

HOW **2** guide: Mastering Non-Traditional Interviews

Most of us have experience with the traditional job interview which involves a one-on-one meeting with a recruiter. However, companies are increasingly using other types of interviews to save money, be more efficient, and screen large numbers of candidates.

Telephone

The telephone interview is often used to screen a pool of candidates. This kind of interview is often the first contact with an employer. Qualified candidates that perform well in the phone interview are typically advanced to the next phase of the selection process. Here are some tips to ensure you can effectively sell yourself:

- Use an enthusiastic tone of voice and explicitly express your interest in the job. Remember that you do not have the advantage of non-verbal communication and body language.
- If possible, use a land line, which is typically clearer and doesn't have a delay. (Turn cell phone off.)
- Conduct the interview in a quiet room where there will be NO interruptions or distractions.
- Dress professionally. Even though they cannot see you, it will keep you in the right frame of mind.
- Have your resume and notes organized in front of you, including the questions you want to ask at the end.
- At the beginning of the call, confirm who will call you back if you get disconnected.
- If you need time to think about an answer, let them know. Otherwise, your silence will be confusing.

Panel

You will be asked questions from a group of company representatives. The challenge here is that it is difficult to build the kind of connection with the interviewers that you can with a personal interview.

- When offered a seat, select one that allows you to easily see all panel members, like the head of the table.
- When answering questions, direct most of your attention to the person that asked the question, but make sure to make periodic eye contact with all members of the panel.
- Another great technique to utilize within a panel interview is to cross reference the latest question with a previous one. For example, "Jane, I believe student success should be at the center of all our endeavors. But as Frank noted earlier, there are numerous impediments to the learning process. Therefore, I have..."
- Use the names of the panel members frequently while answering the questions. This builds connection and demonstrates strong interpersonal skills.
- If possible, write down the names of the panel members and jot down notes related to their questions. While the panel probably functions as a team, it is likely each person has an agenda or their own concerns.
- When asking questions, direct them to the person most appropriate to answer.
- If possible, ask in advance who will be in attendance so that you know the level of staff you will be interacting with, and so you can do some advance research.

Group

In this situation, all candidates interview at the same time in the same room. For job seekers, this is also one of the most stressful types of interviews since you are competing directly with the person sitting next to you.

- Don't be shy. Speak clearly and forcefully, but don't cut other people off or go over your allotted time.
- Prepare and practice a 2-minute introduction summarizing your education, your experience, your career goals and how this position will fit into your future plan.
- Arrive early. This will allow you extra time to meet the interviewers and other candidates, as well as get comfortable in your surroundings.
- Be courteous and professional at all times, even if others are not.