



Considerations for your placement

How to be successful at interview

Careers Consultant - Lindsay Wilson

Finding and Applying for Placements

What we will be covering:



BENEFITS OF
PLACEMENTS



HOW TO CHOOSE A
PLACEMENT



FINDING AND APPLYING
FOR A PLACEMENT



HOW TO MAKE THE MOST
OF YOUR PLACEMENT

Getting a good degree is, on it's own, simply not enough anymore.

Trigger

Warning :

Controversial

Content



=

Good Degree



Right Skills (Technical, Academic And Soft Skills)



Right Attitude



Work Experience



Effective Networking



Career Management Skills

Placement = work experience!

There are a number of advantages to completing a work placement. For example, they:

- let you **apply your knowledge and skills in a work setting**
- **increase skills and competencies** highly sought after by employers
- give you an **insight into the way organisations operate** and the challenges they face
- help you to **understand a particular job or industry**
- provide you with **networking opportunities**
- enable you to attend **training** courses
- **clarify your career goals.**



How do I decide which placement is right for me?

- What is important to you in a company and job?
- Where do your interests lie?
- Research the company!
 - Sector, products, size, culture & values
- Placement reviews/case studies – company website/review websites
- A placement opportunity should be around 6 months, you are looking to begin June 2025. Minimum duration is 3 months.
- Full time post
- Placements should be approved by the university to ensure they are of a suitable standard

Who is responsible for finding my placement?

- You! Ultimately, students are responsible for finding placements
- You have to put in the work to find your placement; there's no guaranteed pre-arranged placement waiting for you
- Do not leave it until last minute: it's a process and you need to engage early to have the best chance of success
- It's a competitive market

Where do I source a placement?

- HWU Careers Service careers portal, 'Target Connect'
- 'Graduate' specific vacancy websites
 - Gradcracker
 - Prospects
 - Target Jobs
 - Bright Network
 - Graduate Jobs.com
 - Graduatejobs.com
 - GradJobs.co.uk
 - Milkround
 - Rate My Placement
 - Trackr
- Individual Company websites (ScotlandIS, Glasgow City Innovation District, CodeBase for suggestions)
- Social Media e.g. LinkedIn
- Speculative Applications



Which companies can I contact about placements?

- Any!
- Nature of placement must be in Software Engineering
- Can be in person or remote
- Think about which types of companies are most likely to respond to you

Previous Industrial Placement Employers



- Millersoft, Edinburgh: <https://www.millersoft.ltd.uk/>
- Cadence, Edinburgh:
https://www.cadence.com/en_US/home/company/careers.htmlCadence
- BAE Systems:
 - BAE Systems Early Careers Site - <https://www.baesystems.com/en/careers/careers-in-the-uk/early-careers>
 - Industrial Placement Pages - <https://www.baesystems.com/en/careers/careers-in-the-uk/graduates/industrial-placements>
 - Summer Internship Pages - <https://www.baesystems.com/en/careers/careers-in-the-uk/graduates/summer-internships>
- Leonardo: <https://careers.uk.leonardo.com/gb/en/home>
- ST Microelectronics: https://www.st.com/content/st_com/en/about/careers/students-and-graduates.html
- Exterity/VITEC, Dalgety Bay: <https://www.vitec.com/about/careers>
- Seebyte: <https://careers.seebyte.com/>
- Level E Research: <https://levelresearch.com/about-us/careers/>
- Keysight: <https://www.keysight.com/gb/en/home.html>
- Ciena: <https://careers.ciena.com/us/en>

Previous Industrial Placement Employers



- CAS Ltd: <https://www.workpro.com/company/careers>
- Wavecrest: <https://wavecrest.com/>
- Datakirk: <https://thedatakirk.org.uk/>
- Amnesty Intl: <https://careers.amnesty.org/jobs/vacancy/find/results/>
- Amazon, Edinburgh: <https://www.amazon.jobs/en/locations/edinburgh-scotland>
- ESOC/ESA: https://www.esa.int/About_Us/Careers_at_ESA/Student_Internships2
- Codethink, Manchester: <https://www.codethink.co.uk/join-us.html>
- Codeplay, Edinburgh: <https://codeplay.com/company/careers/>
- Scott Logic, Edinburgh: <https://www.scottlogic.com/careers>
- Edinburgh Airport: <https://careers.edinburghairport.com/>
- NCR Voyix: <https://www.ncrvoyix.com/>
- IntelliDigest: <https://intellidigest.com/careers/>
- Scrapp: <https://www.scrapprecycling.com/company/careers>

Applying for your placement

- Sell yourself!
- Stand out from the crowd –technical skills, professional/softer skills, qualities etc
- Research, research, research!
 - profession, role/industry/sector, organisation
- Fit – motivation, values etc
- Passion! (enthusiastic, extra-curricular activities etc)
- Actions – evidence
- Language – verbs
- Value you can bring
- Recruitment process
 - What makes a good CV, how to perform successfully at interview etc.
 - We can help!

