

GLAM OBSERVER

GET A JOB IN FASHION

**FASHION  
JOB  
INTERVIEW  
GUIDE**

EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW TO  
GET READY AND ACE A SUCCESSFUL JOB  
INTERVIEW WITH A FASHION COMPANY

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# Your Guide for a Successful Fashion Job Interview

Working in fashion is the dream of many people and it is in fact the high competition that makes this sector difficult to penetrate.

The first step to getting a job in fashion is creating an exceptional CV. The second and last step is to impress the recruiter during the job interview. Getting a job interview with a fashion company seems impossible given the high competition in this sector, but it represents your chance to show that you are the right person for that job.

With the amount of applications received by fashion companies (numbers are higher for internships or junior positions), getting a job interview is not so simple. Because fashion companies receive lots of applications, many brands no longer require simply to submit a resume and a cover letter. Some brands require to send over your portfolio if your background is in fashion design and you are applying for a design related job, while other companies may require you to do an online test in the application phase made by a series of questions. Companies such as Adidas, Nike, and Asos also require a video application where in 30 seconds the recruiters understand everything of a candidate without having to examine all the documentation. Some companies even use an Applicant Tracking System, when they receive a high number of applications. The system scans the CVs based on settings chosen by the recruiter: if your CV doesn't contain specific keywords, the system will discard your CV, which will never reach a human evaluation.



So if you've passed the first big rock and you've gotten the job interview, you're halfway from your next job! The job interview is the most important part because you will have to prove to the company that they were not wrong and that you are the right person for that job.

Although every company follows its procedures and a lot of the recruiting part depends on the person who is doing the interview, there are general rules on the interview process and also on the behaviors and answers that the recruiters expect from you.

In this guide, I will then reveal all the tips for a successful job interview so that you get your dream job in fashion.

These tips are based on real experiences, interviewing many people who work in fashion, luxury and beauty and also asking recruiters.

In this guide, there are also valuable tips from the people working in Talent Acquisition at Burberry and Ralph Lauren.

## **The N.1 Thing (and the most important) You Need to do to Get Ready fo a Job Interview**

The first thing you need to do to prepare yourself for a job interview is studying.

Potentially, you could get the first phone interview call the same day of the application. In general, the job interview process for positions such as internships can last many days. Both because of the high number of applications received and because of the company needs: for example the recruiter posts online the position 5 months in advance, so the recruiting process can take a lot.

So don't be discouraged if after a week you haven't received news from the company. Some companies may also call you after 1-2 months! Since the timing is so variable and considering that the first step of a job interview is always a call, you must be ready for a first phone interview from the moment you apply.

Do online research on the company, study the history, who is the creative director, take a look at all the collections and take notes of which is your favorite and the important things you need to know about the company. Taking notes in a diary will help you not only to better memorize the news and fundamental data, but also to make sure you don't confuse companies if you're applying at the same time for different jobs. Make sure you take the notes with you wherever you go, so you never get caught unprepared. Of course is better if you can memorize the information.

**Studying the brand is the most important thing you need to do in order to ace a successful job interview.**

Recruiters, in addition to assessing your technical skills, **hire above all candidates who are passionate about the company.** Those who are passionate about a brand know everything, so visit the company website, study the e-commerce, visit the stores in-person, check the social media profiles (make sure you are following the brand as recruiters check this) and read as many articles as you can.

During the interview get ready to answer questions like:

tell us about yourself, what do you like about the company, what did you do at [former job], what would you change about the PR / e-commerce / social media strategies (this question changes and is focused depending on the role).

When studying the brand, also pay attention to the pages which refer to the brands values, as the recruiters want to know if you represent and share those values.

## The Steps of a Fashion Job Interview

Especially for large prestigious fashion companies, there are several job interview steps, usually in this order:

- Phone Interview
- Skype Interview
- In-person interview
- Second in-person interview (test)
- Third in-person interview

The number of interviews and the interlocutors of these interviews are generally flexible and are decided from time to time based on the job. It is essential to take all the steps very seriously, starting with the “phone interview” and the so-called “cognitive interview”: they are in fact the first opportunities to make a good impression. Although they are not technicians, the recruiters who conduct these interviews are often those who know the company best, its peculiarities and what the business requires – so they are able to assess the fit of the person with the position sought at 360 degrees.

