



**CONNECTIONS
RECRUITMENT**

Sale | Manchester | London

www.connections-recruitment.co.uk



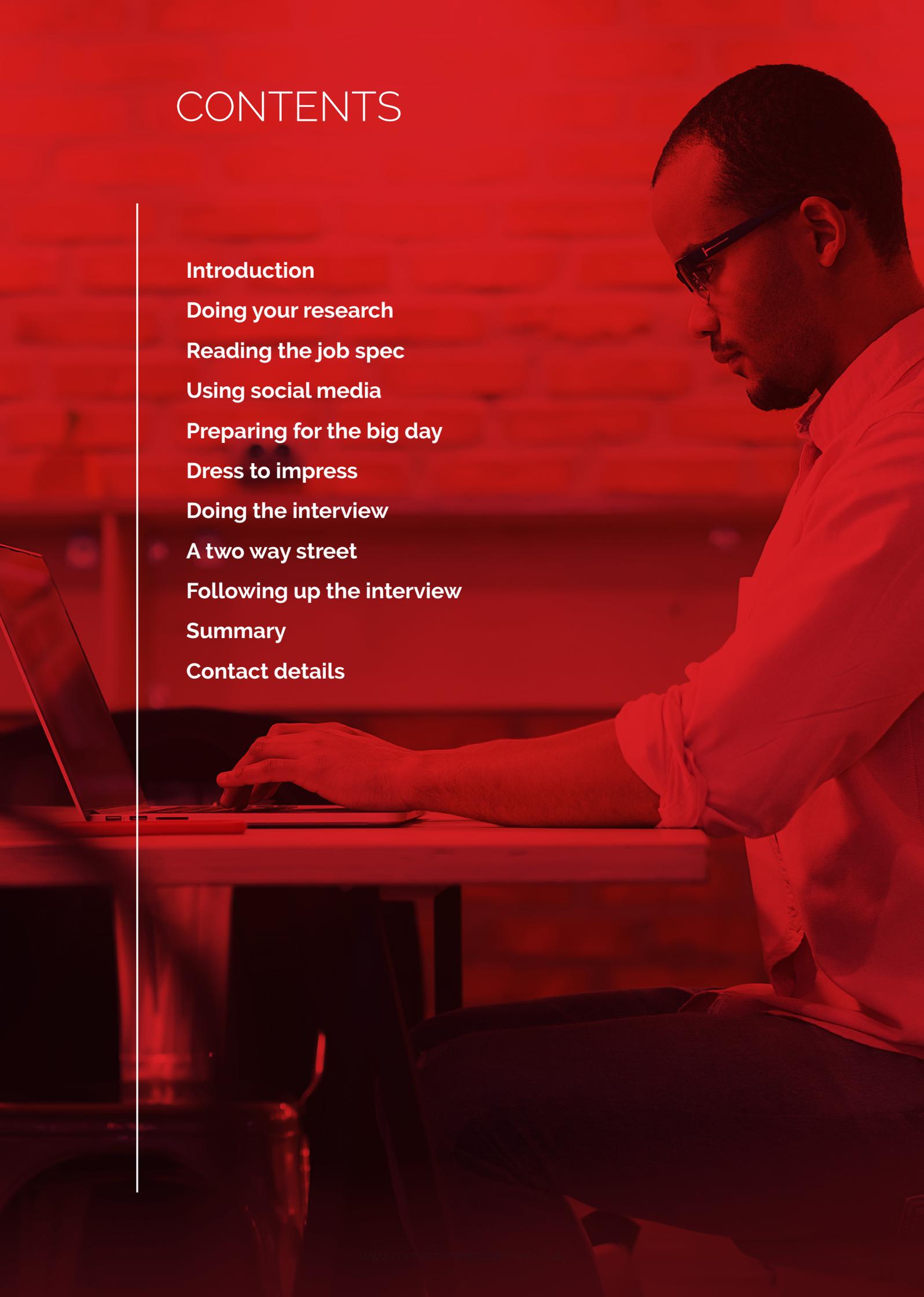
@connections_mcr

Your guide to the perfect interview

Top Tips & Techniques



CONTENTS

A man with glasses is sitting at a desk, working on a laptop. The scene is dimly lit with a strong red color cast. The man is wearing a light-colored shirt and dark trousers. He is looking down at the laptop screen. The background is blurred, showing what appears to be a bookshelf or a wall with some items. The overall mood is focused and professional.