Be so
good
they can't
ignore
you.

STEVE MARTIN

Making the most of your placement – Planning ahead

- It will be helpful to think about the following:
 - what you hope to achieve
 - what you wish to find out/learn more about
 - how you can make the best use of your time
 - how you can create a good impression



Making the most of your placement – Reflection

- Was the work (and the company) what you expected?
- Did you really develop an insight into the type of work, type of company?
- Could you see yourself working in this type of environment in the future?
- Did you develop any of your skills?
- Have you now confirmed or revised your own career goals?
- Do you intend to keep in touch with your contacts?



Summary

- You are responsible for finding your placement; HWU can support your search
- You can apply for placements advertised online but you can also **contact companies directly** to ask if they would take on a placement student
- Your placement **must** be related to the modules you have studied on your programme.
- You can go on placement with **any company** of any size in any industry, as long as the placement is **relevant**

How to be successful at Interview

What we will be covering:



Preparation!

Typical
formats and
questions

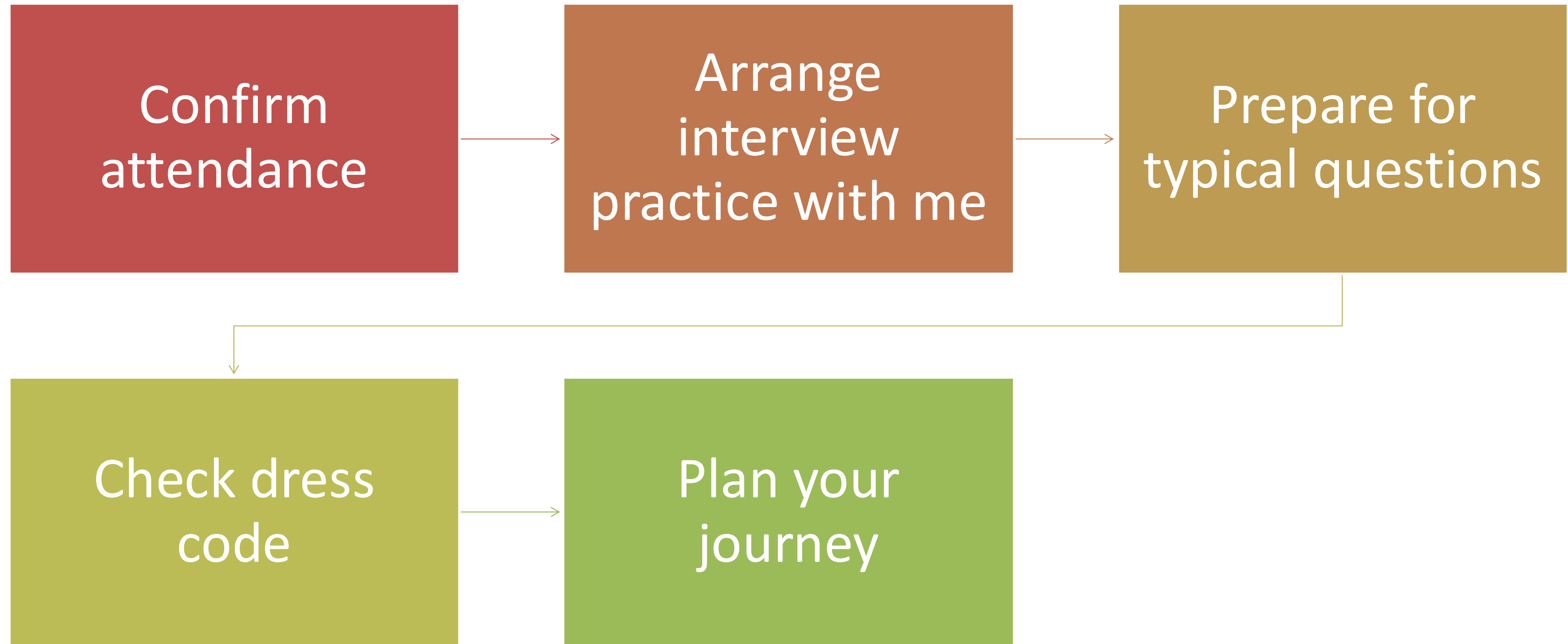
Your
questions

Video
interviews

A top-down view of a wooden desk. In the center is a spiral-bound notebook with the text 'PREPARATION IS THE KEY' written in a bold, black, hand-drawn font. A yellow pencil lies diagonally across the bottom right of the notebook. To the right of the notebook is a clear glass filled with several colored pencils. In the top left corner, a portion of a silver laptop is visible. In the bottom left corner, a pair of black-rimmed glasses rests on the desk. In the bottom right corner, the corner of a tablet with a black screen is visible. A white cup is partially visible at the top center. The scene is brightly lit, casting soft shadows.

PREPARATION
IS THE KEY

Checklist



First impressions count (as do final impressions)!

- Smile
 - Look confident
 - Dress smartly
 - Be professional
 - Greet interviewers
 - Look as if you really want to be there!
-
- You have 45 seconds to make it count!





Common Question Types

Motivational

Strengths based

Competencies/values based

Technical/specialist

Commercial Awareness

Behavioural

Why do you want to work for our organisation?

Show that you 'get them'

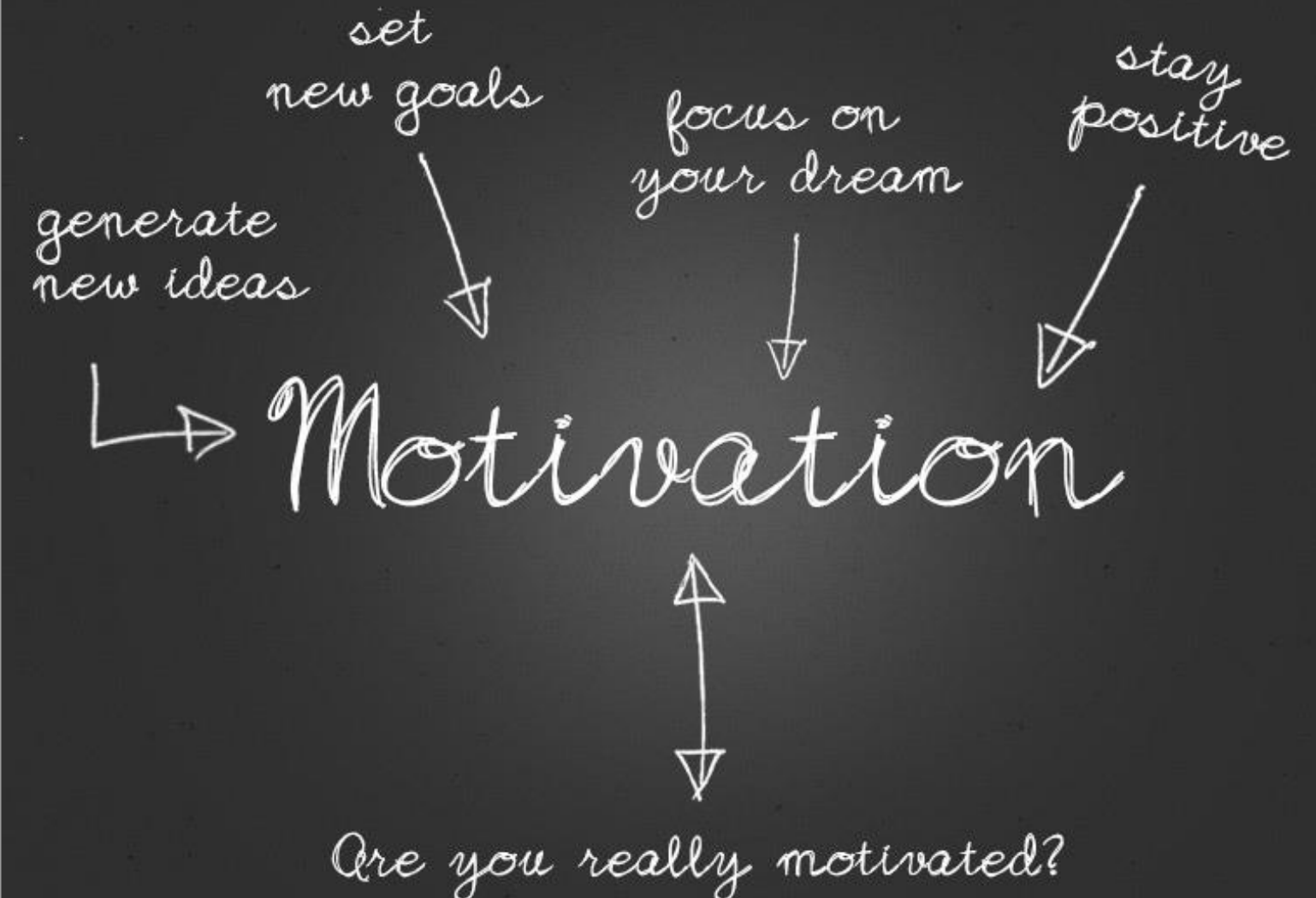
What do they do well?

