

Interview - A Key to Success

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Abstract: *Preparing for the Interview is extremely important, but while preparing, make yourself thorough with various aspects of the prospective employer and profile still leaving enough scope for the spontaneity in the interview. Being prepared gives you the confidence to handle it well. This papers will give you the brief introduction about the concept of Interviews, Advantages and Disadvantages of interview technique and also provides you tips for the interview.*

Key Words: *Communication, Employment, Interviews, Interviewer, Interviewee, Resume.*

1. INTRODUCTION:

An effective selection and placement of individuals connotes an activity that involves looking for and recruiting the appropriate kind of people in an organization and placing him into job that would be apt and right as per his qualifications and experience. In the present day's scenario, almost the entire corporate world is on the lookout for an individual who possesses a positive attitude coupled with a surge of enthusiasm, an adroitness and dexterity along with a passion to learn and the capability to become the leader of an assemblage of young professionals, who too are proficient of thinking immensely and are able to build a vision and chalk out a growth path for the company where they would be employed. One of the major objectives of conducting an interview by HR executives of a company is to evolve a crystal-clear view of a candidate in terms of his/her earlier accomplishments and achievements, previous experience attained during his previous job assignments in various companies and make a candid assessment of his compatibility in the company. A recruitment interview is generally carried out to evaluate the talent, experience and an overall background and arrive at a decision on the compatibility of the candidate of the candidate for a specific role where he would be expected to demonstrate his or her excellence in the tasks assigned as per the job description for the individual is selected. Interviews are generally considered to be more of a personal interaction which occurs across the table among the representatives of the HR team of the recruiting company and the candidates directly. There are some companies who may conduct a single interview and finalize the selection of a candidate although there are certain corporate organizations who may consider it necessary to carry out two or more rounds with eliminations in every round in order to fine tune the list of candidates enabling the selection of the best of the candidates by the senior-most Management who would ultimately assess the candidate's suitability in the organization. There is hardly any doubt that the present day's workplace has become a highly stressed area with several factors, such as, stiff competition, targets to be achieved, performance reports, dead-lines followed by inter-personal behavior with colleagues and superiors in the workplace which is of paramount significance. Stress management plays an important role and employees need to possess a high level of stress management technique to survive and make a burgeoning success of their careers in the organization. The term, "Interview" is a derivation from the word, 'interview' which means 'the sight between.' In fact, an interview is a vocal communication between two or more than two persons for a particular objective and is therefore a frontal interactive part where a person who an interviewer is, enquires the prospective candidate particular queries to evaluate his suitability for recruitment in the company. In other words, interviews are a sociological as well as a psychological instrument. According to P V Young, an interview is defined as "a systematic method which enables a person to make an entry imaginatively into the internal life of another person, who is generally comparatively stronger than him". According to Hader and Lindman, "an interview consists of an interplay of dialogues or spoken answers between two people or between several persons".

1.1. OBJECTIVES OF THE INTERVIEW:

- An interview provides a chance to the interviewer to recognize thoroughly the inherent attributes about the candidate. The information gleaned through the application submitted by the applicant – the missing inputs and assessments is confirmed by conversing with the candidate. It offers an evaluate whether the information about previous experience and training provided by the candidate is vindicated by him or not. The physical appearance, proficiency to converse, approach, nature, of the applicant are also judged at the time of interview.

- An interview is conducted not only to recognize the traits of the applicant but also to expend it as an opportunity to provide him exact information about the company and the job. On the contrary, an applicant is also furnished with full information about the nature of the job, hours of work, perquisites such as medical facilities, and opportunities for advancement, employee benefits and services. Therefore, the applicant can take an immediate decision of joining or deciding against taking up the new job.
- An interview also imparts an occasion to generate and augment the goodwill of the company. The interviewee should be dealt with due courtesy. If a candidate is not selected, then the reasons for the same should be elucidated along with constructive suggestions.