In the technical interviews, all the above mentioned get tested, such as your competences on problem-solving etc. In group interviews, on the other hand, recruiters test how the candidate behaves in a social context: the opening to confrontation, team spirit, leadership, argumentation, and conviction or listening skills are then analyzed.

## Phone Interview

When the recruiter and the manager have evaluated your resume and believe that your profile is potentially suitable for that position, you will get a call, even before getting an email. So if you get a call from an unknown number after you apply for a job, answer all the calls kindly, because instead of the call center, this time it could be the company is calling you, so you don't want to be rude.

**In this first call, the recruiter will ask you more general questions**, like a sort of recap of your resume. He will then ask to introduce yourself, why you want to get that job and he will focus on that part of your curriculum that impressed him. If it was one of your previous experiences that is similar to the job you are applying for, it will ask you specific questions about what you did to see if there is actually a relationship between the activities.

After this first successful phase, the recruiter will invite you to come over for an in-person job interview. Even if you have a scheduled appointment for that day, make sure you say you're available and cancel all the other plans. If you have a valid reason for which you are unavailable that day, say it to the recruiter immediately by being honest and pointing out your interest in the position and asking for the favor of being able to move the interview to another day that suits them.



## Skype Job Interview



Typically Skype interviews are chosen by companies when they have a different location from your city . They want to make a first check that you can be the ideal candidate before making you book a flight. Some companies also do remote interviews when you'll have to work from home.

Preparing for a Skype interview is like preparing for a regular interview.

The questions will be almost similar to those of an in-person interview. After you applied, you will receive the email that you were expecting so much from the company in which they will ask you when you are available for the interview. **Recruiters take Skype Interviews as seriously as in-person job interviews.**

They could hire you directly with this one interview or then invite you for a second step.

In any case, give the best of yourself and do not think that a Skype interview is worth less than one in-person.



# How to Get Ready for a Skype Job Interview

# 1

## CHECK YOUR NICKNAME

Make sure your Skype nickname is professional. If you created your first Skype account years ago, it is better to create a new one because unfortunately, Skype does not allow you to change your nickname. You need to tell the company your nickname because there are at least 3 people on skype that have your same name, so your nickname is what differentiate you from everyone else. If you do not have your Skype account, create one, but never tell the company that you do not have Skype and would prefer to have a call.

# 2

## THE WI-FI AND THE LOCATION

Choose a room where you won't be interrupted during the interview and make sure everything is in order or better if you can have a simple white wall as a background.

Get ready one hour: silence your phone and make sure you have a good connection that allows you to have a smooth conversation without interruption or with the signal that comes and goes.

Before the interview, you can test your connection with your friend or just turn on the webcam to understand your position. You may choose to use headphones if you want to avoid the rumble of the room and have a microphone closer to that of your PC.

# 3

## DRESS LIKE YOU'RE HAVING A NORMAL INTERVIEW

In general, Skype interviews are video calls, so no pajamas even if you will be at home. Dress like if you were going to meet to the recruiter and take care of your makeup: make it simple, clean and professional. Also, your attitude during the call need to be professional. Sit down on the chair and avoid moving too much. Better to show your face from the shoulders. The first impressions are the most important so try to be spontaneous but professional.

# 4

## BRING YOUR NOTES

Make sure you have your resume in front of you (possibly without making it visible in the camera) because in general, it is from there that they will start the interview. You can also have notes with company data, who is the CEO, creative director, the designers, the most important events of the company and the questions you would like to ask them.

## In-Person Job Interview

The first in-person job interview is more cognitive. The recruiter will have your CV in his hand and will ask you to introduce yourself. So **days before your interview you need to practice on your elevator pitch:** it is all about the way you will tell your story. No one is asking you about your mother, father and siblings but instead, they want to know details of your career a piece of paper cannot tell them. So this is your time to shine. It is not about being right or wrong, but it is about captivating your audience with your story. You need to become a storyteller. The secret to understanding “what to say” is to identify yourself with the recruiter, who knows nothing about you and wants to understand who you are and what kind of added value you can bring. You need to tell briefly who you are, giving an exhaustive picture of abilities, skills, and strengths. You will give more details about what you wrote on your resume and then the recruiter could ask you why you chose a university course rather than another, why you left your job, what you liked more and what less of that job, if in particular you have managed or followed a project personally, why would you like to work for that company and what are your ambitions for the future. **Pay attention to talk about your former jobs tying them with the position you're applying for.** Before the job interview make sure to read again carefully the Job Description so you know what they are looking for. Add details you couldn't add in your CV. **It is necessary to show curiosity, to stimulate the attention of the interlocutor, and to make it clear that you did some research before applying for that job.**

Depending on the role, a company can ask you to take a test or present them a presentation. And for this, there is no formula. They can ask you to do them before, during or after an interview.



