



WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT GOING ON A JOB INTERVIEW

Job interviews are typically the last stage in the hiring process, used to evaluate the best candidates. Interviews are usually preceded by the evaluation of supplied résumés, selecting a small number of candidates who seem to be the most desirable (shortlisting).

A company seeking to fill a single position will typically interview a handful of candidates - perhaps as many as ten if the level of application has been high. While job interviews are considered to be one of the most useful tools for evaluating potential employees, they also demand significant resources from the employer and have been demonstrated to be notoriously unreliable in identifying the optimal person for the job.

Multiple rounds of job interviews may be used where there are many candidates or the job is particularly challenging or desirable; earlier rounds may involve fewer staff from the employers and will typically be much shorter and less in-depth. A common initial interview form is the phone interview, a job interview conducted over the telephone. This is especially common when the candidates do not live near the employer and has the advantage of keeping costs low for both sides.

Once all candidates have had job interviews, the employer typically selects the most desirable candidate and begins the negotiation of a job offer.

A typical job interview has a single candidate meeting with between one and three persons representing the employer; the potential supervisor of the employee is usually involved in the interview process. A larger interview panel will often have a specialized human resources worker. The meeting can be as short as 15 minutes; job interviews usually last less than two hours. The bulk of the job interview will be the interviewers asking the candidate questions about their history, personality, work style and other relevant factors to the job. The candidate will usually be given a chance to ask any questions at the end of the interview. The primary purpose is to assess the candidate's suitability for the job, although the candidate will also be assessing the corporate culture and demands of the job on offer.

Lower paid and lower skilled positions tend to have much simpler job interviews than more prestigious positions; a lawyer's job interview will be much more demanding than that of a retail cashier.

Most job interviews are formal; the larger the firm, the more formal and structured the interview will tend to be. Candidates generally dress slightly better than they will be expected to wear to work, with a suit being appropriate for a white-collar job interview, but jeans being appropriate for an interview as a plumber.

Additionally, some professions have specific types of job interviews; for performing artists, this is an audition where the emphasis is placed on the performance ability of the candidate.

Psychometric testing may also be used in job interviews.

In many countries including most of North America, Western Europe and Australasia, employment equity laws forbid discrimination based on a number of classes, such as race, gender, age, and marital status. Asking questions about these protected areas in a job interview is generally considered discriminatory, and constitutes an illegal hiring practice. Asking questions that touch on these areas, such as "Are you willing to travel/relocate?" (possibly affected by marital status) or "When did you graduate from school?" (indicative of age) is still usually possible.

There is extant data which puts in question the value of Job Interviews as a tool for selecting employees. Where the aim of a job interview is ostensibly to choose a candidate who will perform well in the job role, other methods of selection provide greater predictive power and often lower costs. Furthermore, given the unstructured approach of most interviews they often have almost no useful predictive power of employee success.

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