

## How to Prepare for a Scouting Interview

To see the current volunteer roles available in Scouting Ireland, please click here:

<https://www.scouts.ie/Jobs-and-Opportunities/Volunteer-Opportunities/>

### Preparation

- Read over any relevant documentation of the role you are applying for.
  - These documents may include a Terms of Reference or a job description.
  
- Ask yourself why you are applying for this role. Note down keywords to points you think you may forget.
  
- Have notes ready. You should have a list of keywords ready to discuss the following topics:
  - Your skills, strengths and weaknesses
  - Projects or other relevant experiences you have that relate to the role you are applying for. These do not always need to be scouting related.
  - Ideas you have for work in this role
  - What you believe you can bring to the team.
  
- Arrive at least 10-15 minutes before your interview starts. If being done by tele-conferencing, have the app downloaded and ensure you can get into the meeting without any issues.
  
- Have a notebook and pen with you to write down anything discussed in the interview which you'd like to take away.
  
- A copy of your Scout CV to hand will be helpful to jog your memory on your experiences.
  
- Ask for someone to help you by doing a mock interview with you. A friend, scouter or family member would be a good place to start.
  
- If you know anyone who has gone through the interview process, ask them for any advice they have, or what their experience was like.
  
- Write down any questions you have which you would like to bring to the interviewers. This shows you've done your research and are serious about the role.
  
- Have a bottle/glass of water beside you. This allows you to reach for it and take a drink if you need some time to think of your response to the question.

### Presentation

- Wear your neckerchief!
  - Many scouts have 2 neckerchiefs ('Field' and 'Dress'). Dress option is better for interviews.
  - Field – A neckerchief worn with many pins & woggles with a square “friendship” knot joining the two ends.
  - Dress - A clean neckerchief, rolled up neatly and worn with a woggle pushed up comfortably below the neck.

- If you decide to wear your Scout Uniform, ensure it is clean and tidy. Looking your best creates a good first impression which will make the rest of the interview easier.
  - An interviewer would rather see a clean uniform with few badges than a messy/dirty one with many badges.
- Wear your accolades and ensure your uniform is up to date. Chief Scout Award, Gaisce, Explorer Belt, Venture Challenge Woggle, Wood Beads, Phoenix Badges, etc. This allows for interviewers to pick up on things to talk to you about and may assist you when you draw a blank.
- Ensure that any extra items you are taking into the interview (eg. a notebook and pen, a copy of your Scout CV, a bottle of water) are neat and necessary.

### **Interview**

- This is an informal process so just speak normally. Try not to feel too nervous and talk to the interviewers as you would with fellow scouts and scouters.
- Smile naturally and have good, open body language. Sit with your back upright but in a comfortable position. Open body language sends a positive message to the interviewer that you are willing to answer the questions and are happy to be there.
- If you have trouble with fidgeting, place your hands on the table in front of you with your fingers interlocked. You could also have a pencil or a pen with a lid to write or point to things. Make sure the pen is simple because this will stop you playing with the mechanical parts and causing a clicking sound which can be distracting.
- Listen carefully to what the interviewer says and if you don't understand, ask again for it to be reworded or an example given.
- If you need time to think, you can use the bottle of water technique or just say "I need a minute to think about that". Interviewers prefer answers which are thought about rather than the first thing which popped into your head and could potentially not satisfy what they asked.
- If the interview is done through tele-conferencing, nod your head to show you understand the question instead of saying it verbally. Wait for the end of the interviewers' question to verbally agree. Due to technology sometimes having a delay, it may seem like you are interrupting when you didn't mean to.
- Make clear that you wish to learn and grow from this role and if you don't have all the skills, you hope to develop them throughout the year. Having a positive attitude is half the battle in scouting roles.
- Try not to offend the interviewer. If you want to make a change, word it so that you sound like you want to work with them to fix a problem rather than telling them why something is wrong and needs fixed. You may find their opinion is different to yours or they were the person who did that in the first place.
- At the end, thank the interviewers for taking the time to consider you. A Scout handshake is a good gesture if possible.

**Post-Interview**

- After your interview, take 5-10 minutes to take a break. Interviews can be a daunting experience and you may come out of it with a mix of emotions. People experience this differently but some ways of dealing with this are:
  - Sit down in a calm/quiet environment
  - If you require, get yourself a drink to rehydrate
  - Take time to gather your thoughts and relieve any nerves
  
- Write down how you think it went, where you think you did well, where you think you are not as strong and advice for yourself for next time. This is especially important if the interviewers are unable to provide feedback to you after the interview. Keep these notes safe as they can help to prepare you for future interviews and opportunities.
  
- Once the team comes back with their decision, ask them for feedback. Some interviews cannot provide feedback but they will communicate this to you.
  
- If you were unsuccessful in your application, remember that the role was not suited to you, it's not that you were not suited to the role.
  - Scouting relies on a number of different types of people, and it may be that you need to revise the positions available to find what is more suited to your skills and personality.
  - Look for alternative teams you can apply for, or look into other opportunities available to you.
  
- You may not have been successful in applying for the role for a number of reasons and they all come with positives and negatives. Scouting is a non-formal means of education and we are all here to help each other learn and grow. Take this experience as a learning opportunity, which will help you in the future.
  
- If you were successful in your application to the role, begin to think about your work for the year. Write down some goals you would like to achieve in your role and prepare for your first meeting with the team.

**Sample Questions**

- Role
  - Why do you want this role?
  - Why do you think you are a good fit for this role?
  - What do you hope to learn from this role?
- Personal
  - What is your greatest achievement?
  - Tell me about a time you used your initiative to improve a situation.
- Group
  - Tell me about a time that you worked with someone despite your differences.
- Team
  - What can you contribute to the team?
  - What are your strengths and weaknesses on a team?
  - What is a time where you worked well on a team? Why did it work well?
  - What is a time where there was conflict on a team? Why did this occur and how was it resolved?
- Scouting
  - How long have you been in scouts?
  - What was your favourite scouting experience?

- What is your proudest scouting moment?
- What scout events have you been to or what experiences have you had in scouting that can help you in this role?
- Training
  - Where are you in the Adult Member Training process?