2. TYPES OF INTERVIEWS:

Each corporate organization frames its own policies and techniques for selection based on which they take their decision on the kinds of interviews that they wish to carry out. The job requirements and the job profiles could be a significant aspect that would influence the various kinds of interviews, which could be of various types:

- **Structured or Formal Interviews**

In this type of an interview, the interviewer has completed his homework and has prepared a set of questions that are required to be asked, depending on the type of candidates that the interviewer would be facing, such as, the academic qualifications, the professional training of the candidates, the job requirements of the role and several other factors that would be necessary for the selection of the suitable candidate. In fact, it is a standardized method of conducting the job interview, where employer frames the interview questions that would be focused on the skills and abilities of interviewee and candidate is asked the precise questions in the same order. The consistent scale for assessing the candidates is also framed and the interviewees are graded on an identical scale. In general, employers use this format of the interview at the time when they need to assess the candidates impartially. Since the questions are pre-determined; a ranking system is always in place in order that there is hardly any possibility for an unfair or a subjective assessment. This assists the interviewers to circumvent any legal issues relating to biased employment practices. The emphasis of the employers is on the precise aptitudes and capabilities that are needed for the position. While the questions are concentrated on specific skills, this style of the interview is often considered to be a more effective technique for examining a candidate's probable operation on the job. The candidates also feel more self-assured that they are being assessed centered on their skills, rather than any independent factors. As the queries are the alike for every candidate and asked in the equivalent order, every candidate knows that he or she stands an equal opportunity to provide the same information.

- **Unstructured or Informal Employment Interviews**

In case of informal or unstructured interviews, there could be a set of prefixed questions to be asked from the candidates, but the questions are altered based on the candidates' performance. which is called indirect employment interviews. The flow of the interviews is not fixed and can vary depending on the conversations. While the interviewer might have a few sets of questions made ready before the interview, the direction of the interview is rather unplanned, and the flow of questions is grounded on the direction of the discussion. These kinds of interviews are often viewed as less frightening than formal interviews. However, since each interviewee is questioned several questions, this method is not always considered to be reliable. The unstructured interviews may be, by design of the interviewer or may be due to the spontaneity of the event—the candidates might find himself/herself in an unstructured interview after being introduced to a potential employer by a friend or while dropping off a resume in person at a location in which you wish to work.

- **Panel Interviews**

A panel interview, as the name suggests, constitutes more than a single person conducting the interviews. The numbers could vary from 3 to 6 persons depending on the circumstances. Panel interviews might appear to be daunting as a candidate has to confront several interviewers simultaneously. However, they do not have to be terrifying. These panel interviews are organized by an assemblage of two or more interviewers. Characteristically, a single candidate is seated in a room with quite a few people who are employed in the organization - these assessors comprise the panel. In certain instances, the panel will certainly raise enquiries to various candidates concurrently. There is a likelihood that, each of the interviewers in the panel will question the candidate at least one of the questions. However, where there are numerous job pursuers, the interviewers may inquire each applicant one query at a time. The candidate should make an effort to engage with all interviewers, and not just emphasize on the most departing participant. While one of the motives, companies conduct panel interviews is to save time and another is to comprehend how candidates will function in cases were candidates are required to work in groups. To that end, candidates need to be ready for rapid fire questions, cross firing of questions from various interviewers, follow-up questions and for the interviewers to hypothetically have a variety of views and standpoints from each other.

