



A guide for Pacific Engagement Visa (PEV) applicants:

How to prepare for a job interview

This guide will help PEV applicants prepare for job interviews with Australian employers. You will learn how to introduce yourself, answer common questions, and demonstrate your skills. Your job interview will likely be over the phone or a video call. Being well-prepared will help you feel more confident and give you the best chance of getting the job.

Before the interview



Step 1: Research the company

- Talking about the company and the relevant industry shows you have prepared well
- Look at the company's website, especially the 'about us', 'values', and 'mission' sections to understand what is important
- Research the company's leadership team, and look at their social media to learn more about what they do and what is important to them. LinkedIn is a good place to start
- If the employer has a LinkedIn page, find current employees and look at their career paths
- Learn about the industry and how the company fits into the market by looking at competitors and recent news.



Step 2: Prepare for common questions

Employers often ask similar questions, so practising your answers can help you feel ready. Some examples are:

- Can you tell us a bit about yourself? Prepare a short introduction about where you are from and your status as a PEV applicant
- Why does this job interest you? Connect your own values and experiences to the company's mission
- What are your strengths? Talk about a key strength that is important for the role. To find what strengths are essential for the job, look at the job description carefully. The words used will give you clues about what the employer is looking for
- What is one weakness you've worked on? Choose a weakness that shows you can reflect on yourself and improve
- Can you tell us about a time you worked in a team? Give an example that shows you can work well with others.

Use the STAR method to structure your answer. The STAR method is a great way to provide clear and complete answers about your past experiences.

- **Situation:** Describe the situation you were in
- **Task:** Explain what you needed to do
- **Action:** Describe the specific actions you took
- **Result:** Explain what happened in the end and the positive outcome.



Step 3: Practise your answers and prepare

- Try a mock interview with a friend or family member and ask for their feedback
- Prepare three or more short stories about your experiences that show your skills
- Write down key points to help you remember what to say during the interview
- Prepare a checklist for your interview day. If it is online, check your technology and Wi-Fi connection.

- Be polite and thank the interviewer(s) for their time
- Be ready to ask the employer questions, such as about the next steps in the process
- If start dates are discussed, let them know about your visa application timeframe.



Communication tips

Sometimes, shyness or short answers can come across as disinterest. It is a good idea to find a way to 'break the ice' at the beginning of the interview, during introductions or small talk.

Find some common interests you can discuss with the employer, or ask them how their day has been. This can set a positive and more relaxed tone for the interview.

During the interview



What to expect

- Interviews are often structured, with each candidate being asked the same questions. They usually last between 20-45 minutes
- You may be interviewed by one or more people
- Be on time. If the interview is virtual, log in five minutes early. If it is in person, arrive 5-10 minutes early
- If you have applied online to a recruitment agency, you may receive an automatic invitation to attend an in-person interview. It's important to let the recruiter know if you are not in Australia and you need to request an online interview
- It is common to have more than one interview if you are interviewing for a corporate role (for example, in an office environment or a senior-level role)
- At the end of the interview, you will be asked if you have any questions. This is a chance to show your interest in the company
 - For example, you could ask: "What does a typical day in this job look like?", "What do you enjoy most about working for this company?", or "What are the most important skills for a person to succeed in this role?"



First impressions are important

- Dress professionally, even for a video interview
- Sit upright, smile, and make eye contact by looking into the camera
- Speak clearly and do not rush your answers. You can take time to write some points down to structure your answer

After the interview

Send a short thank-you email to the employer

If you have not heard back after about a week, sending a polite follow-up email is okay

Think about what went well and what you could improve for your next interview

Remember that interviewing takes practice. Be kind to yourself, as every interview is a learning experience

The PEV Employment Support Service can help you prepare for your interview.



Find out more about the PEV Employment Support Service at pev.gov.au

On our website, you can explore more resources, including employment fact sheets and resume templates. You can also sign up for Employment Information Sessions to learn more about finding a job in Australia.



Short thank-you email template

PEV applicants can use the following template when creating a short thank-you.

- i Instructions for use:**
- Copy and paste the right column text into a new email (e.g. Gmail, Microsoft Outlook, Yahoo, AOL)
 - Do not copy the blue instruction text in the left column
 - Replace the text in [orange brackets] with your own information.

INSTRUCTIONS

Mention something specific you discussed during the interview, for example, the team you would be working with or a particular project.

Insert your personal details:

*Your full name,
Your phone number
Your email address*

TEXT TO COPY

Subject:

Thank you – Interview for [Job Title]

Message:

Dear [Interviewer's name],

Thank you for your time today to discuss the [Job Title] role. It was a pleasure to learn more about the position and about [Company Name].

I particularly enjoyed learning about [Interview topic].

I am very interested in this opportunity and believe my skills would be a great fit.

I look forward to hearing from you regarding the outcome of the recruitment process.

Kind regards,

[Firstname Surname],
[(Country code) Phone number]
[name@serviceprovider.country domain code]