What is so good about their products/services?

What is their USP?

Why do clients go to them and not their competitors?

Motivation - Organisation



Why have you applied for the role of software engineer?

What value does the role have?

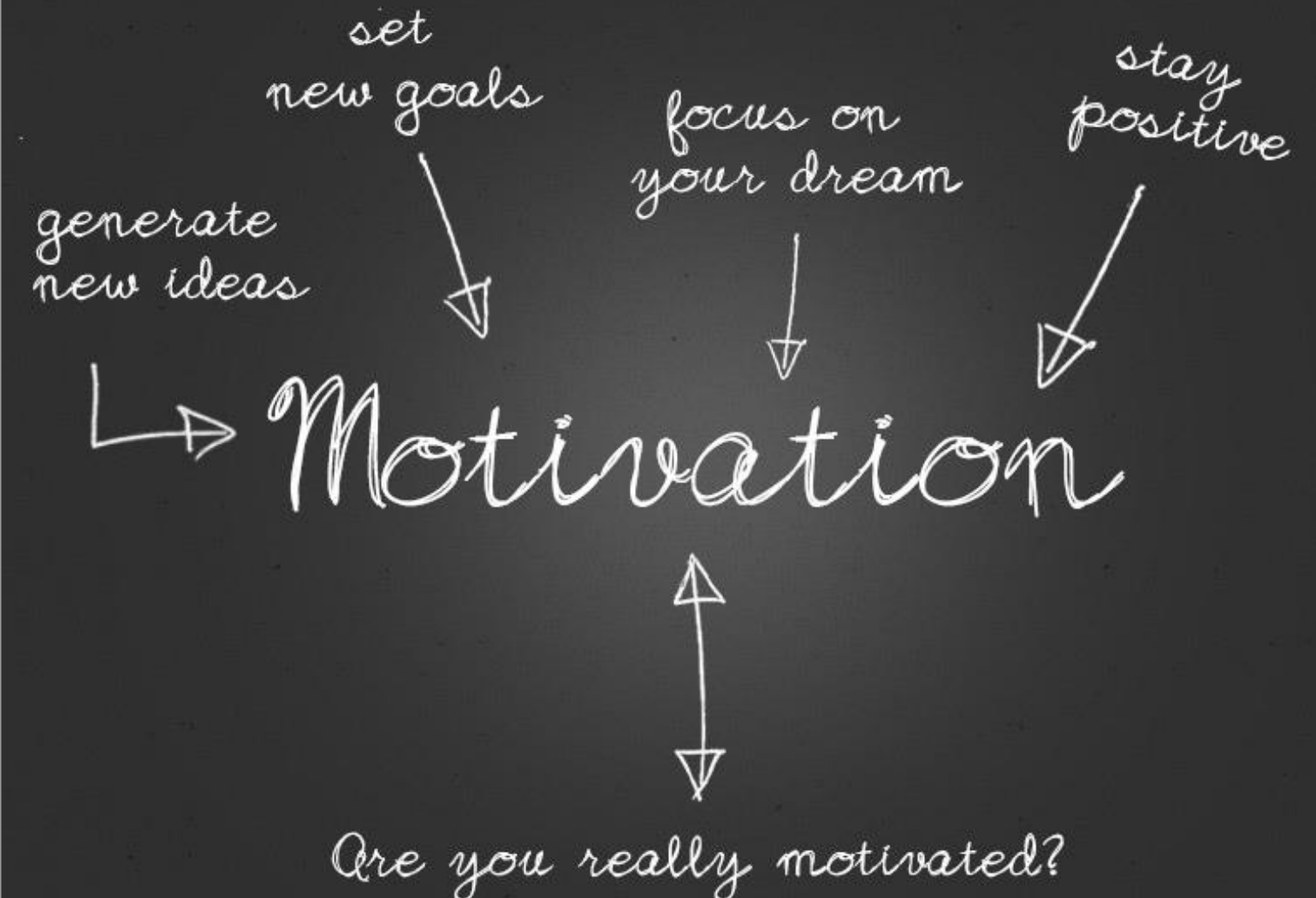
What is the point of the role?