- **Stress Interviews:**

Stress Interviews are interviews where interviewers continuously exert pressure on the candidates to check his/her responses and behavior. This kind of technique is characteristically used for complex roles, which require candidates to absorb stress and face innumerable challenging situations right from day one. Stress interviews come in several shapes and sizes, ranging from mildly disconcerting to downright aggressive. The interviewer is not simply taking pleasure in rendering a candidate uncomfortable; rather, the foremost intention is to place the candidate on the defensive to ascertain how a person perform under intense pressure. The reason is that the manner in which a candidate responds under pressure at the time of the interview is symptomatic of the way the person will manage similar situations, while on the job. The creation of an fervently disordered situation puts candidates under extreme psychological stress is to observe if they will snap, maintain their calm or even succeed under pressure. There is hardly any doubt that stress interviews can be controversial since they create a sensitive and emotionally charged relationship amid the applicant and the hiring manager and thereby, the company. There are times when even the most successful applicants will refuse to accept an offer considering the nature of the interview alone. The significance of getting through this process is to remain calm and unemotional throughout the interview which is not an easy task, except for several conditions when a candidate is provoked or disrespected and keeping a level head is not as easy as it may appear. Further, the candidate should always accept in his mind that it is he, who is interviewing the company in a similar manner that they are interviewing you.

4. PERSONAL INTERVIEW TIPS:

In the Corporate sector, large companies and huge business organizations conduct interviews through their Human Resources departments with a motive to assess and comprehend the key motive for carry out an interview. The foremost purpose for holding both campus interviews, as well as, in-house interviews is to assess the following qualities:

- ✓ Confidence Level
- ✓ Communication skills
- ✓ Positive Attitude towards work
- ✓ Inter-personal relationships with peers and colleagues
- ✓ Adjustment in the organization
- ✓ Developing a rapport with all employees in various departments



Figure 4. Top Interview Tips

Apart from experienced candidates, there are freshers too who appear for interviews and being freshers, they do not possess the requisite professional experience. In such cases, the evaluation of these candidates is profoundly reliant on the way in which, they maintain their demeanor during the entire interview.

4.1. The first impression is at all times the last impression:

Which can mar or make an Interview successful and sets the tone for the rest of the interview. Some of the common errors and mistakes that people generally make are the resume that they present to the interviewers.

- A resume containing grammatical and spelling errors are summarily rejected. It is therefore recommended that quality time should be spent while creating a resume with multiple proof readings.
- The shoddy dresser – One of the first impressions that a candidate creates over the minds of the interviewers is the way in which he is dressed. A slovenly dressed person and filthy and unpolished shoes are not a valid excuse and leaves a negative impression that the person is totally careless.
- Undoubtedly, a latecomer cuts a sorry face in front of the interviewers. It immediately gives the impression that the candidate does not understand the importance of deadlines. If a candidate is getting late due to unavoidable reasons, he should take an initiative to inform the concerned authority.
- Torn and improperly arranged documents creates an impression that the person appearing for the interview is totally messy and disorganized.

4.2. Research::

It is always a good habit of researching a company before the interview and consider what the operations of the company. Statements like “I did not get enough time to do so” or “I did not understand the content” leaves the impression that a person does not bother to devote time or ask anyone for help.

4.3. Body Language:

The body language of the candidate during the entire interview can either make or break your interview.

- A person is considered to be low on confidence when he does not have a solid and firm handshake.
- Leaning back on the chair gives a too relaxed look.
- Not looking at the recruiter or playing with something in your hand gives an impression of low confidence.
- Not modulating your voice appropriately can disturb the whole environment of the interview.

4.4. Be Honest:

It would come as a surprise to know how far honesty can take you in the interview process. Statements like “I can manage all things on my own” or “I do not have any weaknesses” can land you in trouble. Relating your weaknesses to personal aspects can operate in the candidates’ favor to a large extent.

Table 1: Interviewee vs Interviewer

What the Interviewee has	What the Interviewer looks for
Knowledge of the work	Skills and Knowledge for the Job
Abilities to relate with Others	Team Spirit and Confidence
Communication skills	Clarity, Accuracy, Politeness, People Skills
Motivation	Adaptability to work culture
Commitment to work	Potential Value and Contribution to the Organization

It is extremely important for the candidate to prepare for the Interview, although while preparing, ensure that he is thorough with the various aspects of the prospective employer and the profile still leaving enough scope for the spontaneity in the interview. Being prepared gives you the confidence to handle it also well.

