

Interview Do's and Don'ts, Including AI

The habits that make a strong first impression, the mistakes that end an interview early, and how to use AI responsibly.

1 Before the interview

Do

- Research NVEEE and your committee, and be ready to explain why you applied [1]
- Prepare a 60–90 second introduction focused on the role [2]
- Prepare specific examples and review everything on your résumé [1]
- Practice out loud using short bullet notes, not a script [3]
- Prepare three to five questions for the interviewer [1]
- Dress professionally, including on video [4]
- Test your camera, microphone, internet, and screen sharing [5]

Don't

- Schedule an interview you have not prepared for
- List skills on your application that you cannot demonstrate [6]
- Memorize answers word for word [7]
- Join from a car, a noisy café, or while walking
- Wait until the last minute to install or test Zoom

2 During the interview

Do

- Join a few minutes early [5]
- Look at the camera, sit up straight, and speak clearly [5]
- Give specific examples with results; say what *you* did [1][8]
- Keep answers focused and let the interviewer guide the conversation [9]
- Take a moment to think, or ask for clarification, if a question is unexpected [3]
- Be honest about what you do not know and how you would learn it [8]
- Ask thoughtful questions at the end

Don't

- Use your introduction to share personal or childhood history unrelated to the role [2]
- Exaggerate your experience; it becomes clear quickly, especially in the skills exercise [8]
- Avoid questions or give one-word answers [8]
- Speak negatively about past employers, schools, or teammates
- Eat, chew gum, check your phone, or let background noise interrupt [5]
- Read answers from a screen or use AI tools

3 After the interview

Do

- Send a personalized thank-you email within 24 hours [9]
- Write down the questions you were asked and what you would improve [9]

Don't

- Send a generic thank-you note that could apply to any organization
- Follow up repeatedly before the timeline you were given

4 AI and your interview

NVEEE's policy

AI tools may not be used during your interview, including tools that suggest answers in real time. The only exception is a skills exercise that explicitly asks you to use AI, such as for AI Tools & Digital Innovation applicants, who will use AI openly and explain how they checked its output. Reading AI-generated answers during an interview will end the interview.

Why employers take this seriously

- Interviewers notice the signs of AI use: long pauses, eyes moving to another screen, and answers that sound polished but cannot survive a follow-up question [10][11].
- In a 2025 Gartner survey, 39% of job candidates said they had used AI during the application process, and Gartner advises employers to set clear expectations about acceptable AI use [12].
- Google, Cisco, and McKinsey have brought back in-person interview rounds to confirm candidates' skills, and some employers now ask candidates to confirm at the start that they will not use AI [11][13].
- Career centers warn that presenting AI-generated answers or invented experience can get you disqualified [14].

Using AI to prepare: acceptable

- Generating practice questions and running mock interviews [6][14]
- Researching an organization, then checking the facts against reliable sources [7]
- Writing your own answer first, then asking for feedback on its structure [6][7]
- Identifying skills you need to build [6]

Using AI: not acceptable

- Reading or memorizing AI-written answers [6][7]
- Using AI during the live interview [11][13]
- Claiming experience or skills you do not have [6]
- Letting AI write your résumé or application answers from scratch [6]

A simple test before you submit anything

NACE suggests asking yourself whether you could answer detailed questions about a document in an interview [15]. If you could not explain it in your own words, it is not ready.

Sources and further reading

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- [14] University of Waterloo Co-operative Education, Using GenAI in Interviews. <https://uwaterloo.ca/co-operative-education/news/using-genai-in-interviews>
- [15] NACE, The Ghostwritten Candidate: AI Fraud, Auto-Apply, and the Fight for Authentic Career Readiness. <https://naceweb.org/career-readiness/best-practices/the-ghostwritten-candidate-ai-fraud-auto-apply-and-the-fight-for-authentic-career-readiness>