How to customers/clients benefit from this role?

Don't mention your gains

NOT a 'suitability' question

Motivation - Role



What am I good at?

What makes you effective?

How have I challenged myself?

Focus on role requirements

Back up with evidence

Self awareness

Your Self Awareness - Strengths



Your Self Awareness - Weaknesses

It's a training need

Keep it technical/trainable

Avoid role requirements

Self awareness



Flexibility

Dedication

Positive Attitude

Creativity

Leadership

Determination

A Hard Skill

Organisation

Empathy

Learning

Impatience

Self-criticism

Too Direct

Delegation

Disorganised

Public Speaking

Insecure

Too Detail-Orientated

Very
Extroverted/Introverted

A Hard Skill

Example strengths and weaknesses

Tell me about a time when....

*Once Upon a
Time...*

Competency Questions



Example competencies

- Adaptability
- Commercial Awareness
- Communication
- Conflict Resolution
- Decisiveness
- Independence
- Flexibility
- Leadership
- Problem Solving
- Organisation
- Resilience
- Teamwork

Example competency questions:

- Describe a situation in which you **led a team**.
- Give an example of a time you **handled conflict** in the workplace.
- Tell me about a **big decision** you've made recently. How did you go about it?
- Describe a project where you had to use different **leadership** styles to reach your goal.
- Give me an example of a **challenge** you faced in the workplace and tell me how you overcame it.
- Give an example of a situation where you **solved a problem** in a creative way.

1. Identify relevant competencies



2. Prepare your evidence

Activity	Problems Solved	Initiative Shown
University		
Volunteering		
Work		
Societies		
Travel		
Other		

For each competency, select the best story



3. Tell your story



Choose one source of activity and provide a **SPECIFIC** example

Describe that you understood the issues within the **TASK**

Describe your plan to resolve the issues and the **ACTIONS** you took

Demonstrate your impact and how you measured your **RESULT**

REFLECT on your experience. Would you do anything differently?

EXAMPLE.....

Q. Describe a situation where you have demonstrated motivation and initiative.

A. At the end of my second year I planned to spend the vacation in a marketing department of an industrial company. (S)

My objective was to learn about industrial marketing and gain some new skills. (T)

I began in a very haphazard way, writing to a few companies I had heard of and addressing my letter to the 'Personnel Manager'. This was unsuccessful and so I re-evaluated my approach.

I visited the University's Careers and Employability service and discovered a network of alumni willing to give careers advice to current students. Searching revealed three people from my course working in my home city. None of them worked in marketing but they gave me some contacts to try within their companies. This helped me focus my letter and explain how I arrived at their name. (A)

I was successful in getting a six-week paid placement at Jingle and Jingle and my line manager said that my approach had persuaded her of my motivation. (R)

How would you solve.....

Assessing specialist skills

Based on common challenges

Know the basics of you subject
inside out

Be prepared to talk about
projects you have worked on

Technical Skills



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What do you know about us and the wider industry?

Organisation structure

Role requirements

Products/services

Challenges

Competition

Commercial Awareness – The Company



Know your sector!

Show your active interest

Show your knowledge

Challenges facing the sector

Opportunities for the sector

Commercial Awareness – The Industry



Behavioural

Aimed at understanding how you may handle a hypothetical scenario

Used to assess how you are likely to behave in similar circumstances on the job

‘What would you do if....’

‘How would you...’