Introduction

Doing your research

Reading the job spec

Using social media

Preparing for the big day

Dress to impress

Doing the interview

A two way street

Following up the interview

Summary

Contact details

1

INTRODUCTION

So, you've got
the interview...

BUT HOW SHOULD YOU PREPARE?

Preparing for interviews can seem like a scary prospect, but don't fear – we've produced this guide to help you best manage your time. Arming yourself with relevant, up to date information on your potential employer will allow you to walk into that interview room with confidence.

First and foremost, make sure you do your research.

There's really nothing more unappealing for an interviewer than a candidate who has made no effort to research a role whatsoever – it's bound to lead to a lot of awkward silences.

Your research of both the company you are interviewing for and a

thorough understanding of why you are the right person for the job will play a crucial role in how you perform.

Taking a few steps to understand the values and purpose of what you are applying for will make all the difference.

2

READING THE JOB SPEC

Social media is a fantastic source of company information which should be top of your list when it comes to interview preparation.

REMEMBER:

a person specification is only a wish list - you are not expected to fulfil every element of the desired criteria.

Marketing Assistant Job Specification

Logoz was founded two years ago with the idea of helping **companies** create their own brand online.

We are a fast-growing start up with an **international reach** and are on the lookout for a bright and forward-

thinking Marketing Assistant to join our digital team.

In return you will enjoy great perks like free professional development, 30 days holiday per year and **awesome staff night outs.**

Have you worked in a business-to-business environment before?

Note the casual tone - this could suggest an informal interview.

This could be an opportunity to discuss any additional languages you might have.

What you'll be doing:

- SEO based Copywriting
- Updating all social media channels
- Email marketing to a broad audience
- Building relationships with bloggers and other third parties
- Monitoring website traffic and user behaviour

We are looking for:

- At least one year's experience in a digital marketing agency.
- Experience managing email marketing to a large audience.
- Experience of using Google Analytics would be an **advantage.**

Not having this skill will not disqualify you from getting the role.

3

RESEARCH USING SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media is a fantastic source of company information which should be top of your list when it comes to interview preparation.

Company pages on **Facebook**, **Twitter** and **Instagram** can provide a breadth of useful knowledge of a company's values and culture.

Often hiring managers will have a professional profile on **LinkedIn** that may give you an insight into their background, providing useful talking points in the interview.

Jonathan Dobkin
Director at Connections Recruitment
Connections Recruitment • Leeds Metropolitan University
Manchester, United Kingdom • 500+ 🧑

Message

Jonathan (better known as 'JD') joined Connections in June 1996, having spent the previous five years working for a global Insurance Broker. A Business and Finance graduate, he is responsible for overseeing new business.... [See more](#)

Highlights

12 Mutual Connections
You and Jonathan both know Michelle Malkin, Pamela Stokes, and 10 others

You both work at Connections Recruitment
Jonathan started at Connections Recruitment 20 years and 5 months before you did

Jonathan's Articles & Activity
1,744 followers

Personal Branding (For Introverts)
Jonathan Dobkin on LinkedIn

CALLING ALL RECRUITMENT AND HR PROFESSIONALS... A good friend and former...
Jonathan shared this

Forever Manchester Women Raises Over £1,200
Jonathan liked

What I discovered after using a standing desk for 1 year
Jonathan liked

[See 6 more articles](#) [See all activity](#)

The profile section should normally indicate your interviewer's precise role at the company if you are unsure.

Check out the activity section for possible conversation topics (blogs, favourite charity causes etc)

4

CHECK LIST FOR THE BIG DAY

The day of your interview can be a scary prospect, but it doesn't have to be. Following this checklist will ensure the whole experience goes smoothly.



Plan your route

Work out where you are going long before the day of the interview, making sure you are aware of **exactly** how long it will take to arrive there by car or public transport.



Dress to impress

From your research of a company you should be able to work out the dress code. If not, check with the recruiter or HR team. First impressions really do make a lot of difference.



Arrive 10-15 minutes early

To be early for an interview can only be viewed as a positive. To be late can form a negative impression which can be hard to turn around.



Bring the right tools with you

Bring along a copy of the job specification, your CV and a pen and notepad. This will help to remind you of any crucial points before the interview. Taking notes during the interview will impress most employers.

Our success in job interviews, meetings and day-to-day working life is very much based on first impressions which can be decided in an instant. It's equally important to remember that employers are looking for presentable people even in non-customer-facing roles, as company branding becomes more and more important.

Leading tech companies expect their employees to wear jeans, while many more firms have adopted a 'business casual' policy. On the other hand, it can be difficult to decide on the right level of formal dress in more traditional corporate environments.