Usually the second interview can be a test or can be again a general interview but with different people, such as a new recruiter and the head of the department. When you have to do the test, you will find a laptop and have to solve a business case, do an exercise in excel or maybe prepare a presentation.

So, when getting ready for your job interview, **you don't only have to practice on how to answer the questions, but you need to get practical with excel or power point.**

To understand the kind of test you may be subjected to, just study the Job Description of the job for which you are applying. If you know that it is an analytical role with numbers then the test will focus on excel, while if you are applying for a job in PR maybe you could write a press release or a presentation of a brand, if you apply for a graphic role they could ask you to do something with Photoshop, InDesign or Illustrator. It all depends on the role for which you are applying. Speak loudly when you solve the proposed exercise because even if you do not get to the final resolution, the recruiter wants to know what you think and how you approach problems. If during the test, you don't know how to do something, you say that you've never had to do it, but you're willing to learn quickly and even to study (Google will be your best friend).

There are some companies whose hiring phases could be even more than two.

Do not be intimidated by this. During the job interviews, always be spontaneous, rational and try to answer thinking about what they would like you to say.

## EXTRA EXCLUSIVE TIP

**BURBERRY'S TALENT ACQUISITION MANAGER SAYS TO GLAM OBSERVER WHAT SHE PAYS MOST ATTENTION TO DURING THE JOB INTERVIEW AND WHAT IS THE DECISIVE FACTOR THAT ALLOWS HER TO UNDERSTAND THAT ONE IS THE RIGHT PERSON**

I pay a lot of attention, in addition to the professional requirements, to understanding how much the person in front of me is in line with the corporate culture.

The “wow” factor is when the candidate shows enthusiasm and realism through a multifocal approach (underlines both the advantages that it would bring to the company, and the benefits it would derive from the fact of working inside it), as an expert (how he uses its technical know-how better than the other candidates ) and as a problem solver (it is able to highlight its ability to think in perspective by focusing on the possible challenges that the company could face in the future). All this, in addition to certain personal characteristics that cannot be changed, requires a pre-interview preparation on the company, its industry, its products, its values ,and objectives.

## 7 Things you Should Never Do and Say

The interview is the moment when the company wants to understand a little more about your personality and above all, if you are in line with the company's values and what you know about the industry and the job.

The company expects you to show interest in the position, be humble and ready to work and grow with the company, so here are the things you don't have to do and say if you want to get the job:

### *1. Don't be late*

The day before the interview, check on Google Maps how long it will take to get to the office and add 15 minutes extra for traffic (Google already calculates it but better to be sure that no accident blocks the road or an unexpected event delays the path). Delay is synonymous with irresponsibility, it is not professional, and the company may think you do not care about that job if you're late for your fashion job interview. Don't arrive too early neither: 10 minutes early will be fine.

### *2. Do not speak badly about your previous experiences*

Even if your previous boss bullied you and was the meanest person in the world, don't talk about this during your fashion job interview. It's unprofessional and the recruiter don't know if you're saying the truth. Nobody knows that your boss was really bad, and do not even try to prove it with examples. People may think you're making up everything and they certainly will not want you to repeat this with them when you go somewhere else.

### *3. Don't be insecure*

Even if the new role scares you and there will be things you don't know about, don't show you're insecure during the job interview. You can learn everything and Google always helps everyone. So show you're confident and do not doubt your abilities. Be authoritative and communicate that you will learn everything you need, even studying at night, just to be the best. Also keep eye contact with the person in front of you as it will make you appear more confident.

### *4. Do not say if you've had a conflict with anybody at a past job*

Recruiters may ask you how you're likely to work in team. So even if you had a conflict with someone of your team for various reasons, don't tell the recruiters about this but show you're positive and that it is not a problem for you to work in group or by yourself and say you give the best in every situation.

### *5. Do not compare salaries*

Don't say that you earned more or less in your previous job. If you think that your pay should be higher, then explain your skills and competencies without mentioning your previous salaries.

