

Stand Out Every Time

A Gameplan for Shining in Group Interviews

by Dr Jo Winchester

If a one-on-one interview feels stressful, a group interview can feel like a competition on caffeine. But here's the truth: employers aren't looking for the loudest person — they're looking for the most aware, collaborative, and authentic one. This guide gives you the tools to calm your nerves, contribute with confidence, and leave a memorable impression (for all the right reasons).

1. Understand What They're Looking For

Group interviews aren't about who dominates. They're about who works well with others.

Employers are observing:

- How you listen and include others
- Whether you share ideas constructively
- If you stay calm under pressure
- How you contribute to group outcomes

👉 Your goal: to show you're someone who makes a team stronger and not someone who needs to win every moment.

2. Before You Walk In

- Research the company.

Know what they do, what values they promote, and what the role involves.

- Re-read the position description.

Look for keywords like "teamwork," "initiative," or "customer focus", they'll guide how you speak.

- Practice your intro.

A confident 20-second version of who you are and why you're excited to be there.

- Prepare two stories.

Brief examples that show teamwork or leadership (use the STAR method: Situation, Task, Action, Result).

- Get your mindset right.

You're not competing- you're collaborating in front of an audience.

3. During the Group Activity

- Listen first, then speak.

Jumping in too soon can seem pushy. Take a breath, make eye contact, and build on what others say:

“I agree with Jordan’s idea, and maybe we could also...”

- Use names.

It shows respect and attentiveness.

- Share airtime.

Invite others in: *“Sam, what do you think?”* That's leadership in action.

- Add structure.

Offer to keep time, take notes, or summarise. This shows initiative and teamwork.

- Keep energy positive.

Smile, nod, acknowledge ideas. Encouragement is contagious.

👉 Remember: being calm and constructive will always outshine being loud and competitive.

4. How to Shine in the Debrief

After the group task, interviewers may ask what you learned or how the group worked. Here's how to stand out gracefully:

- ✓ Give credit. *“Everyone contributed great ideas. I liked how we built on each other’s strengths.”*
- ✓ Reflect on teamwork. *“I noticed I naturally stepped into a time-keeper role. I realised it helped me stay focused.”*
- ✓ Highlight self-awareness. *“If I did it again, I’d speak up a little sooner. It was a good learning moment.”*
- ✓ Show enthusiasm. End with something like, *“It was great seeing how differently everyone approached the task.”*

5. Practice Your Presence

Skill	How to Show It in the Room	Why It Impresses Employers
<u>Confidence</u>	Open posture, steady tone, relaxed smile	<i>You appear calm under pressure</i>
<u>Collaboration</u>	Include quieter voices, build on ideas	<i>Shows leadership without ego</i>
<u>Communication</u>	Clear, concise points	<i>Keeps group focused</i>
<u>Adaptability</u>	Stay flexible if plans change	<i>Demonstrates resilience</i>
<u>Emotional Intelligence</u>	Read the room, stay respectful	<i>Creates good team chemistry</i>

👉 Tip: It's not about being the star — it's about being the glue that helps the team shine.

6. After the Interview

- Send a short thank-you email.

“Thanks for the opportunity to take part in the group activity today.” It was great to learn more about the company and meet your team.”

- Write down what you noticed.

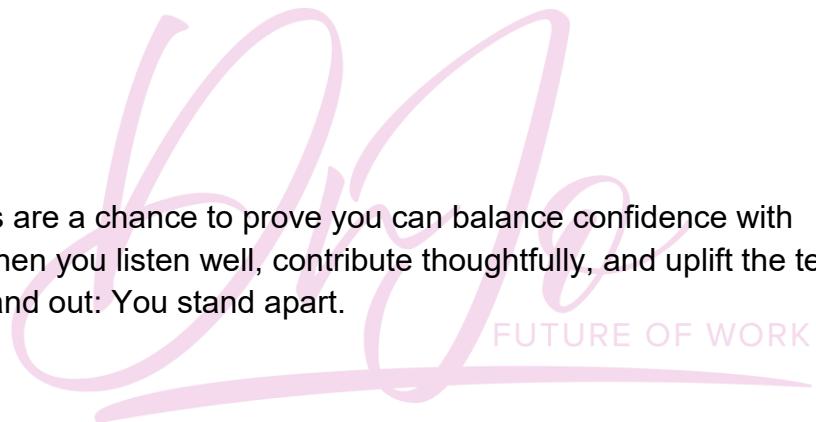
What did you do well? Where could you grow? These reflections will sharpen your performance next time.

- Stay connected.

Follow the organisation on LinkedIn or reach out to your contact politely and keep the momentum going.

Final Thoughts

Group interviews are a chance to prove you can balance confidence with collaboration. When you listen well, contribute thoughtfully, and uplift the team, you don't just stand out: You stand apart.



Dr Jo Winchester

Future-Ready Educator

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