Strong colours have been shown to cause employers to **form a negative impression of candidates**, but what steps can we take to stand out from the crowd? Follow the guide below to ensure you nail your interview outfit.

Business formal

Women



- Trouser suit or conservative length skirt in a neutral colour
- White-collared dress shirt
- Modest Accessories
- Dark Tights
- Neutral colour closed-toe heels

Men



- Two or three piece suit in neutral, dark colour
- White or plain collared shirt
- Solid, coloured, unflashy tie
- Cufflinks or a watch
- Black or brown oxford shoes

Business casual

Women



- Skirt or suit trousers
- Shirts, jumpers or blouses in solid colours or subtle patterns
- Casual statement jewellery
- Closed-toe heels, flats or loafers in any colour

Men



- Formal shirts in any colour
- Jumpers or cardigans worn with collared shirts
- Ties are optional; most colours
- Suit trousers or chinos

5

DOING THE INTERVIEW

Modern interviews tend to follow a structure, whether it be a competency style interview or a presentation. Whatever the interview format is, you should come armed with some well-considered examples of both your strengths and achievements from previous roles.

Remember to relax

Remember that interviewers want you to do well. Take a deep breath, and a bit of time before answering. If you aren't totally sure what the question was, politely ask your interviewer to repeat or rephrase it.

Use evidence

It's useful to consider things such as how you may have added value to your team or business. The interviewer's job is to extract the information that they need to see demonstrated clearly, articulately and with specific detail.

Examples could include:

- SEO based Copywriting
- Measurable targets such as leads or sales which you have generated.
- Any cost-saving/efficiency improvements which you have made.
- Company prizes which you have won
- Innovations/ideas which you have made for your team

Remember that facts and figures alone won't help you. Using these examples to create a story (how you progressed in your previous job/how you discovered a hidden talent etc) will ensure your answers are compelling.

Pay attention to body language

It's surprisingly easy to forget the impact of body language, considering that it's responsible for 65% of our communication. Ensuring you give a firm handshake, maintain eye contact when talking and listening, and demonstrating enthusiasm will help to put you and your interviewer at ease.

6

A TWO WAY STREET

An interview is just as much of an opportunity for you to ask questions as the interviewer. It is important to consider yourself as a potential employee and there are plenty of good examples of positive questions that may help to position you ahead of other applicants.

Great questions to ask...

What do you like most about working here?

Do you offer any additional opportunities for training?

How is performance measured or reviewed here?

How would you describe the culture at this company?

What are the most important challenges which this organisation faces?

When can I expect to hear from you?

Questions to avoid...

How quickly can I get a promotion/ pay-rise?

Do you do background checks?

When can I take holiday time?

What does this company actually do?

“ *The smart candidate will look at their interviewer and find out why they like the company, what they see as the positives about the workplace and culture that might give you a greater insight than the website offers.* ”

Matt Fox-Rees, Operations Manager

7 FOLLOWING UP THE INTERVIEW

Don't hesitate to follow up your interview. It's a way for hiring managers to gauge your enthusiasm, and can mean the difference between edging yourself to the top of pile and never hearing back at all.

However – you should be careful to consider how, and when you are going to make your follow up.

A survey from **Accountemps**¹ revealed that the two most popular follow up methods among hiring managers was:



87%
email



81%
phone call

Whether or not you choose to pick up the phone, it's always a good idea to send an initial follow up email – promptly. This is a great opportunity to demonstrate that your ability to listen to and process information – mentioning a talking point from the interview is a great way to do this.

When to Follow Up the Follow Up

Hopefully your interviewer indicated a time when they would reach a decision. If not, try and remain patient for a reasonable length of time. If it's been longer than a week, consider making another follow up to establish whether any progress has been made.

If the waiting continues, remain patient – a number of factors could be causing a delay, and being enthusiastic rather than desperate will pay off. If you have received a positive response from each of your follow ups then it may be appropriate to check in at frequent intervals. If the response has been mixed, then it's best to play it cool.

If you haven't been successful

Being rejected after an interview can feel like a real setback – but it doesn't need to be. It's important to remember that getting an interview is a real achievement in itself. Asking for feedback is a great way of moving forward. If you feel you were perfect for a role and are struggling to work out why you didn't make the cut, then your interviewer could open your eyes to an area where you could improve.

¹ https://s3.amazonaws.com/filecache.drivetheweb.com/mr4enh_rhigroups_accountemps/1310/Thank-you-method.gif

9

SUMMARY



9

CONTACT INFO

