

# Top tips

# Interviews

- 1 Be prepared.** Find out where you are going beforehand and arrive on time. Remember first impressions with everyone you meet, count! Be confident, friendly and polite.
- 2 Do your research** about the council and the area you are applying to. Find out as much as you can to show you are interested.
- 3 Bring any documentation** that is asked for in the invite instructions.
- 4 Listen to the questions** and think before you begin your answers. Ask the interviewer to repeat or explain further if you do not understand a question. Don't be afraid to ask for a moment to think about something, jot the question down or ask to come back to it, interviewers understand that you will be nervous.
- 5 Be positive** about your skills, strengths and experiences. What you CAN do!
- 6 Honesty.** If you've faced difficult situations, show what you learned from them.
- 7 Think yourself into the role** beforehand, how would it feel? What would you be doing?

- 8 Use examples.** For each answer use an example of how you demonstrate what is being asked. Look up the STAR method to answer questions about your skills and experience.
- 9 Practice with someone beforehand.** Consider the possible questions you may be asked.
- 10 Speak clearly, slowly** and to everyone on the interview panel.
- 11 Read through the job description** and person spec and your application again before the interview. This will give clues as to the questions you may be asked.
- 12 Ask questions** firstly about the role and opportunities, rather than pay and conditions. Prepare these beforehand.
- 13 Relax.** Remember the interviewer is hoping you will be the best candidate!



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Remember, interviews are always great experience and don't forget to ask for feedback.

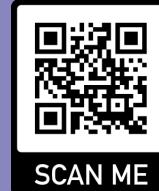
**Bolton Council**

# Top tips

# Job applications

- 1 Prepare your information before you start.** Its quicker if you have everything to hand.
- 2 Focus on what you have.** Don't be put off by what you haven't done.
- 3 Take a break.** If you get stuck for what to write, take a break and come back to it.
- 4 Make it an easy read.** Avoid jargon and waffle. Steer clear of super-long sentences, check you haven't repeated yourself.
- 5 Go through the person specification.** Demonstrate how you meet each of the criteria that has "application" detailed as the assessment method.
- 6 Think creatively.** If your work experience is limited, think creatively about your other interests and hobbies, what skills have you developed?

- 7 What makes you stand out.** Think of your real strengths and sell yourself, focus on "I" not "we".
- 8 Check the information.** Do you have the right experience or qualifications for the role. Ask for a quick call with the recruiting manager to find out more.
- 9 Double check** your spelling, grammar and if you have provided the information requested.
- 10 Use the STAR method** to answer the person specification questions using your examples, what was the Situation, Task, Action, and Result?
- 11 Consider speaking to your referees** beforehand, so there is no delay. Make sure their contact details are correct.



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