



**THE ULTIMATE GUIDE
TO PREPARING FOR A
MEDICAL SALES JOB
INTERVIEW**



INTERVIEW

Job interviews in the medical sales sector are exciting and daunting for many candidates. If you're lucky enough to be invited to an interview, you've likely already impressed your potential employer recruiter with your CV, cover letter, and application. But that doesn't mean you're guaranteed a job offer.

The interview process is when hiring managers and recruitment teams go beyond the experience, skills, and qualifications listed in your CV to determine whether you're the best fit for their team. They'll assess everything from your confidence to your soft and technical skills and how you present yourself as an individual who will add something to their organisation.

To make matters more complex, every company can take a slightly different approach to the interview.

Some will have multiple parts to the process, including telephone screening, video interviews, psychometric and skill testing, and first, second, and third-stage interviews depending on the type of medical sales role.

Some will ask you to complete tasks as part of an assessment; others will invite you to group or panel interviews where you need to convince multiple stakeholders.

However, just because interviews can differ doesn't mean you can't prepare effectively for them. With the right strategy, you can ensure you enter every interview with the confidence and insights you need to make a positive, lasting impression on employers.

We've created this complete guide to interviewing success based on our experience helping candidates find incredible roles in the medical sales landscape.

Understanding the Job Interview Process

Let's start by understanding the process. There's no one-size-fits-all strategy for conducting a medical sales job interview. Even if you find the ideal list of common interview questions you can use to help you prepare, you might still be caught off guard by the interview process itself.

Companies handle interviews in the medical sales industry in numerous ways.

Some of the most common options include:

The Traditional Interview

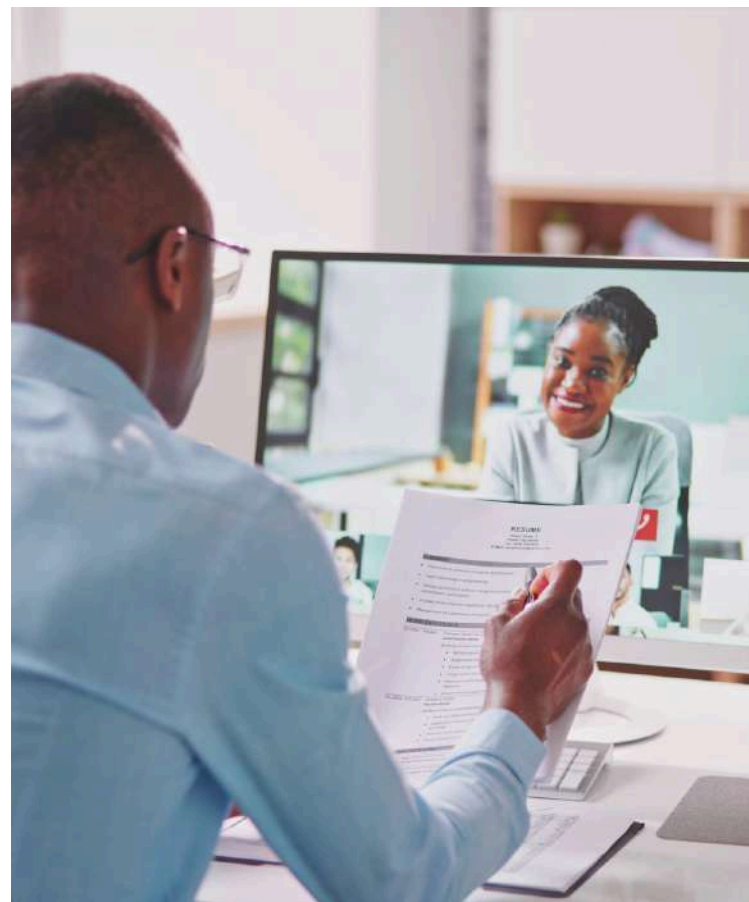
In a traditional interview, you'll sit down with a representative from the organisation you apply to work for and answer a series of questions. These questions will usually help the interviewer determine if you're the right candidate for the role based on pre-defined criteria linked to the job description, skills, and cultural fit.

The Phone/Video Interview

During the pandemic, over 80% of companies adopted phone and video interviews to assess talent. These methods have retained their popularity in recent years, as they help companies save time and money on the interview process. During these types of interviews, it's crucial to ensure you're familiar with the technology you will use and prepare just as you would for a traditional interview.

