

Staying Calm in an Interview



Presented by
Logical Recruitment Partners



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Interviews can feel nerve-wracking, but staying calm and collected is the key to making a great impression. Whether it's your first interview or your tenth, feeling nervous is totally normal. The good news is that there are practical steps you can take to calm your nerves, boost your confidence, and shine during the interview process.

Here's your Gen Z guide to staying cool and composed in any interview situation.

1 Preparation Is Key

The best way to stay calm during an interview is to feel fully prepared. When you know you've done your homework, you'll walk into the interview with confidence.

- **Research the company:** Understand the company's values, culture, and the role you're applying for. Knowing who they are and what they do will help you feel more in control during the interview.
- **Practice common questions:** While every interview is different, there are common questions that you can expect. Practice answers to questions like "Tell me about yourself," "What are your strengths and weaknesses?" and "Why do you want to work here?"
- **Know your resume:** Be ready to talk about any experience or skills listed on your resume. The more familiar you are with your own background, the easier it will be to respond confidently.



Pro tip:

Practice mock interviews with a friend or family member, or even in front of a mirror. The more you practice, the more natural your responses will feel.

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Shift Your Mindset

Interviews are conversations, not interrogations. It's easy to feel like the interviewer is there to judge you, but remember—they're also trying to see if you're a good fit for the company, just as much as you're assessing if the job is right for you.

- **Think of it as a two-way street:** You're there to learn about the company and see if it aligns with your values and goals. Shifting your mindset to a collaborative conversation can ease the pressure.
- **Focus on growth:** Whether you land the job or not, every interview is a learning experience. By seeing it as a chance to grow and improve your skills, you can take some of the stress off.



Pro tip:

Don't put too much pressure on one interview. Even if it doesn't go as planned, it's just one step in your journey, and each experience will help you improve for the next.

3

Control Your Breathing

Nervousness often leads to shallow, rapid breathing, which can make you feel even more anxious. Controlling your breath is one of the easiest and most effective ways to calm your nerves during an interview.

- **Deep breathing technique:** Before your interview, take a few deep breaths to calm your nervous system. Try inhaling for 4 seconds, holding for 4 seconds, and exhaling for 4 seconds. Repeat this a few times to slow your heart rate and clear your mind.
- **During the interview:** If you feel anxiety creeping in, take a deep breath before answering a question. It's perfectly okay to pause for a moment to collect your thoughts.



Pro tip:

Incorporate breathing exercises into your daily routine. Practicing mindfulness or meditation regularly can help you stay calm under pressure, both in interviews and in life.

4

Visualize Success

Visualization is a powerful tool used by athletes, performers, and professionals to stay calm and focused. Before your interview, take a moment to picture yourself succeeding.

- **Visualize the interview:** Imagine yourself walking into the room (or logging into a virtual interview), shaking hands, and confidently answering questions. Picture the interviewer nodding and smiling at your responses.
- **Feel the emotions:** Focus on the feelings of confidence, calmness, and success. By mentally rehearsing a positive outcome, you're more likely to walk into the interview with that same energy.



Pro tip:

Visualization doesn't just help calm your nerves—it can also boost your performance by mentally preparing you for different scenarios that may come up during the interview.

5 Take Your Time

It's easy to rush through answers when you're feeling nervous, but speaking too quickly can lead to misunderstandings and more anxiety. It's okay to take your time when answering questions.

- **Pause before answering:** After the interviewer asks a question, take a brief pause to collect your thoughts. This gives you a moment to organize your response and shows the interviewer that you're thoughtful and reflective.
- **Pace yourself:** Speak slowly and clearly. There's no need to rush. Taking your time allows you to articulate your thoughts and reduces the chances of stumbling over words.



Pro tip:

Practice slowing down your speech in everyday conversations. If you can maintain a steady pace in casual settings, it'll be easier to stay composed during interviews.

6 Use Positive Body Language

Your body language plays a huge role in how confident and calm you appear. Even if you're feeling nervous, adopting positive body language can trick your brain into feeling more relaxed.

- **Maintain good posture:** Sit up straight with your shoulders back. Good posture not only helps you feel more confident but also sends the message that you're engaged and attentive.
- **Make eye contact:** Eye contact shows confidence and attentiveness. In a virtual interview, this means looking at the camera, not the screen. In a face-to-face interview, try to maintain natural eye contact with the interviewer, but don't overdo it.
- **Smile:** A genuine smile can break the ice and help you feel more comfortable. It also makes you appear friendly and approachable to the interviewer.



Pro tip:

If you're doing a virtual interview, check your body language on camera beforehand. Practice sitting at a comfortable distance from the screen and making eye contact with the camera.



7

Have a Game Plan for Nerves

Even with the best preparation, you might still feel nervous going into an interview. That's okay! What matters is having strategies to manage those nerves when they arise.

- **Acknowledge the nerves:** Instead of trying to suppress your nerves, accept them. It's normal to feel nervous in a high-stakes situation, and acknowledging that feeling can reduce its power over you.
- **Stay hydrated:** Nerves can make your mouth dry, so take small sips of water before the interview. If the interview is in person, ask for a glass of water so you can take a sip when you need to gather your thoughts.
- **Ground yourself:** If you feel overwhelmed, discreetly ground yourself by focusing on your senses. Feel your feet on the floor, your hands in your lap, or the cool air in the room. This can bring you back to the present moment and help calm anxious thoughts.



Pro tip:

Bring a small notebook to the interview. If you're feeling nervous, jotting down key points or questions can help you stay focused and grounded.

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Remember: It's Okay to Not Be Perfect

Interviews can feel like a lot of pressure, but remember: no one expects you to be perfect. You're human, and so is the person interviewing you. If you make a mistake or stumble over a word, don't let it throw you off.

- **Recover gracefully:** If you don't know the answer to a question, it's okay to admit it. You can say, "I'm not sure about that, but I'd be happy to learn more." Showing a willingness to grow is more valuable than pretending to know everything.
- **Focus on progress:** Every interview is a learning experience. Even if it doesn't go perfectly, you're building confidence and refining your skills for the next one.



Pro tip:

If you're feeling overwhelmed after an interview, take a moment to reflect on what went well rather than focusing on the negatives. Each interview is an opportunity to learn and grow.