

Teacher interviews - how to be the successful candidate

Research suggests that an interviewer forms an opinion of a candidate within just 90 seconds of meeting, so it's important to be prepared, do your homework and show up (10 minutes early) in your smartest clothes.

In this short guide, our recruitment professionals share their top tips to help you succeed at your teacher interview - *and* enjoy the process!

Be prepared to talk about YOU!

Keeping those all important 90 seconds in mind, opening interview questions such as 'tell me a bit about yourself', or 'what interests you about this role?', should be articulated clearly with enthusiasm and accuracy, ensuring that your personal attributes and personality shine through. In an unstructured interview, these opening points could steer the rest of the interview - so aim clearly in the direction of getting hired.

Look the part...

Dressing appropriately for an interview is a key criteria to getting the interviewer on your side from the start. If in doubt, always dress smarter. You can't go wrong with a conservative suit, but be sure to add an element of colour, pattern or an accessory that hints at your personality.

...but dress comfortably

If you're feeling uncomfortable in a stiff suit or tight shirt then you won't deliver your best interview performance on the day, so ensure that the clothes you choose feel good, fit well and carry an air of professionalism.

Do your homework - aka research the school, college or institute

It's *always* a good idea to do some background research into the place you're applying to work. In this day and age, with information available in seconds at the touch of a button, there really is no excuse! An interviewer will always be impressed that you've taken the time to research, especially on current projects, initiatives or areas they specialise in. What makes that place unique and why does that appeal to you as a potential teacher?

Prep for the tough questions

How do you deal with classroom disputes? How do you handle classroom discipline? What are your thoughts on team teaching? What would you say is your biggest weakness? The interviewer will always ask these types of questions to get a feel for the type of teacher you are and how you handle stressful situations, conflict or bad behaviour. Think back to some of the difficult situations you've had to deal with in the past and how you overcame those issues. What do your responses and actions tell you about yourself? Are you aware of your own strengths, weaknesses and areas for development?

Prepare questions for your interviewers

It's useful to remember that interviews are a two way process. While you may find them a nerve-wracking experience, it's also a great opportunity to find out more about the culture of the establishment and whether it's a good fit for you. When you shift your perspective you may find the nerves naturally dissipate!

Usually interviews end with 'do you have any questions for us?', so it's always good to be prepared and come away with a better feel for what it would be like to work there. Here are a few of our favourite questions to get you started:

- What is the best thing about working here?
- What are some of the school's goals for this academic year and what plans do you have in place to meet them?
- How many students are in an average class?
- What do you think are the school's greatest strengths?

And finally...

Now you've read our top tips to becoming the successful candidate at interview, we wish you every success in your career as an inspiring teacher, shaping the next generation of learners.

Not getting invited for teacher interviews? Read our guide to creating a great CV.