

# Mental Rehearsal, Visualization, & Guided Imagery

## About This Practice

Some individuals, including ourselves, are influenced by limiting beliefs, stories we create that are founded on assumptions, self-judgments, past experiences, and long held concepts. These negative convictions cause us to believe we won't be successful at certain things like networking, job interviews, or maintaining the employment of our choice—so why try. (Schafer, 2022).

One technique to overcome limiting negative beliefs is called Mental Rehearsal. This tip sheet is an overview of mental rehearsal, what it is, how it helps, and how to lead a mental rehearsal session. This session will specifically address the job interview. Following is a script prepared for you to use as you develop your comfort level with the process. A YouTube link of the recording is also provided.

Mental rehearsal is used in various areas of life because it works so well. Many singers and actors use it to overcome stage fright, and athletes rely on mental rehearsal to prepare for their sports events. Using mental rehearsal can improve one's confidence, feelings of control, focus, and insight even when facing a life challenge (Joseph, 2015).

## Incorporating This Lesson



- Mental rehearsal does not take away the need for actual skills to perform a task; interview skills still need to be honed with preparation, practice, and role plays.
- Mental rehearsal helps lessen stress by preparing mentally. Any negative thoughts about interviewing for a job creates stress, so by replacing negative thoughts with positive thoughts the stress level is lessened.
- Using both words and mental pictures is most captivating. Use your words to create powerful images of success and positive feelings.



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## Incorporating This Lesson

- Incorporate as many of the senses in the imagery as you can—sight, sound, smell, taste, and touch. Experiencing the imagery through all five senses enhances the power and depth of the experience.
- Practice makes perfect---allow for the mental rehearsal to take place as often as possible. Confidence builds with each rehearsal.

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- Make sure that mental rehearsal takes place in a relaxing and distraction free environment; use a comfortable chair.
  - The following script should be read slowly using a calm voice. Dots..... are prompts for short pauses. You can add additional pauses where you see fit. You may want to listen to, or use, the YouTube recording as you increase your skill with facilitating a mental rehearsal session.
  - After the session allow the person time to reorient themselves. Sometimes it takes a person a few minutes. If they would like to talk about their experience, give them time to share but don't rush into this too quickly, give them time to refocus.



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The following script is to be paired  
with this YouTube video:  
[tiny.cc/mentalrehearsal](https://tiny.cc/mentalrehearsal)



I would like to guide you through what is called a mental rehearsal. It is a practice where you mentally visualize yourself successfully completing a task, in this instance a job interview. By practicing mentally, you are preparing for the real event. It does not replace preparing for the interview but will help to decrease stress and build confidence.

First, make sure you are comfortable, so you can relax and enjoy this adventure. Take a deep breath and then slowly exhale. Take another deep breath, and this time as you exhale close your eyes, if you have not already done so. Take one more deep breath and exhale.....Now, you can now return to breathing at a pace that is most comfortable to you. And it is OK if you need to move at any time to get more comfortable.....

Let's start by relaxing and letting go of stress...then we will begin your mental rehearsal of a job interview. Are you ready to successfully complete a job interview? You can nod if you are ready .....Continue to breathe in and out. As you inhale, relax... more and more.... As you exhale, imagine that stress is leaving your body....Set any other concerns you have aside for now....Just listen to my voice and mentally imagine..... Focus first on your feet...feel all the stress leaving your feet as you exhale ... that's right...moving up your legs, let all the stress leave your legs ... becoming more relaxed as you breathe in and out....all stress is now leaving your abdomen... your chest ...your arms, and hands and your fingers....relaxing more and more.... Release any stress in your neck, your jaw, and all the way to the top of your head ... feel all the stress leaving your body. Continuing to breathe in and out at a pace you are most comfortable with, continuing to let all stress leave your body, and your mind.

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**The following script is to be paired  
with this YouTube video.**

Free your mind of all distractions. Allow your mind to focus on my voice and this activity. Today you will successfully complete a job interview. This mental practice will improve your performance.... Mentally repeat to yourself the following words as I say them..." I am confident that I could successfully interview for a job...I am confident I will successfully interview for a job..... I am confident.... I will be successful because I am practicing and visualizing my success."

Now, mentally picture yourself just before you leave for a job interview. Not all people can see a picture in their mind, but you can always imagine what is taking place. Imagine leaving your home for your job interview...you feel prepared and optimistic. You are relaxed and focused. As you leave your home you find yourself feeling calmer and more assured, you tell yourself 'I am ready for this, I am prepared.'

You are looking forward to this interview. Now mentally, look around you, notice the weather, is it warm and sunny, cloudy, what color is the sky...what smells are you aware of? Flowers, fresh mowed grass, a crisp winter day. This is your imagination; you decide what is taking place around you. Continue to breathe in and out, letting go of any stress... Imagine yourself pleasantly greeting any passerby with your head held high with confidence.... hear yourself saying "Good morning or good afternoon". As you arrive at the building that the job interview will take place, imagine your confidence growing.

Now, imagine yourself entering the building, going through the door where you will announce your arrival... Picture how the room will look. Is it a waiting room? Is there a receptionist you speak with? Is the room bright? Quiet? Is there music playing? The more you can visualize with all your senses the more effective this mental rehearsal will be. What do you see, who do you see? Is there a waiting room with chairs, a couch? Are the chairs comfortable? What artwork is hanging on the walls. I will be quiet for a moment for you to create a positive picture of this environment.

.....(10 second pause).....

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The following script is to be paired  
with this YouTube video.

Now, picture yourself approaching the receptionist with a smile on your face. They look up at you and smile back, you confidently let them know who you are and why you are there. Imagine yourself as an active participant, not as a passive observer. You are in control of this situation. Any job interview you take part in you will feel in control, and proud of your abilities.

You are confident because you have prepared for this or any job interview. You have practiced interviewing and have participated in this mental rehearsal. You are prepared for this and feel secure in sharing your knowledge, skills, and desire to be offered this job... Now, imagine the person who will be interviewing you, notice they are friendly, and welcoming. You feel comfortable with the interviewer.

You are seated across from them and are relaxed. They begin to ask you questions...you confidently and clearly answer...Picture or imagine yourself calmly answering the interview questions, knowing how to answer because you are prepared. You highlight your skills and experiences that make you qualified for this job. They smile and nod as you answer. You are having fun. When they ask if you have any questions, you ask the questions you planned in advance. You ask them confidently. Before you leave you let the interviewer know that you are interested and hope they will be offering you the job. Feel this taking place.

See yourself leaving the interview happy and positive. You did a great job. You have successfully performed in your mind, and that is great preparation for actual performance. Praise yourself for being successful! You should now be confident that you will perform successfully in the real situation. Praising yourself is helpful because self-reinforcement is a key to self-motivation. Now, Open your eyes and smile.

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