

# Job Interview Survival Guide

## Planning and Preparation

Think about any reasonable adjustments you might need during the interview, and request these as early as you can. You might benefit from participating remotely via video call, or from being located in an accessible ground-floor room with no stairs to contend with. Don't be afraid of requesting a time slot that suits your needs: some people might be more 'on the ball' first thing in the morning, others may be at their best later in the day. If there's something that could make the process more accessible for you, don't be afraid to ask for it. Just make sure you request these things in plenty of time before the day comes!

Be smart in your background research about the role and the company. It's valuable to be as clued up on these things as possible, but that doesn't mean you have to commit every scrap of content on the organisation's website to memory. Read through the information you have available and note down the points most relevant to your own background and role. Condense that information into notes that make sense to you, so you can read through them every day and help consolidate that knowledge in the lead up to your interview.

Be proactive in as many small decisions as you can, in plenty of time. Plan your journey and take account of any delays you may face; choose your outfit and pack anything you may need to take with you, consider any healthcare needs you may have to accommodate e.g. extra medication or symptom management, additional mobility aids, or whether you'd benefit from a PA or Carer coming with you. Taking care of these things in advance means they don't have to take up your valuable energy and brain space which could be better utilised during the interview itself.

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## During The Interview

Easier said than done, but manage your nerves as best as you can. Take a couple of breaths whenever you feel you need to centre yourself, and pay particular attention to the speed at which you're talking. Anxiety can make us feel as though we need to rush what we're saying or respond to questions asked within a millisecond, but this doesn't have to be the case. Listen to questions and consider them before feeling obliged to speak, and don't be afraid to ask for a question to be repeated – it won't be used against you.

If you live with fatigue or pain, you may benefit from having rest breaks during the interview itself. You may have requested these in advance in order to help you with pacing and symptom management, but if you feel as though you're physically struggling during the interview, don't be afraid to ask for a breather. Stepping outside or taking a few minutes for some peace and quiet might be just the thing you need to help you perform at your best.

A disheartening fact is that many people with long-term conditions simply don't feel comfortable discussing their illness or any health needs with potential employers, worrying that this could be used against them. However, rest assured that times are changing. Employers are becoming more receptive to the needs and value of the Invisible Talent Pool, and there are so many positive things that could be gained from having an open and frank conversation about your health and how it might interact with the role you're interested in. Doing so can help both parties to form a professional connection, build up a rapport, and better understand each other.

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## Follow-Up and Outcomes

If your interview is successful and you secure the role, congratulations! Following on from the previous point, don't be afraid to be proactive in continuing the conversation about your health. Discuss any reasonable adjustments that may be necessary and ensure you're on the same page as your employer, so that you'll be able to carry out your role safely and sustainably.

If you don't land the role this time, never mind. Remember to thank the employer for the opportunity and ask to be kept in mind for the future. Leave a positive impression and give them a reason to remember your name. You never know who might come back to you at a later date.

No matter what the outcome may be this time, never forget how valuable you are. Rejection doesn't mean failure... often, it simply means redirection. Your health condition doesn't make you any less worthy than any other applicant, or your skillset any less valid. The right opportunity is out there somewhere, and we know that any employer would be lucky to have you.