

5 things you can do in 5 minutes to prep for an interview

Things that take around five minutes to accomplish: making popcorn, showering, making coffee, paying a bill online and prepping for an interview. Yep, that's right. There are some simple things you can do in a short amount of time to ensure that you're confident from the moment the interview begins.

1. Select a winning outfit

First impressions are important, and your appearance is part of the first impression you make on hiring managers. It only takes a few minutes to pick out the right outfit, but what you choose can actually speak to the type of worker you may be. According to a CareerBuilder survey, when asked to advise job seekers on the best color to wear to a job interview, employers most often recommended blue (23 percent) and black (15 percent). Not only did orange top the list of the worst color to wear, but it was also most likely to be associated with someone who is unprofessional. Also consider factors such as fit, accessories and other elements of your appearance (nails, polished shoes, etc.). You want to stand out, but not because of the wrong outfit choice.

2. Read the company's "about us" section

While you should invest time in researching the company and role before an interview, if you only have five minutes, head to the company's website and give its "about us" section a good read. There you should find information such as the company's mission statement, its core values and general company facts. A quick read like that can impress interviewers when you demonstrate that you are taking the opportunity seriously and that you prepared for your work.

3. Review your résumé

After spending hours updating your résumé, you may think you know it backward and forward. But while you may have added in a section about your current job, did you look back at what you wrote for previous jobs? It's easy to forget details about earlier work, so don't get caught off guard if asked about a certain project at a former company, especially if it relates to the job for which you're applying.

4. Practice your "elevator pitch"

The common "So, tell me about yourself" question or variant of it usually comes up right at the start of an interview. While it may seem like the easiest question to answer, a question that broad can actually be tricky. How do you truly tell this hiring manager who doesn't know you and whom you want to impress everything about your work experience without going on and on? Instead, take a few minutes beforehand to practice your "elevator pitch," or a 15–30 second overview of who you are, what you do and an example of what you've accomplished.

5. Determine the best route to your destination

You could spend days prepping for an interview, but if you show up late, it could all be for nothing. A simple solution is to check out the location's address beforehand, consider what traffic conditions may be like, and plan out the best route and mode of transportation that will get you there on time (or better yet, early).