

Interview Tips and Example Questions

Tips

An interview is an exchange of information, therefore, it is important to ask clear questions, give the person a chance to speak and listen to their answer. Don't assume anything, whether in terms of giving or receiving information.

Choose a venue. Select somewhere where you will both feel comfortable. This could be a quiet café, library or community centre.

If required, arrange assistance with the interview. Having a 2nd person for support and whose opinion you trust can be helpful.

Prepare a list questions to bring with you to the interview. Have a trial run to practice them. Interviewing can be just as stressful as being interviewed.

Think about how formal or informal you want to make it. An interview can be a conversation over a cup of tea, but remember that you do need to ask some formal questions to assess the person's experience and personality.

Prepare an introduction for the interview to explain a little bit about yourself and what you are looking for in your PA.

Prepare information to conclude the interview e.g. timescale for making a decision, checking references etc.

Plan the length of the interview. Allow 60mins per interview so you don't need to rush.

Make notes during the interview. Write down their answers to your questions so you can refer to them later. This will help you remember what was said and also help you compare candidates if you are interviewing more than one PA.

Be yourself.

Arranging the Interview

Explain a little bit about yourself, your situation and what you are looking for in a PA.

Agree on a date and a time for the interview

Mention if you have pets before the interview. Some people have allergies or are uncomfortable around animals.

Opening the Interview

Thank the person for coming

Introduce yourself (and colleague/friend if applicable). Explain a little bit about yourself, your situation and what you are looking for in a PA.

Briefly outline what tasks are required and what you are hoping to achieve by having a PA e.g. help with washing, food preparation, companionship, greater independence

Example Questions

Below are some sample interview questions. Choose a few from the following list that you think are relevant and add your own.

- What qualities and experience do you have that you think would make you a good personal assistant?
- I see that you don't have direct experience of this kind of work, but people often have other experience. For example, some people have members of their family, or friends, or maybe neighbours who are disabled in one way or another. What experience of working with disabled people do you have?
- What are your hobbies/interests?
- What do you find rewarding about being a PA?
- Have you been on any relevant training courses? If so, which courses and when?
- Would you be interested if there was any training available?
- Have you had a DBS check?
- I will need to tell you how to do things in the way I want them done. How would you cope with this?
- How would you react if you have done something and I want it done again in another way?
- If I ask you to do something, and you think there is another way to do it that you would prefer – what would you say and do?
- If we did have a difference of opinion, how do you think you would deal with this?

- If you were out with me and someone persisted in ignoring me and spoke only to you, how would you react?
- What shifts would you prefer e.g. days, nights or a mixture?
- What hours are you available to work?
- Would you be prepared to consider part-time or relief work?
- Would you be prepared to consider being called on at short notice to do more than your usual hours, e.g. if another personal assistant was sick?
- Do you have a car? Would you be prepared to use it for work?
- Are there any questions that you would like to ask me?
- Do you have any questions about the job description?
- You should mention any other things you enjoy doing such as gardening, socialising and ask if the personal assistant would be prepared to do this as part of their job.
- If relevant you should ask why they are leaving, or have left, their current or last job.

Concluding the Interview

At the end of the interview you should also explain the following:

- Pay and conditions and any rota system you have worked out in advance.
- Contract of employment.
- That you will take up references for them before appointment.
- That if they are successful relevant Disclosure and Barring (DBS) checks may need be carried out before they can start work. (NB: Ask the Direct Payment Support Service for clarification of when this is required).
- Let the person know when and how they will hear if they have been successful or not.

Thank the person for coming and for their time.