### *6. Do not talk about your personal situation*

If you have a personal problem that may require days off work, it is better not to mention it during your fashion job interview.

### *7. Do not ask about other candidates*

Surely you are not the only person who is having an interview for that job. But do not ask if you've gone better than others.

## Fashion Job Interview Questions

There will always be a part of the interview more oriented to understanding the candidate's soft skills and his fit within the company. I'm listing you the most common job interview questions, so make sure you practice your answers before any job interview and always keep in mind the job you're applying for and how you can use your previous experience and skills to impress the recruiters.

**Motivation questions:** "What is the driver that pushes you to consider leaving your job?", "What do you like about our company and why would you like to work here?", " Why should we hire you?"

**Impact questions:** "What is the biggest challenge you had to face in your work experience and how did you do it?", "On which parameters / KPIs is your work measured and what are your goals?", "What was your biggest professional satisfaction? ", "What was the hardest thing you had to do in your previous job and how did you deal with it?", "How have your responsibilities evolved over time?", "Can you tell us about a project you are proud of and why it was successful?"

**Feeling questions:** "In what kind of working environment can you perform best?", "Do you prefer to work independently or autonomously?", "Which of our values do you recognize most?"

# Fashion Job Interview Answers

## Tell me about yourself

I'm currently a [your job title/student] at [company, university], where I handle/study .... Before that, I worked/studied at [company name or school] where I did/studied/learned [list all the activities or things you have learned]. I've developed the ability to [ list your abilities and remember throughout your answer to focus on the experiences and skills that are going to be most relevant for the hiring manager when they're thinking about this particular position and this company, use the keywords you find in the job description] . During my job at I was able to [grow sales, support the marketing team...].

## What interests you about this role?

Recruiters want to make sure you're really passionate about the company and that you did your research. This is your opportunity to highlight your relevant skills. Read the job description and choose a few things you particularly enjoy or excel at, and focus on those in your answer.

## What did you like most about your last position?

Be honest and make sure you include in the things you like the most also activities included in your current job description.

## What did you like least about your last position?

This is a tricky questions. Even if you were bringing coffee and making photocopies during your former job, don't say that these activities were boring. Avoid saying anything negative about your former employer, managers or colleagues. Make this answer about your career growth and your enthusiasm for joining their organization. Say something like "there was a lack of opportunity in the way I wanted to progress in my career. I deeply enjoy being challenged and getting better at what I do."

## **Why should we hire you?**

This is an excellent opportunity for you to show off what you know about the company and prove that you did your research. Do practical examples of what you like about the company, show your passion and your interest in that specific role. You also need to play with your experience and skills and finding a relationship with your future job.

## **What other companies are you interviewing with?**

Often companies ask this question and the best approach is to be honest. You can mention that you are exploring a number of other similar options if you are, while if you haven't applied for other jobs is better to say the truth.

## **How do you deal with pressure or stressful situations?**

The fashion industry can be very stressful sometimes, especially during periods such as Fashion Weeks. Make sure you tell the recruiter you can deal with stress and control it and that you're able to take rational choices even under pressure. If you can, do some examples of how you managed stressful situations during your former job or at school.

## It's your time to ask questions

The job interview is also your occasion to know more about the job and the company to know if it's a good fit for you and if you'll really enjoy working there.

Recruiters love when candidates ask questions because it is a way to show even more interest for the job.

You don't have to ask too many questions, 2/3 questions is fine. Make sure you don't ask something related to the company that you can find online because otherwise the recruiter will understand you didn't do your research. So don't ask about their values, who is the creative director...

At the end of the job interview ask something like what are your day-to-day activities, who you'll be working with, if you work with other departments and how your responsibilities will evolve.

### The Last Precious Tip



Once the interview is over, send a thank you e-mail to the people you met. This will strengthen your interest in the position and make the difference. Write an email within a couple of hours of your interview.

If you don't have the email addresses, you can ask for them at the end of your job interview.

Thank them for their time and the opportunity and then underline again the reasons why you are interested in that position and if you think there is something to add that you did not say during the job interview, this is your chance.



*Believe in yourself, work hard and your dream job in Fashion will come soon!*

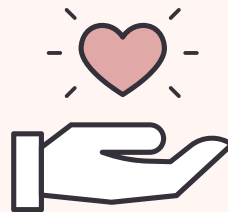
**GOOD LUCK!**



## For more tips to get into the fashion industry



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