The 'Project/Task' Interview

The 'project/task' interview is a more specialised interview form in which medical sales candidates are given a specific business problem or puzzle to solve or a technical task that could be part of your role. This is your opportunity to demonstrate your business understanding, skills and knowledge of the industry.



The Group Interview

Group or panel interviews are less common among smaller medical sales companies but still occur in some situations. For instance, if you're interviewing for a leadership role, multiple executives may want to assess your talents simultaneously. In these interviews, it's crucial to ensure you're dividing your attention equally between everyone in the group.

In some group interviews, you're asked to attend an interview alongside other candidates, making it critical to know how to stand out.

The Multi-Stage Interview

Multi-stage interviews are also relatively common when companies hire essential new medical sales team members. You may have an initial "screening" interview with a recruitment company, where they ask basic questions over the phone. If you make the right impression during this interview, you will move to second and third stage interviews.



Mastering the Interview: Pre-Interview Preparation

Effective preparation is crucial to your success, regardless of which type of interview you're invited to. Preparing for an medical sales interview doesn't just mean searching on Google for common interview questions and practising your responses.

An effective process means gathering all the necessary resources, conducting research, and cultivating the right mindset to tackle any situation confidently.

Some of the first things every medical sales candidate should do include:



Researching the Company

For employers, the goal of any interview isn't just to evaluate the skills and qualifications of each candidate but to define whether those candidates are the right fit for their specific needs. The only way to demonstrate that you're the "ideal" candidate for the role is to comprehensively understand what the company is looking for.

Look up the company you've applied to work for online and make notes about its vision, mission statement, company culture, values, and overall business goals. Check out the career pages on their website, their latest social media posts, and any press releases or news reports published by other organisations.

If you are working with a [recruitment company](#), they will be able to give you a detailed breakdown of the company, its goals, and ethos.



Evaluating the Job Description

It's easy to fall into the habit of "skim reading" job descriptions when applying for new roles.

However, if you're invited to a medical sales interview, it's worth reviewing and assessing the job description carefully. What keywords are regularly mentioned in the description, such as "attention to detail" or "adaptability"? What stands out about the company's description of its culture or the required and preferred skills they ask for?

Examine your skills, experiences, and attributes based on the job description. Remember, interviews often start with the question, "Tell me about yourself", so what can you say in that opening statement that reflects how well you're suited to the role?

Consider developing an "elevator pitch" where you highlight what you've done, your skills, achievements, and how they all relate to the role you're applying for.



Update Your CV and Cover Letter

Ideally, you should be updating and customising your CV and cover letter before applying to any role. Don't make the mistake of sending the same information to every medical sales company you apply to work with.

Instead, use what you learn about the company during your initial research and the information you gather from the job description and your recruiter to build the perfect "complementary" documents for your interview. Ensure you're drawing attention to the most relevant skills, showcasing aspects of your personality that demonstrate cultural fit in your cover letter, and removing any "unnecessary" information.

This will boost your chances of getting a job interview in the first place and give you a valuable document you can refer to during the interview. Taking a copy of your CV to the interview will provide you with a cheat sheet you can refer to whenever you need help sharing relevant stories and experiences with your interviewer.



Preparing to Excel in a Medical Sales Job Interview: Top Strategies



Once you've taken the three steps above to ensure you have the right information (and resources) to perform well in your medical sales interview, it's time to go deeper with your self-assessment and preparation process. Before attending an interview, it's worth taking extra time to practice and master the essential skills you'll need to "sell yourself" to a hiring manager.



Master Non-Verbal Communication

Nonverbal communication dominates how we communicate, according to behavioural psychologist Dr. Albert Mehrabian. Mehrabian's extensive research on body language resulted in the 7-38-55 rule. This rule indicates that only 7% of all communication is done verbally. In contrast, the nonverbal components of our daily communication, such as the tonality of our voice and body language, make up 38% and 55%, respectively.

In other words, it's not just what you say that influences your chances of interview success, but how you say it. Your posture, stance, and even how frequently you make eye contact with your interviewer says a lot about you.

Practice interviewing in front of a mirror or a friend. Pay attention to how you hold yourself during the conversation. Slouching, crossing your arms, or fidgeting can all send the wrong message about the kind of employee you will be.

Focus on sitting up straight, smiling (when possible), and making regular eye contact with your interviewers. If you will be interviewing over video, remember to look directly at the camera when answering questions (don't just focus on your video stream).



