CITY of BRISTOL COLLEGE

City of Bristol College

Apprenticeship Interview Preparation

0117 312 5000 enquiries@cityofbristol.ac.uk cityofbristol.ac.uk

Before your interview

Research where the location of your interview is, and consider doing a "dummy run" before the day so you're sure how to get there.

Research the company online so you have strong background knowledge of what they do, their aims and their values.

Set yourself aims and objectives that you would like to achieve during your apprenticeship. Be positive about this – make it about what you do want to do, not what you don't want!

Come prepared with a pad and pen

Be 10 minutes early for your appointment

Arrive clean, well-presented and enthusiastic

Preparing for your interview

Interviews can be stressful, so don't worry if you're feeling nervous – it's perfectly normal! Here are some guidelines which may help you feel more prepared.

Body language: sit up straight, face your interviewer and don't cross your arms. This will help you appear and feel more confident.

It can be hard to make eye contact when you're nervous, but try to keep regular eye contact with the person you're talking to, so they know you're listening and engaging.

Be honest. Interviewers will usually know if you're not being truthful, so if you don't know an answer, simply say "I'm sorry but I don't know that". Honesty is the best policy and will show respect to the interviewer by demonstrating that you don't think you can fool them.

Speak clearly and concisely, in a manner that is not intimidating.

Likely interview questions and answer guidance

Q. *Tell me about yourself*

This question can be confusing as you might not be sure what the interviewer means. Give a brief outline of where you are from, where you want your career to go and why you are there.

Example:

I'm Natasha, I live in Clevedon. I am currently studying an NVQ in Office and Admin skills and I am looking to gain some office experience to add substance to my CV. I am a friendly and hard working person and I thought of coming here to gain work experience as this is the sort of organisation I would like to work for.

Q. *Tell me about your school/college history*

Talk about what attracted you to the course and then talk about the positive skills you are developing (always giving examples).

- Use of the computer system (be specific - Word, Excel, Powerpoint etc).
- Use of office equipment (be specific – fax, photocopier, printer, telephone etc).
- Effective teamwork.
- Meeting college deadlines.
- Project work.
- Experience in working with people from all walks of life.

Q. *Talk me through your work history/experience*

This is an opportunity to tell them about any work you have done in the past. Be detailed, be as positive as possible and remember to include any voluntary work you have done. It's a good idea to have your CV in front of you as a memory jogger if you tend to forget things under pressure.

Q. *Tell me about a time you have worked well in a team*

This means any time you have worked within a group to achieve a successful outcome. Examples might be a college project where you were set a tight deadline to achieve some work, or maybe a time in work where you were expected to achieve certain sales. It's a good idea to think of an example which meant doing extra work or similar for the good of the group/team, if you have one.

Q. *What has been your biggest achievement to date?*

This can be anything! It could be an educational achievement or something in your personal life like sports or a hobby. Most importantly you should be able to explain why you feel it's your biggest achievement, and the hard work you had to put in to achieve it.

Q. *Tell me about a time where you have dealt with a difficult situation*

This could be dealing with a difficult customer at work, or maybe turning around a bad situation like having poor attendance at College. It could also be something from your personal life like diffusing a situation where two people weren't getting along. The important part is to focus on how you decided what to do and the positive outcome.

Q. *Tell me about a time where you have shown extra commitment*

This could mean staying late at work/college in order to achieve a goal or just to help someone out, going above and beyond of what has been asked of you, or taking on extra responsibility.

Q. *What do you know about our company and why do you want to do an apprenticeship with us?*

This is your chance to show you have done your research, but make sure you truthfully apply it to why you want to work there rather than just repeating facts!

Example:

If it's a big company, you could say "I thrive in fast-paced environments and would love the opportunity to work with people across the organisation"; or if it's a small company you could say "I love to work in a team and like my role to be varied".

Do you have any questions you want to ask?

Always prepare three questions. Examples could be:

Q. *What training and support will I receive?*

Q. *What are the greatest challenges of this position?*

Q. *What is the company culture?*

Q. *If I was to gain an apprenticeship here, would there be any potential of permanent employment at the end of it?*

Leaving the interview

Once the interview is over, remember to:

- Thank the interviewer for their time and consideration and shake their hand.
- Tell the interviewer that you are looking forward to hearing from them in the future.

CITY of BRISTOL COLLEGE