



The A-Z of becoming a PA

Interested in becoming a PA but don't know where to begin? Here is Tate's A-Z guide on how to work towards your dream career:

Accuracy

Everyone makes mistakes, but for a PA it's best to do whatever's possible to avoid them. A reputation of being reliable and trustworthy is very important for this role, so start as you mean to go on by making doubly sure there are no spelling mistakes, factual errors or gaps in your application.

Balance

The ability to multitask and balance a heavy workload is one of the biggest challenges in this role. There's always lots to do and prioritising your tasks is no mean feat, so train yourself to be really, really, really organised.

CV

When applying for a position as a PA, always tailor your CV to reflect the requirements listed in the job description. Make your skills stand out by linking them to examples from your past working or education experiences.

Detail

The trick is in the detail. Retaining details benefits the three driving forces behind a successful PA: accuracy, efficiency and punctuality.

Easy-going

If you're easily stressed, becoming a PA may not be your true calling... It's a highly rewarding vocation, but you will have to juggle a lot of things at once while remaining completely unflappable (on the surface at least!).

Friendliness

You spilled coffee on yourself. You've been given attitude over the phone. Your computer isn't working. Various people are demanding things from you. Does that mean you can have a grumble? Of course not! A good, friendly, can-do attitude is the only way to be, so take every opportunity to show this to your prospective employer.

G-force

Speed is the name of the game for a PA. If you're inefficient, your other skills will become ineffectual. But remember: there is a stark difference between doing something promptly and rushing it.

Helpful

Even if you've got a lot on your plate, you should always be willing to help out if needed. After all, the unofficial title for a PA is right hand man/woman!

Interview

Interviews for PA jobs can be tough. Expect a real grilling! Your prospective employers will want to put you through your paces to see if you are up for the challenge, so do your best...and keep smiling!

Jokes

It may be high-pressure job, but that doesn't mean you should leave your sense of humour at home. If you're good at what you do and can crack a few jokes along the way, you'll be unstoppable in this industry.

Knowledge

Knowledge is power, as they say, so never underestimate how far it can take you in this business. Soak as much information as you can like a sponge – you never know when you'll need it.

Love

Don't hold back when it comes to expressing your passion for the role. Enthusiasm will keep you going!

Mentor

It's really useful to speak to someone who has experience as a PA. Not only will they be able to give you advice on becoming successful in the role, but they may also be able to introduce you to some valuable contacts.

Networking

They say it's not what you know, it's who you know (it's true – although as a PA you do need to know your stuff as well!). If you want to become a PA, networking could get you your dream job and may also help you form connections for additional support and guidance throughout your career.

Outfit

Always dress to suit the personality of the company you are interviewing for. For instance, PAs in a conservative law firm will have to dress in smart formalwear, whereas a PA for a creative marketer may be able to show a little more uniqueness in what they wear.

Personality

The ability to be a good PA is not always something you can learn. Not everyone has the personality to do the job, so don't push yourself into it if you don't enjoy it or are struggling too much.

Question

PAs should never be too compliant. If something isn't working you need to have the confidence to either sort it out or ask someone who can. In an interview situation, bring questions with you about the company to show you're on the ball.

Research

As always before an interview, you will need to research a lot about the company. Write down notes to take with you to show just how dedicated you are.

Software

This job requires you to be quite tech savvy. Keep up to date with the latest office software and perhaps take a few courses to familiarise yourself in certain areas such as database management, Microsoft Office, reports and word processing.

Time

Time management is key. It's about knowing yourself as much as it is about knowing what you're doing.

Understanding

PAs often bear the brunt of their boss' stresses. Learn more about their role so you can understand them better and know when to use diplomacy and discretion when needed.

Verbalise

What you say and how you say it is as much a representative of your skills as the way you perform your day-to-day tasks. Communication is key for the majority of jobs, but for a PA it's a true reflection of your abilities. Don't forget to make sure your body language complements what you say as well.

W_{riting}

You will be writing a lot of emails as a PA so make sure your writing skills are up to scratch. No matter what anyone tells you, spelling and grammar are very important and can be a real embarrassment to the company if poorly used.

X_{-ray}

Do you know what people want before they even know themselves? Intuition and the ability to read people are profitable talents to have as a PA. If you happen to have telepathic abilities that might be even better...

Y_{ou}

Be yourself. Employers want a confident PA who can tackle any situation swiftly and easily, and the only way you can truly do that is by being yourself. Believe in your abilities and show prospective employers why they need you in their company.

Z_{zzzzzzz}

You need to be on point every day as a PA, which means you need to learn how to relax when off duty! Your time off should be used to unwind and energise your body and mind, so you won't be able to burn the midnight oil on a weeknight. Insomnia sufferers may also get a bit burnt out by this type of fast-paced role.

If you have any questions about becoming a PA or would like to find out more about the roles we currently have available, contact our consultants today.