Polish Your Verbal Communication Skills

Exceptional communication skills are among the top things any interviewer will look for when meeting with medical sales candidates. They'll want to see evidence that you can respond to questions carefully and thoughtfully, with a degree of confidence.

Practice answering common interview questions and pay attention to your language and cadence.

- Are you using a lot of jargon that interviewers might find confusing?
- Do you frequently use slang terms or rush through sentences?

Sometimes, it helps to take a moment to formulate your response before you start talking. If you need a minute, say something like "That's a great question" to give yourself time to think.



Learn to Handle Behavioural Interview Questions

Behavioural interview questions are common in the medical sales landscape. They're an excellent way for interviewers to dive into your previous experiences and evaluate how you'll respond to different scenarios.

Typically, the best way to respond to behavioural interview questions like "Tell us about a time when you overcame a challenge at work" is with a well-structured story.

You might use the "STAR" method (Situation, Task, Action, and Result) to guide your interviewer through an experience. Remember to use detail in your response, referencing clear facts, figures, and statistics wherever possible.

Another option is the "CARE" method (Context, Action, Result, and Evolution). Here, you'll introduce your interviewer to the situation you faced and why it was important, then follow up with an explanation of what you did to achieve specific goals. You can also build on that with insights into how you've evolved and improved since or what you learned from the experience.



Prepare for Project/Task Interviews

Projects and task interviews can be particularly complex, as it's often difficult to determine what kind of problem or puzzle you'll be asked to resolve in advance. Often, the best way to master these interviews is to be prepared to ask the right questions.

This shows that you're carefully evaluating the situation with a strategic mind. For instance, if your interviewer asks what you would do to help a company with declining revenue, you might ask:

- How long has revenue been dropping for this company?
- When did the issue begin? Were there certain factors at play, like a price increase?
- Which segment of our audience has experienced the biggest churn rate?

Once you've gathered the right information, formulate a response that showcases your understanding of the problem and draws on your experience. You might say, "We encountered a similar issue at [company]. Their issue was also related to higher competition in the industry, and we found that implementing [solution] drove [results]."



Be Ready for Group Interviews

Group medical sales job interviews can be complex. There are two common types of group interviews. The first is the group/panel interview, where you're asked to attend a conversation with multiple stakeholders from the company.

During these interviews, it's important to interact with as many people as possible in the room and pay the most attention to the person or people speaking to you.

The second type of group interview involves multiple candidates interviewing simultaneously. In this scenario, your employer will often be looking for both leadership and collaboration skills. With this in mind, think carefully about how you:

- Speak up and present yourself as a leader.
- Involve other people in the group by asking additional questions.
- Build off the ideas of other team members.
- Listen regularly to what other candidates are saying.



Optimise Your Interview Wardrobe

As business leaders continue to prioritise strategies for removing "bias" from the interview process, many are striving to avoid making decisions based on what a person looks like. However, we're often unconsciously affected by a person's appearance.

Ensuring you are well-groomed and dressed appropriately for an interview is crucial to demonstrating professionalism. Whether you're attending an interview in person or via video call, make sure you dress professionally.

You can look at a company's social media profiles or website for insights into what employees typically wear, and your recruiter can help you here. If you're unsure of the right attire, stick with a business approach.





Overcome Interview Anxiety

Interview nerves are common. Most people feel anxious before an interview. This anxiety can affect everyone, from executive-level employees to beginners in the medical sales industry. While you might not be able to eliminate nerves, you can focus on getting into the right mindset before the interview.

Experiment with ways to calm your anxiety, such as practising some basic meditation techniques before you start the conversation. Take a few deep breaths, give yourself a miniature pep talk, or listen to a piece of music that makes you feel happy and confident.

During the interview, be patient with yourself. If you need an extra moment to breathe and ground yourself, say, "Good question; let me think about that."



Brush Up on Your Technical Skills

In the medical sales landscape, many employers will infuse technical skill tests into the process to help them identify which employees have the "hard skills" they need to deliver in a role. Often, the company's hiring manager or your medical sales recruitment company will inform you in advance if you need to take a skills test.

This will allow you to read through valuable articles online, practice some "mock tests", and brush up on any skills you'll be asked to demonstrate.

The more you practice, the more confident you're likely to feel.





