

What Are the Different Kinds of Interviews?



Most people think of the typical one-on-one type of interview when they think of an interview, but there are many kinds of job interviews. Knowing what type of interview you will be having will help in your preparation.

Types of job interviews:

One-on-one

This is the most common type of interview, where one person will be interviewing only you. See the **JobSearch Guide** *What Can I Expect During the Interview*, which outlines exactly what will happen during a one-on-one interview and how to prepare for it. The interviewer may use one or all of the techniques detailed on the right.

Group

In a group interview, several candidates are interviewed at once. The purpose of this type of interview is usually to see how you act in a team situation and how competitive you are. Your group might be given a task to perform together. Those who contribute the most to the group will be considered first for open positions. There may be employees of the company mixed into your group, but you won't know who they are.



Team

In this type of interview you are interviewed by a panel of several employees of the company. The key to success in a panel interview is to interact with each member of the panel. Make eye contact. Answer questions asked by any of the members. Look for specific concerns from individual members and try to address them. Be aware that the team may play "good cop, bad cop." One may actually be confrontational while the second may appear to be your friend. Try to understand why they take this approach and respond appropriately.

Multiple

Often, several interviews will be set up with different members of the same company. If this happens, try to find out in advance what the schedule will be so that you will know how much time you have with each person. Use what you learn about the company and the tasks of the position in one interview to present yourself better in the next. Be sure to get the business card of each interviewer so you can send them all thank-you notes.

Second interviews

If you are invited back for a second interview, it usually means that you are one of a few final candidates for the position. It often also means that the decision-maker either has not interviewed you or still must be convinced. Approach this interview with the same enthusiasm, knowledge and care as you did the first.

Techniques used by the interviewer:

Question and answer

This is the typical interview format. Questions may be straight-forward, or they may be tricky. The interviewer directs the interview. As you answer each question, be sure to highlight your strengths (see the **JobSearch Guide** *Common Interview Questions*).



Non-directed

Not everyone is a skilled interviewer. You may find yourself in an interview where the employer is unprepared or seems unsure of what questions to ask. In this case, you will have to do your best to keep the interview focused on your interests and abilities and to find out what you need to know about the position being offered. If you are well-prepared, and you know what you want to communicate, you can use a non-directed interview to your advantage by communicating exactly what you want and avoiding topics that might not cast you in a favorable light.

Behavioral

In this type of interview, you will be asked questions about how you acted in a specific situation. Questions might include: *Describe a situation where you had to resolve a conflict* or *Describe a situation where you used creativity to solve a problem*. In these interviews, the interviewer is looking for responses that demonstrate a specific skill that is used on the job. You may also be asked to describe a situation where you were not successful in solving a problem and what you did about it. Here the interviewer is looking for evidence of accountability and the ability to learn from mistakes. Prepare for this type of interview by taking each task that the job will entail and identifying a situation in which you performed that task.

Traveling Tips

After screening interviews given on campus, at job fairs, or over the phone, companies often will invite the top few candidates to their company headquarters for further interviews. *If you are not interested in working for the company, or if you have no intention of moving, thank them politely and decline the interview.* On the other hand, if you are interested, set up the interview.



Arrangements must be made prior to your trip. Will you fly there? When? How should you get from the airport to the office? Where will you be staying? Knowing ahead of time your schedule and what will be reimbursed will allow you to be more relaxed during the trip. Usually, the interview will consist of multiple interviews and probably a mealtime interview.



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Screening interviews:



Screening

These are shorter interviews, usually performed by a member of the Personnel Department. Standard questions are asked, usually designed to weed out unqualified applicants. The interviewer may not know a lot about your field. Give them plenty of reasons to pass you on to the next step and try not to give them reasons to exclude you. Emphasize your experience and education. Treat this interview as you would a typical one-on-one interview.

Campus and Job Fair interviews

Campus interviews are a form of screening interview. They are shorter, usually one-on-one interviews and are designed to allow a recruiter to see a large number of applicants on a single trip. Most college and university career placement offices have procedures for scheduling these interviews, which are typically with large corporate employers. Follow the procedures established by the placement office or job fair sponsor, or you might miss out!

Campus recruiters are trained interviewers. You should prepare for these interviews thoroughly. A recruiter is looking for the candidate who is alert and well-presented and who comes to the interview with knowledge about the company. Your placement office can help you gain this information. If you are successful at the interview, you may be asked to an on-site interview at the company. Don't forget to write your thank-you note. It might help you stand out from the rest of the crowd.



Telephone interviews

Telephone interviews are often used to evaluate an applicant before paying for them to visit the company. Usually, a time for the interview is set up in advance, but not always. Some employers simply pick up the phone and call the candidate. Be ready for the call. Make sure that you have no distractions, such as children or dogs. There are some advantages to the telephone interview. Obviously, you don't have to get dressed up, and you can have your résumé and information about the company right in front of you while you talk to the interviewer. For more information review the **JobSearch Guide *How to Ace Telephone Interviews***.

Other types of interviews:

Meals

Sometimes an interview will take place over lunch or dinner, or a series of interviews will include lunch. Dining with your interviewer is a great opportunity to develop a more comfortable relationship. BEWARE! You are still on an interview. Do not forget this! Resist the urge to become overly familiar with the interviewer. Remain professional, and remember your table manners: no elbows on the table and don't speak with your mouth full. Order something in the mid-price range on the menu, but nothing messy, like spaghetti. Avoid alcohol and don't smoke. Your host will almost always pay the bill but you should offer and be prepared to pay for your meal.

Informational interviews

These interviews are not about employee selection at all. If you are considering entering a new field, you can use an informational interview to find out about what that field is like from someone in that line of work. First, compose some questions you would like to ask. What is a typical workday for you? What are the educational requirements for this type of work? What's the best way to get into the field? Next, call your contact and ask them for fifteen minutes of their time. This is important. Be sure to ask them first, and do not go over fifteen minutes! At the end of the interview, thank them for their time and end the conversation politely. This type of interview is not about job openings. Resist the urge to ask about open positions. For more information review the **JobSearch Guide *How to Acquire Job Information By Interviewing***.



Headhunters and employment agencies

Companies often hire professional search companies, sometimes called "headhunters," to identify potential candidates. Headhunters get lists of people in a profession from many sources and then use that list to screen candidates. If a headhunter calls you with a position that sounds attractive to you, by all means, try to sell yourself to them. These calls can come out of the blue, so you'll have to think quickly. Once the headhunter is convinced that you are a good candidate for the job, they will sell you to the employer. Interviews with employment agencies are usually planned in advance. They are screening interviews and should be handled as such. Review the **JobSearch Guide *How to Use Private Employment Agencies***.

Spouses

Occasionally, you will be asked to bring your spouse with you, especially if the job involves a relocation. Remember, your spouse is also being evaluated! Many companies encourage family values and evaluate how the candidate and their spouse interact.

Internet resources



- www.cms.livecareer.com/quintessential/job-interviews-- Describes the different types of interviews.
- <https://theundercoverrecruiter.com/6-interview-types-you-must-know-candidate/>-- Different types of interviews and how to prepare for each.
- <http://www.careerthinker.com/interviewing/types-of-interview/>-- Different types of interviews.
- www.jobskills.info/resume_edge/types_of_interview.htm -- Another look at the different types of interviews.