Early priorities

Training opportunities

Mentor/buddy scheme

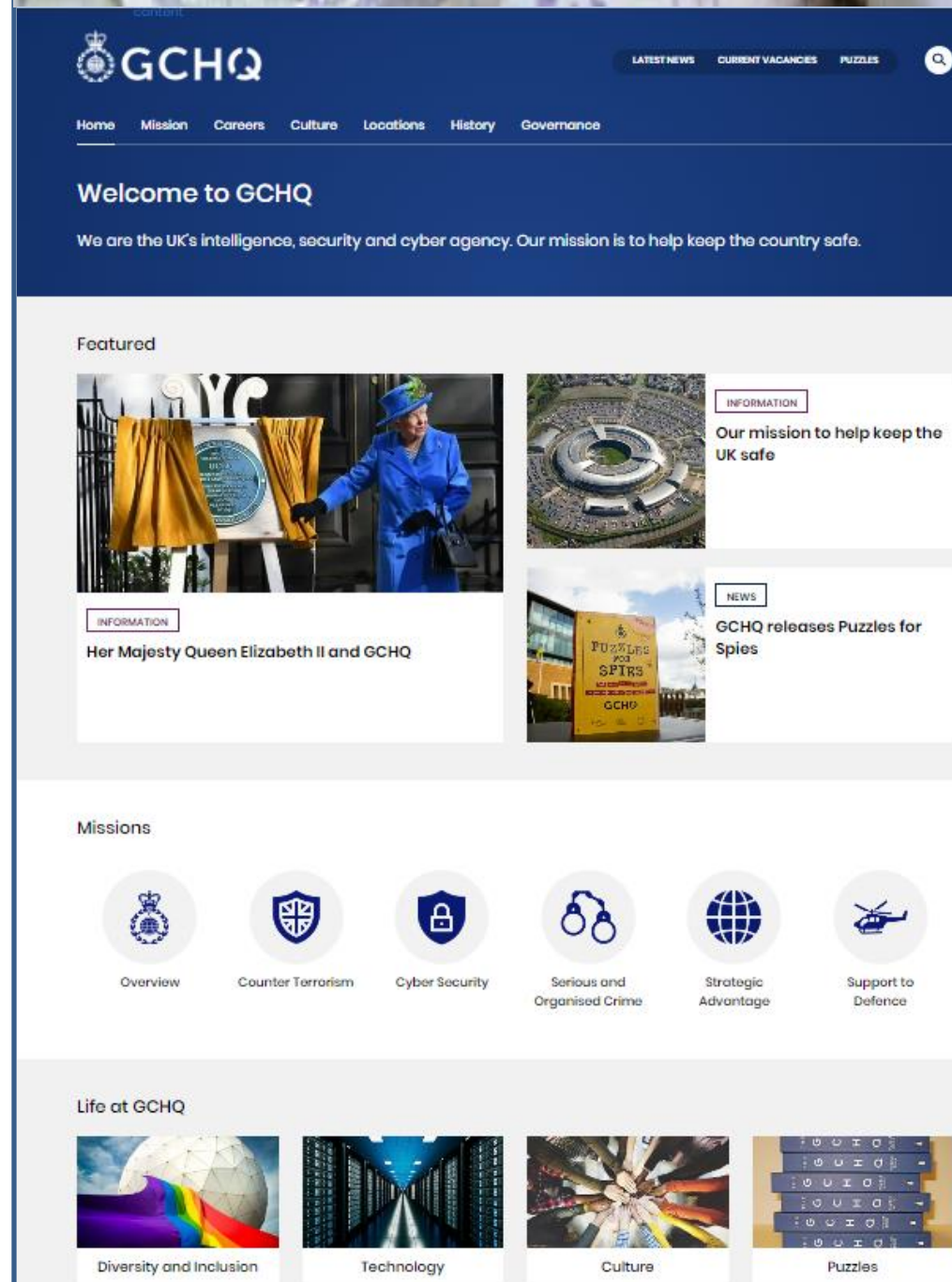
I was reading recently that.....

Usually only ask around 2
questions

Your
Questions!



NOT Question
Topics!





Video Interviews

‘Human’ Video Interviews



Check Technology – and close apps!



Strategically placed notes



De-clutter surroundings



Professional dress code



Practice how you come across on screen!



AI Video Interviews



Uses AI to 'objectively' assess your performance

Body language

Tone of voice

Key words/phrases

Still expected to make eye contact!

AI Video Interviews



Usually allows multiple 'takes'

1 min sec prep – 2 min response

Personality assessment

De-humanising?

Needs much more practice!!

<https://assessment.aon.com/en-us/video-interviewing-solution>

WHAT WE HAVE COVERED:

- ✓ How you can prepare for interviews
- ✓ Common question types
- ✓ How to answer 'do you have any questions for us?'
- ✓ What are video interviews?