Prepare Carefully for the Day of the Interview

Preparing well for your medical sales interview also means planning the day in advance to mitigate as many potential risks as possible. Start by planning the route to the interview location and how you will get there. If possible, visit the area ahead of time if you're unfamiliar with the route you'll need to take.

If you're attending a virtual interview, ensure you still have time to review your notes, dress professionally, and groom yourself before you appear on camera. Additionally, take a few moments to check all of your technology is working effectively.

Arriving early is a good idea whether your interview is virtual or in-person. This will give you a few moments to get into the right mindset before the interview begins, calm your nerves, and test any technology. Plus, ensure you prepare all the documents or resources you need in advance, such as your CV, list of references, and portfolio.



During the Interview: Top Tips for Success

If you've followed the steps above to ensure you're adequately prepared for your medical sales interview, your chances of success will be much higher. However, while effective preparation is key, ensuring you're ready to 'perform' well in the interview is also important.



Build Rapport with Your Interviewer

Building rapport is crucial during a medical sales interview. Hiring managers will look for evidence that you'll mesh well into their team. Demonstrating your personality, smiling at the interviewer regularly, and asking them about themselves will form the foundations of a positive professional relationship.

Building rapport doesn't have to mean wasting an interviewer's time with endless small talk. Simple strategies can help form deeper human connections, such as:

- Subtly mirroring your interviewer's body language
- Making eye contact as often as possible
- Smiling (when appropriate)

It's also important to practice "active listening". Lean forward and adapt your body language to show interest when your interviewer speaks. Ask them questions (when necessary) to build on the questions they ask you.

For instance, if an interviewer asks, "What did you like most about your prior role?" you might say, "It was a great experience overall. Are you more interested in the company culture or my work in that role?"



Answer Questions Concisely and Confidently

Although it's important to give detailed and specific answers to your interviewer's questions, remember that they will likely be limited on time. Avoid going into in-depth stories and sharing lengthy accolades with every question.

Identify what your interviewer is looking for when they ask a question and deliver concise, confident responses. For instance, if the medical sales hiring manager asks why you're a good fit for the role, don't tell them about your career journey.

Highlight the experiences you've had during your career that resonate with the values and goals of the company. Draw attention to critical skills and show you have a deep understanding of the priorities of that organisation.

Additionally, while it helps to rehearse responses to common interview questions, avoid sounding like you're reading from a script.



Ask Relevant Questions

A medical sales interview isn't just an opportunity for a hiring manager or executive team to learn more about you as a candidate. It's also your chance to learn as much as possible about the company, the role, and your responsibilities.

Asking the right questions shows interest and enthusiasm for the role. Avoid asking questions you could have easily answered with a little research (such as: "What products do you sell?").

Instead, ask questions that demonstrate your commitment to being a good hire, such as:

- What are the key performance indicators you'd track in my work?
- Which team members will I work with regularly?
- How would you describe your company's approach to training and development?
- What would be the biggest challenge I'd face in this role?
- How does your company prioritise diversity, equity, and inclusion?
- What does a typical onboarding process look like for someone in this role?





Demonstrate Enthusiasm and Interest

No employer wants to hire a medical sales candidate who doesn't seem fully committed to the role. This is particularly true in today's world, where employers are prioritising adaptability and resilience in a skills-short market.

According to a Glassdoor study, 25% of new hires leave a role within six months, and your employer will want to avoid this rapid turnover.

With this in mind, focus on showing genuine enthusiasm for the position. Talk about what excites you when you consider working for this company. Do you share their values, feel thrilled about their upcoming goals, or look forward to opportunities to improve your work?

Ask about the development opportunities you'll have, which skills you'll need to develop to become the best possible employee, and how you can improve your chances of progression in the long term. Showing a commitment to growing with the company will significantly improve your chances of getting a job offer.



Post Interview Follow-Up: What to Do Next

Finally, mastering the medical sales interview process doesn't just mean being properly prepared before the interview, and impressive during the interview conversation. It's also important to think carefully about what you will do after the interview.

At the interview, ask when the hiring manager is planning on making a decision, and don't send any follow-up emails or messages until after that point.

Once you leave the interview:

Send a Thank-You Note or Email

Just because you shouldn't be pestering your hiring manager for a decision immediately after an interview doesn't mean you shouldn't get in touch at all. The one form of message you could send after each medical sales interview is a "thank-you" note.

Keep the note short and sweet and send it within 24-48 hours of your interview. The message should express gratitude for the opportunity the company has given you. You can also mention something specific you remember about the interview.