5. INTERVIEW PROCESS:

5.1. Preparation for the day of the Interview:

- Sleep well before the interviews and have a healthy breakfast before leaving home as long day can be awaiting you. It will helps you to preserve the energy level high throughout the day even if you face the interviews in the latter half of the day.
- Plan your journey well and start on time. Plan for any unexpected delays. It is always in the candidates’ interest to reach the location a minimum of half an hour prior to the time of the interview rather than rushing to the venue totally exhausted, both mentally and physically.
- Stay calm throughout the day and do not get involved in any unnecessary altercations that would ruin the mood and hence divert your concentration.
- Do not forget to turn off your mobile before reaching the interview venue to avoid any last-minute embarrassment.

5.2. Preparing for the Employment Interviews:

- It is important that the candidate research about the organization well in advance. This would give him or her a chance to have an edge over unprepared candidates in the beginning itself. Visiting the website and studying various important aspects is the ideal manner to know more things about the organization in question.
- Analyzing the Work Explanation is extremely important before applying for any job. In case, you have not received the same, feel free to ask it from your college authorities or Placement Cell representatives. It is very useful insight to have before the actual interviews start. It is good to see whether the profile expectations or job responsibilities, salary offered, general terms and conditions match your aspirations. In case not, it is better to opt out of the process and not waste a seat which could be allotted to someone else.
- There are some typical technical and HR questions which are asked in every interview these days. These kinds of enquiries must be rehearsed and prepared well by candidates in advance to avoid any last-minute lapses. It is also important that these answers should not look rehearsed but should come out naturally.
- It is always recommended that dress code for the interview day is always planned in advance rather than leaving these things for the last minute.
- Carrying a well-maintained Placement Folder is a must for any prospective candidate looking out for a job. This folder must have detailed resume, passport size photos, all certificates, marksheets, documentary evidences of all trainings completed, trainings done and achievements.

5.3. DO'S FOR THE EMPLOYMENT INTERVIEWS:

- Always be punctual for the interviews from your side. Reach the venue at least 10 minutes prior to the slated time for the same. In case you are stuck in bad traffic or some unavoidable circumstances, do make a courtesy call to inform the concerned authority about the delay and sorry for that. That shall give the impression to the concerned person that at least you are responsible enough to notify them of this delay.
- Dress up decently for the interviews. Extremely loud clothes or casual shall go against you. Always take a permission when you enter the room and greet the employer/s. Wait till they ask you to take a seat and present your documents folder to them for their reference your documents.
- Always remember, non-verbal communication in terms of Body Language, Eye Contacts and Tone is very important too. Your body language must be positive and should reflect intent to complete every job. You should maintain Eye Contacts with the interviewer and with all in case of multiple interviewers from time to time. Your Tone shall be at right level. Very high levels reflect that you are trying to be aggressive and too low levels reflect you under confidence.
- Always remember that Employment Interviews is a two-way process. You as a candidate have a equal right to judge the company or profile offered in terms of your aspirations and desire. This can only happen when you are alert enough and ask relevant questions when you are given a chance to speak or ask questions.
- Show enthusiasm for the company and position on offer. Make sure you are aware of whatever you have written in your resume including projects, achievements, internships completed, educational credentials etc. Present all your strengths with relevant examples to support them. Even while presenting your weaknesses, always reflect how you are trying to eradicate or improve upon them.

5.4. DON'TS FOR EMPLOYMENT INTERVIEWS:

- Poor listening skills shall be a big hurdle in these interviews. Never be in a hurry to answer questions. Instead, listen the question carefully before starting to answer it. Crisp and to the point answers are what employers look at. Never feel shy of asking the question again in case you have failed to understand it properly.
- Never loose on confidence if things are not going your way. Do not loose heart if one or two questions are not answered to your satisfaction. Answer one question at a time and you shall then have a chance to cover ground in next set of questions.
- Do not interpose the interviewer when he/she is speaking or asking questions. Do not try to hide facts or tell a lie. Lies can put you in an awkward position which could have no way coming out.
- Do not answer in simple 'Yes' or 'No'. Try and explain all answers in detail to involve the interviewers and support all the facts shared by you.
- Always discuss good things about your experience during internships, live projects etc. and especially with your previous bosses or supervisors. Never say bad things about anyone you have dealt with in your previous experiences. Stating negative things can go against you in terms of handing you over some demerit points for it.
- Do not discuss on salary part, holidays, perks offered etc. unless and until the interviewer start the discussion on same.

