

GROUP AND PANEL INTERVIEW TIPS

Group Interviews

Group interviews usually involve two or more candidates interviewing for the same position. In addition to listening to your answers, interviewers will observe how you interact with others. Group interviews typically consist of one of two formats: the interviewer(s) may ask traditional interview questions to have each candidate discuss their qualifications in front of the others, or the interviewer(s) may have candidates discuss an issue or solve a problem collectively, which allows them to evaluate teamwork and communication skills.

Tips for Group Interviews

- Arrive early for the interview (about 10 minutes) so you have a little extra time to settle in, become comfortable with the atmosphere, and review your preparation before entering the interview room.
- Introduce yourself to your peer interviewees before the group interview begins. You'll be more comfortable asserting yourself as well as supporting their ideas during the interview.
- Make sure you demonstrate good teamwork and group communication skills. Do not “compete” with the other interviewees.
 - Be courteous. Don't answer every question first, while also making sure you give yourself the opportunity to comment on each question you are asked.
 - Interviewers may be looking for leadership skills, but this does not mean you should talk over others or try to be the loudest. Instead, act as a facilitator and/or equal team player. This shows that you are confident and willing to listen to others.
 - Include quieter people. If someone hasn't said much, ask their opinion. This shows you are considerate and a real team player (don't defer to someone else when it's your chance to speak).
 - Praise others for their good ideas. This is a good way to seem friendly and a little authoritative at the same time. Be sincere with compliments and offer them sporadically.
 - Don't be shy. Speak up without cutting other people off or going over your allotted time. While you want to make sure you stand out, you also want to show your politeness.
 - Be memorable for the right reasons.

Useful phrases to promote teamwork and overall interview flow:

- “That's a good idea - I agree with that and also think...”
- “I understand what [candidate's name] said, however I feel differently because...”
- “I also would like to add that...”
- (To a quiet person) “What's your opinion on this?” or “What is your perspective?”
- “I had a similar experience, but... (explain how yours was different and what you learned)”
- Be sure to thank the interviewer(s), and say something like, “I really enjoyed meeting you today. Best of luck to you!” to the other interviewees.

Panel Interviews

Panel interviews are interviews that involve more than one interviewer. The interviewers will be working together to make a decision about you as a candidate, so be sure to engage and build rapport with each.

- Find out who will be on the panel ahead of time, if possible. Research their roles within the organization and anticipate questions they may ask or qualifications they may be paying particular attention to.
- Make eye contact with all interviewers evenly throughout the interview.
- Ask questions of each of the interviewers at the end of the interview. Just as each interviewer has a different function within the organization, each also has a unique perspective.
- Get a business card from all the interviewers you interact with, and send unique thank-you notes to each.

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Wilbur Cross Building 202
860.486.3013
career.uconn.edu



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