

Interviewing for support roles where you are working within a client or family home, is different to other jobs, it is not just about what experience you have, but who you are.

We have been placing candidates to support children, young people and adults with disabilities or additional needs since 2001 – we hope you find our tips useful!

Be Prepared #1; Make sure you know where you are going & allow plenty of time to get there. Make sure you have the client's telephone number with you, just in case you are held up. If your interview is online, do a test run and check your connection is good, the background is appropriate and select the best camera height (Make sure it is above you a little, so you are looking up and not down - with your potential employer is looking up your nose...). A laptop/PC is generally better to use than a mobile. Let the rest of your household know you are going to be in an interview.

Be Prepared #2: Know the job as discussed with your recruiter inside out! If you start asking what the hours are, trust us, it will not go down well... Research local activities, about the child or client's disability/additional needs if anything is unfamiliar to you.

Be on Time; Not too early and not late. 5 minutes early for your interview time is fine for face to face, but not 20! Online interviews, check your connection 10/15 minutes before and then log on a couple of minutes before the start time.

Personal Presentation: Clean and tidy, smart casual; you should look as if you have made an effort, but it's best not be overly formal, be yourself. Please do not wear perfume, aftershave, or highly perfumed products if meeting in person, some clients may react badly to strong smells - but deodorant is always good! Online interviews should be the same, you should look as if you care about how you have presented yourself.

Turn Off Your phone; Before you go inside/online.

Washing your hands If you are visiting a child or client with complex medical needs, it is always appropriate to ask if you can wash your hands, especially if you have arrived by public transport.

Take off your shoes; Many households don't like people to wear outdoor shoes inside. If you just plan to take yours off, you will be prepared to do so, it removes any awkwardness. Oh, and make sure you are wearing good socks 😊.

Interact with the child or client: As well as asking & answering appropriate questions, remember to interact directly with the child or client: that's what your potential employer will be looking for. You'll be able to judge the level of interaction that is appropriate, of course you don't want to overwhelm the child or client.

Prepare an Activity: Preparing an appropriate activity for the child or client demonstrates confidence and thoughtfulness. If you are thinking of doing this, please ask your recruiter beforehand, they'll have information of what may or may not be appropriate. You might prepare an activity and then decide it isn't appropriate, just play it by ear.

Snap Care: Interview Tips

Sell Yourself: You have been put forward for this role as you have the relevant experience. Think about how you will discuss your experience that demonstrates how helpful it will be for this child or client.

Confidentiality: Demonstrate you understand about client confidentiality by not mentioning any previous employers by name. Never speak negatively about a former employer even if it was a nightmare job!

Professional: Your potential employer will want to get to know you, but there should always be professional boundaries; don't overshare personal details.

Why you like this job: If you are asked why you are interested in the position, make sure you explain what you can bring to the position, not just what the job can do for you – for example please don't say it's of interest as it is 2 days a week which is convenient!

Identification: Please take your ID and any supporting documents with you as advised by your recruiter to show the client. Make sure you can easily access them, and you don't have to rummage around in a large bag to find missing items! Putting them all in a folder is helpful both to find and keep in good order.

Two-Way Process: This is also your opportunity to see if this is the right job for you; it is not just to see if you are suitable for the job. Only ask questions you *really* want an answer to – and at this stage, don't ask questions about wages, sick pay, maternity leave, holiday entitlement... it won't leave your potential employer with the right impression!

Be Yourself! Interviews can be daunting, but remember they are looking for reasons to employ you!

Enjoy your Interview! If you are relaxed and enjoy meeting the family or client, it will show.

Any questions before your interview, just call us on 020 7729 2200 otherwise, best of luck – we look forward to hearing all about it!