps - again, if you have done well, it shows a good degree of **confidence and hunger**. You want the job and you want to be in pole position to get it

Closing Strongly



- 87. Re-iterate that you want the job - "I'd love to be the one you hire, is there anything else you need to know?" works really well
- 88. "I'm really keen to go to the next stage. When can I expect to hear from you?" - is **assertive** and demonstrates your **desire** to land the role
- 89. Look for a chance to **build rapport** as you wrap up - e.g. if your research showed your interviewer is a fan of a certain sport, bring it up and get them on a topic they clearly enjoy
- 90. Thank them for their time and opportunity to interview for the role - reinforces your good manners and appreciation of the interviewer

Closing Strongly



- 91. Ensure you leave with their business card or at a minimum contact details - for your thank you note
- 92. Send a thank you note - email is acceptable for all but the most formal / staid companies (in which case, mail a real letter!)
- 93. Your thank you note should **highlight the positives** from the meeting
- helps embed your best qualities in the mind of the interviewer



WHAT TO DO IF
IT STARTS TO
GO WRONG!





WHAT TO DO IF IT STARTS TO GO WRONG!

94. Interviewers will put you under pressure deliberately - what's important is how you handle yourself when the heat is on

95. **Don't panic** about not knowing something - the reality of business life is that no-one knows everything, and minimising the impact of errors is the hallmark of the best companies

96. If your nerves are impacting your performance, say something like "Sorry if I seem a little nervous, this opportunity means a lot to me" - this usually brings a sympathetic response and helps you calm down

97. If you start to give a jumbled answer to a question, just say: "Sorry, I'm not being clear, let me start again with that"

FINAL TIPS



FINAL TIPS



98. This could be a **turning point in your life** - treat the opportunity like your dream job and prepare like you have never prepared before

99. Make a choice to **relish the interview** - you will end up being more natural, more comfortable and ultimately deliver a better performance

100. Be yourself, but **give the best of yourself** and command the stage!

101. **Believe in yourself** - you have been selected for the interview for a reason: **YOU ARE GOOD ENOUGH TO GET HIRED!**



Thanks for reading my **101 Top Tips for Interview Success!**
You're now set to attack your next interview more prepared,
more confident and more likely to get hired!

If you liked this guide, I can help you with **PRIVATE COACHING** for the ultimate in interview preparation.
You can find details of my coaching packages [here](#).



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