5.6. ADVANTAGES OF EMPLOYMENT INTERVIEWS:

- Any misunderstanding incurred due to mistake in resume or written exam held earlier than the face to face interviews can be clarified in this. Employment interviews help creating a chemistry or bond between the interviewee and interviewer which helps out both parties to clear all their doubts for taking better decisions for the long term.
- The interviewer has a chance to collect the primary information in face to face interviews which is otherwise not possible to collect through other sources like resume, reference letters etc. It also gives an interviewer a fair chance to verify all factual information as claimed by the candidate during initial stages of the selection process or written documents submitted by him/her.
- Interviewer or panel of interviewers have full authority and flexibility to ask any question to the interviewee by changing the course of interviews to get more and more details. They need not follow a fixed pattern as in other rounds like written test, Group Discussions, Extempore etc. Free flow of information leads to retrieval of more information which comes handy to the interviewer/s.
- The face to face interview process is least costly as minimal resources are required for same as compared to other means of testing or selecting the candidates at disposal to the interviewer/s during the whole selection process.
- Interviews are not only beneficial for the interviewees where their horizons of knowledge are increased, but also for the interviewers where they can learn lot of things by interacting with fresh talent and pass outs. It helps them revisiting their campus days and hence connect with the world of academia.

5.7. DISADVANTAGES OF EMPLOYMENT INTERVIEWS:

- Biggest drawback of the interviews method is the contribution of individual human element which can lead to biasness and distortion of results. This way, many deserving candidates loose out which is even a loss to any organization where they lose out on probable assets.
- Employment interviews are always very time consuming. Identifying right candidates to be interviewed, preparation of the interview, arranging panel of interviewers, taking interviews, compilation of results etc. seizes a major share of time.
- Inefficiency of the interviewer in terms of lack of experience can lead to rejection of good candidates and selection of bad candidates for the offered profile. This could be a waste of such a big exercise where lot of resources as well as time has been spent by the organization and result is opposite to what was desired.

6. CONCLUSION:

There are multiple ways to test a candidate for employment purpose like written test, extempore, group discussions, skype interviews etc. however, face-to-face or personal interviews remain the most trusted and followed means to hire a candidate. The insight which you can get through these interviews is no match or comparable to anything else. Whether the case is to hire freshers with nil experience or positions which require specific or vast experience, personal interviews stays to be the most preferred medium used by any employer. Other means to shortlist candidates can always be used as a supplement or additional steps, but personal interviews put a stamp to either final hiring or rejection of the candidate for the role being hired. The biggest advantage personal interviews have is that there is always a two way communication and not only gives chance to an employer to judge the candidate but also gives an equivalent prospect to the candidates to check their suitability to the profile on offer, ask relevant questions to the interviewing person to pronounce their fitment in the company's culture, whether the offer match their aspirations etc. to make a more informed decision for mutual benefit of both parties. Wrong selection due to any factor could be a big loss in terms of time, money, manpower hours etc. invested in the whole exercise of hiring candidates which can take months sometimes from initial step of connecting with the candidate and their joining the organization. There is no scope for any error when such high stakes are involved. Hence, personal interviews are most trusted way to move forward. In short, employment interviews are here to stay, and all prospective students must take them very seriously and prepare well for it. Proper research before the interviews would be very handy and lead to success overall. Similarly, for the organizations, employment interviews are very important, and they should invest right manpower in terms of experience and aptitude to conduct these to capture right candidates for different roles in their organizations from long term perspective.

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