

# HOW TO... INTERACT WITH POTENTIAL EMPLOYERS

Knowing what to prepare before meeting potential employers can give you a headstart in the competitive biomedical scientist job market. The team from recruitment specialists **Matchtech** give their guidance.

**F**or many, meeting potential employers is the most nerve-racking part of the job hunting process. If you've been invited to interview for a role, however, it is important to remember that it is a positive sign that your CV or application has impressed. To combat any pre-interview nerves, you should be as prepared as possible. First impressions are vital when it comes to face-to-face interviews and there are some simple ways to ensure you're fully prepped. From wearing the right clothes, to knowing the history of the organisation, here are some sure-fire ways to ensure you stand out and make a good impression.

## Do your research

Knowing something about the laboratory or organisation and the services it provides will be sure to impress. Start with their website to get a better understanding of their products and services. It is also a good idea to read outside sources to gather industry knowledge. For example, looking at

research or trade publications, such as *The Biomedical Scientist*, might provide insight on future trends, which could affect the organisation you are interviewing for. From this, you can develop questions based on your research to demonstrate your desire to work for that organisation and your knowledge of the industry.

It is a good idea to learn about the laboratory and the organisation through an informal visit. You can do this through your recruitment agency or by calling the laboratory manager directly.

## EXAMPLE QUESTIONS TO ASK AT YOUR INTERVIEW:

- ✓ In your opinion, what makes this organisation a great place to work?
- ✓ Can you tell me what the culture is like here?
- ✓ What opportunities are there for career progression?
- ✓ What are the next steps in the hiring process?



This will allow you to familiarise yourself with their equipment and find out what tests they do.

## Prepare questions

Often an interviewer will give you the chance to ask a few questions towards the end of an interview and it's important you do. Start with questions like "why has the position become available?" and "what are the main objectives of the role?" Having around five questions prepared will stand you in good stead.

## Preparing responses

An interview for a biomedical scientist position is likely to involve a combination of competency-based and technical questions regarding your laboratory experience, usually around use of equipment and tests. You may also be asked questions around safety, data protection and quality management, so make sure to prepare your answers.

Competency-based questions are a popular way for employers to assess a potential employee's future performance. Questions could be based on how you have dealt with a difficult situation or they may ask you to describe a time when you have worked well in a team. The best way to prepare is to re-read the job specification to understand what core competencies they are looking for. If team work is a desired attribute, prepare an example of when you have demonstrated your ability to work in a team. This is a popular topic in interviews and is likely to come up in an interview for a small laboratory, as the right person will have an impact on the team dynamics.

## Pack the night before

Pack your bag/briefcase/handbag the evening before to avoid unnecessary stress. Ensure you have a pen, notepad and extra copies of your CV, plus anything that may have been specifically requested.

The most important document to bring when interviewing for a role is your continuing professional development folder. This will give you something to refer to during the interview and will provide examples of how you have improved during your career.


It is also a good idea to bring ID with you and two examples of proof of address, such as a utility bill or bank statement. Should you be successful, bringing ID may help the organisation to set the ball rolling on any necessary DBS checks.

## Dress to impress

While your day-to-day work will likely see you in casual clothes and a lab coat, for the interview dress smartly, unless told otherwise. A smart shirt and tie combination, paired with suit trousers and clean (black or brown) shoes is a winner for men. For women, avoid being too glitzy. Smart, low-key dresses will never tire, but a trouser suit or skirt with

a blouse also works well. Attending an interview dressed too casually will raise concerns with the hiring manager who may question how seriously you are taking the interview.

## On the day

Greet the interviewer(s) with a smile and a handshake. Throughout the interview, make eye contact, stay engaged and try mimicking their style – if they're formal, be formal, if they're informal, be informal. Avoid negative body language, such as crossing your arms; be open and engaged in the way you hold yourself. 

**Matchtech** has over 10 years' experience helping biomedical scientists find jobs in NHS and private laboratories all over the UK. If you're considering a new challenge and would like to have a confidential conversation, please contact Matchtech's medical team of specialist recruiters on 01489 898247. | [medical@matchtech.com](mailto:medical@matchtech.com).

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