Express excitement about hearing back from the interviewer and remember to personalise the message by using the hiring manager's name.

Evaluate the Interview Process

Every medical sales interview you attend won't necessarily lead to a job offer. However, every interview is a valuable opportunity to learn and improve. Sit in a quiet space and review the interview process in your head, listing the things you think went well and the areas where you believe you need to improve.

Invest in developing your interview skills as you commit to constantly learning and improving your career.



Stay Positive and Proactive

Don't beat yourself up even if you don't successfully get the role, you applied for with a specific medical sales company. If you've followed all the steps outlined above, the chances are that you did have a great interview, but you may still not have been the right person for the role.

If you think the interview went very well, and there are no areas you need to specifically improve on, consider speaking to your [medical sales recruitment company](#). Ask them for feedback on your interview.

Get their suggestions on which soft and technical skills you might need to develop or ask them whether you should consider applying for different types of companies and roles based on your current skill set.

Interviews are naturally nerve-wracking, regardless of how much experience you have in your role or how many companies you've applied to work with. While it's impossible to fully predict what each interview will entail in the medical sales industry, you can still be prepared.

Making sure you do the right research and prepare effectively before the interview by honing your hard and soft skills, practising different interview techniques, and making the right impression on your interviewer by answering questions confidently and building rapport will boost your chances of success.

Over time, as you continue to learn from each interview experience, your confidence will grow, and you'll find yourself nailing every interview opportunity.

About Advance Recruitment

Advance Recruitment is a specialist medtech recruitment agency with a focus on filling commercial positions such as management, sales, marketing and clinical training.

Founded in 1997, we are the longest established recruitment agency in our sector.

Based in Manchester, our in depth knowledge of the medtech sector allows us to help our clients attract the brightest talent and enables our candidates to build exciting and fulfilling careers.

We work with everyone from large, blue-chip multinational companies to SMEs and start up organisations.

Memberships



Corporate
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The REC is the voice of the recruitment industry, speaking up for great recruiters.

It drive standards and empowers recruitment businesses to build better futures for their candidates and themselves. They are champions of an industry which is fundamental to the strength of the UK economy.

REC members are recognised for their professionalism and the value they provide to clients and candidates. If a recruitment agency displays the REC logo, it's a sign of quality. It demonstrates that they have passed the REC Compliance Test and adhere to their Code of Professional Practice.

Advance Recruitment's values are aligned to that of the REC and you are guaranteed a high standard of ethical conduct and professional behaviour.

Next Steps

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If you are looking to expand your team, please do not hesitate to give us a call to see how we can save you time on your hiring process.

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Joshua Clegg, Product Specialist - Medartis

Dave and Advance are by far the best recruiters I have ever worked with. I discovered Advance when they reached out to me about some roles that they were recruiting for. From the start they have demonstrated a superior level of professionalism but have also made the working relationship a pleasure to be a part of.

Dave and Karen both have exceptional knowledge of the roles that they are recruiting for but also are extremely personable.

I cannot recommend working with Dave and Advance enough, and my expectations from recruiters are now set to a very high standard after dealing with them. I cannot thank them enough for their assistance through the interview process and their genuine investment in their roles.

Lauren Turner, Clinical Educator - AMBU

Advance Recruitment stood out to me as they specialise in medtech companies and healthcare practices. Karen was incredibly helpful in listening to what my current situation was and helping to find me a solution to that.

With a very quick interview turnaround, I managed to secure a fantastic new role within a week of leaving my job. I've got a new role with a better territory, training and support and a higher income.

Advance Recruitment are lovely to work with, they answered any of my questions very quickly, listened to any concerns I have, and helped with interview preparation.

I have already recommended 2 of my friends to Advance Recruitment and will be happy to recommend again in the future! :)

Dawood Iqbal, Territory Manager - Teleflex

I have used Advance Recruitment since 2015 and Karen McCurdy has always been on hand to support. Karen has always been professional in her approach but has a friendly and supportive manner which is why I always prefer working with her.

When I contacted Advance Recruitment I instantly felt like a valued partner and was offered roles that were right for me.

Karen helped me find my previous role in 2015 which was a perfect fit for me, I excelled in that role and decided to look for new opportunities in 2023 and again Karen found a role that was exactly what I was looking for in regards to the opportunity itself and career progression.

I would highly recommend that anyone looking for a new role or career advice reach out to Advance Recruitment.

