Interviews: Best Practice Cheat Sheet

Step 1: Consider Alternatives

- Are interviews the best way to assess someones capability for the role you're recruiting? Consider also:
  - **Show reels**
  - **Work samples**
  - **Practical tasks**

Step 2: Prepare the Interviewee

- Clearly **explain the format and how many people will be present** (e.g. panel, one-on-one, remote or in-person)
- State the **expected length** of the interview
- Share the **types of questions** or any **tasks involved**
- Send **detailed information about the location**, how to get there, and what the room will look like (if in-person)
- Give **clear expectations** - e.g. on dress code or what they can bring (including notes)
- **Avoid an interview time that requires travel during peak hours**

Step 3: Offer Adjustments in Advance

- Include on the interview invite that you **welcome requests for adjustments** to the interview process or environment
- Ask the candidate if they need:

  - **Extra time** to process questions
  - **Written copies** of interview questions
  - **Breaks** during longer interviews
  - A **quiet room** or low-stimulus setting
  - **Someone there** to support them

Step 4: Use Clear and Structured Questions

- Use plain **English** and **avoid jargon or metaphors**
- **Avoid abstract or overly hypothetical scenarios**
- Ask **direct, specific questions**

Example:

✖ "Tell me about a time you went above and beyond?"

✔ "Can you give an example of a project you completed on a short deadline? What steps did you take?"

Step 5: Allow Processing Time

- **Don't rush** the candidate - give them time to think
- **Reassure them** that it's okay to pause or ask for clarification
- Offer to **repeat or rephrase the question** if needed

Step 6: Focus on Skills, Not Social Style

- Evaluate the **substance of the answers**, not how they're delivered
- **Don't judge** based on:
  - Eye contact
  - Body language
  - Tone of voice
  - Social fluency or small talk
- Focus on whether they can do the job based on the evidence shared

Step 7: Debrief and Document Fairly

- **Provide constructive feedback if possible**