

## Business Skills 360 – Tips for your First Job Interview (Part 3: Research)

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### Discussion Questions

1. When you do research, where do you usually look for information?
2. Why do you think it might be important to know something about the company where you will have an interview?
3. What are some recent important trends in the industry in which you want to work?

### Vocab

**to arm yourself** – to prepare yourself for a specific purpose; “Before the debate, Jonathan armed himself with many relevant facts and statistics.”

**attributes** – a quality or feature of a person or thing; “Speed and strength are important attributes for anyone wishing to become a professional football player.”

**pertinent (collocation: pertinent question)** – relating to or appropriate for the matter at hand; often used before the word “question;” “At the press conference, the senator was willing to answer only pertinent questions about the proposed law.”

**to figure out** – to find the solution to or to understand; “From the confusing email, Garnet couldn’t figure out exactly what the customer wanted.”

**to read between the lines** – to understand something that is not said directly; “When Wendy said that she was tired, Blaine read between the lines and understood she didn’t really want to go out with him.”

**potential** – possible or prospective; “The sales manager took the prospective customer out for lunch to try to strike a deal.”

**head to** – go to; “Martin usually gets up early and heads to work around 7:00 in order to beat the traffic.”

**to browse** – to look through or over casually; “I spent my lunch hour browsing through the electronics store, but I didn’t buy anything.”

**the greater scheme of things** – the larger context; “I like money and what it can buy, but in the greater scheme of things happiness is much more important.”

**done your homework** – prepared and researched well; “Vince had really done his homework before the sales pitch and knew exactly what the customers wanted to hear.”

**broader context** – the larger situation or environment; “The historian tried to understand how the border dispute fit into the broader context of relations between the two countries.”

**shine through** – become clear or evident; “Mozart’s extraordinary musical ability shone through at a very early age.”

## Transcript

Hello and welcome. I'm Tim Simmons, and you're listening to the Business Skills 360 podcast. Glad you could join me. This is the third part in our 360 series on your first job interview, and we're going to be looking at the topic of research. And by that I mean the research that *you* should be doing *before* you step into the interview. Okay, so let's get started...

When you prepare for an interview, you want [to arm yourself](#) with knowledge in three key areas. Number one is the position itself. Number two is the company. And number three is the industry.

So, how do you find out about the position? Well, the job ad or posting is an obvious place to start. This should include a job description that lists all the responsibilities and skills required for the position. You may also visit the company's website, or go to job websites that describe similar positions and the type of work that people with that job do. You can even try to talk to people who work at the company.

When you're doing your research, you should be asking yourself several questions. What are the required *skills* and [attributes](#) for the job? What is a person in this position expected to deliver or produce? How much authority comes with this position? How does this position fit into the company's organizational structure? Which other people in the company will I have to work with? The more you can find out, the better. It will help you to understand which of your skills and experiences are the most relevant or impressive. Your research will also help you discover things that you want to know more about, so you'll be able to ask [pertinent](#) questions to the interviewer. Great, so what's next?

That's right, you need to research the company, and a great place to start is their website. There you should be able to find an overview of the company. What are their products and services? What is their mission? Who are the company leaders? What is the company's history? From there you can search for the company in the news and learn about the latest developments. Try [to figure out](#) where the company fits in the market as well as how it differs from the competition. Dig deeper and [read between the lines](#) to understand what kind of corporate culture exists and to see what challenges the company is currently facing. During the interview, you may be able to speak about [potential](#) solutions to such challenges.

Finally, you should learn something about the industry and the market in which the company operates. There are plenty of resources online, but you can also [head to](#) the library or bookstore [to browse](#) books and magazines. Industry publications and newsletters can also help. As you learn about the industry in general, see where the company fits into [the greater scheme of things](#). Also pay attention to trends, growth areas, external influences, and problems in the industry.

Okay, these are the three key areas of research that you need to cover before your interview. If you've [done your homework](#), you will arrive feeling much more *prepared* and, therefore, more *confident*. You'll be able to fit the interview questions and your responses into a [broader context](#) of the company's goals. You'll also be able to ask

much better questions to the interviewer. Don't feel that you have to pull out everything that you learned. The fact that you've done research will **shine through** in your responses and questions. And interviewers truly appreciate any effort you've put into your preparation. Hopefully, they are so impressed that they offer you the job...

That's all for now. I'm Tim Simmons, and this is Business Skills 360. If you'd like to test your understanding of today's show, please visit us online at [www.BusinessEnglishPod.com](http://www.BusinessEnglishPod.com). You'll find a quiz as well as a transcript, plus lots of other useful material. And don't forget to tune in to our next episode, where we'll wrap up our series on first job interviews with a great show on how to answer those particularly difficult questions that interviewers might throw at you. See you soon.

**Review**

1. Where does Tim suggest looking first for information about the job?
  - A. The company’s website
  - B. The job ad or posting
  - C. Current company employees
  - D. Industry publications
  
2. What will knowledge about the position help you to do?
  - A. Change the company’s organizational structure
  - B. Develop specific skills before the interview
  - C. See how the company fits into the market
  - D. Decide which of your skills and experiences to talk about
  
3. Which of the following is something Tim suggests finding out about the company?
  - A. The corporate culture
  - B. Products and services
  - C. Compensation philosophy
  - D. Current challenges
  - E. Overall employee satisfaction
  - F. Company leaders
  - G. Marketing strategy
  - H. Company history
  
4. According to Tim Simmons, if you do good research before the interview you will arrive feeling more \_\_\_\_\_ and, therefore, more \_\_\_\_\_.
  - A. knowledgeable... relevant
  - B. organized... attractive
  - C. prepared... confident
  - D. responsive... lucky
  
5. Which of the following is something that Tim says you *don’t* have to do?
  - A. relate everything you learned to the interviewer
  - B. talk about your skills and experience
  - C. ask questions
  - D. read extensively about the industry
  
6. Indicate which area of research each topic relates to:

	The position	The company	The industry
Potential solutions to challenges			
Trends and growth areas			
Degree of authority			

**Review Answers**

1. Where does Tim suggest looking first for information about the job?

**B The job ad or posting**

2. What will knowledge about the position help you to do?

**D Decide which of your skills and experiences to talk about**

3. Which of the following is something Tim suggests finding out about the company?

- A. The corporate culture**
- B. Products and services**
- D. Current challenges**
- F. Company leaders**
- H. Company history**

4. According to Tim Simmons, if you do good research before the interview you will arrive feeling more \_\_\_\_\_ and, therefore, more \_\_\_\_\_.

**C. prepared... confident**

5. Which of the following is something that Tim says you *don't* have to do?

**A. relate everything you learned to the interviewer**

6. Indicate which area of research each topic relates to:

	The position	The company	The industry
Potential solutions to challenges		X	
Trends and growth areas			X
Degree of authority	X		