

PREPARE FOR A PANEL INTERVIEW



Summary: Panel interviews require a few extra steps to thoroughly prepare for but can be done quite easily to make the interview less daunting.

Panel interviews are incredibly more intimidating. Having to sit in front of a group of people that are questioning you and critiquing everything you say will make anyone nervous. However, with the proper preparation, the experience does not need to be scary.

Companies opt to have panel interviews for several reasons. Bringing everyone onboard at one time can save time, which saves money. Using a panel also helps the company see how a candidate handles a high-pressure situation and how they work with different personalities. Understanding why employers use this interview method is part of preparing.

Once you learn that your interview will be before a panel, ask for the names of the panel members and their roles within the company. If possible, get the job description for each of the member's positions. Better knowing who will be interviewing you will help you give more detailed and direct answers to their questions. You can also use resources like LinkedIn, company profiles, and other online platforms to learn more about the interviewers. The more you know about them, the more you will know what they are looking for in a candidate.

Just like in a normal interview, you need to fully research the company. Look at their company website, social pages, and more to learn about their mission and goals. You should also be looking into their closest competitors to develop ideas that could help the company distinguish itself from their competitors. Also see what kind of publications the company has been featured in to see where they stand in the media and their industry.

Start preparing answers to behavioral questions. You will want to have a range of experiences and projects that you can use as examples that will showcase your abilities. Using your prepared answers, hold a mock interview to make sure the delivery of your answers are smooth and clear. Remember to keep your answers relevant to the panel members' backgrounds and positions.

Don't focus completely on just one panel member. Be sure to address the person who asked the question first but make eye contact with each panel member as you answer since you don't know who the big decision maker will be. Use the panel members' names as often as possible to make things personal and show you paid attention. Have questions prepared that are specific to each person. Watch your body language when interacting with the panel members. Ask each member for their business card at the end of the interview so you can follow up with a thank you note to each one.

Panel members are no different than normal interviews in regards to how you dress. You need to show up for the interview looking the part. Wear a modest, professional outfit in neutral colors. Avoid flashy items or anything too revealing.

Would you prefer a panel interview or traditional one-on-one interview? Share your thoughts with us in the comments below.

To learn more about how to prepare for interviews, read these articles:

- [Don't Get Lost in Your Closet Looking for an Interview Outfit](#)
- [Make Phone Interviews a Breeze](#)
- [Prepare for the Challenges of a Second Interview](#)

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