**6. MOCK INTERVIEW**

What Is a Mock Interview?

**•••**

BY

[**ALISON DOYLE**](https://www.thebalancecareers.com/alison-doyle-2058389)

Updated on January 25, 2022

A mock interview, also known as a practice interview, is a simulation of an actual [job interview](https://www.thebalancecareers.com/what-to-expect-during-a-job-interview-2063897). It provides job seekers with an opportunity to practice for an interview and receive feedback on their interviewing skills.

Mock interviews are an ideal way to practice for real job interviews because you are in a situation that mirrors an actual interview with a company. When you review your interview with the interviewer, you'll be able to modify your responses and interview behavior, if necessary.

Here's what you need to know about mock interviews, how they can help you prepare for job interviews, and how to find someone to practice interviewing with.

What is a Mock Interview?

A typical mock interview is a practice job interview held with a professional career counselor. A mock interview helps you learn how to answer difficult questions, develop interview strategies, improve your communication skills, and reduce your stress before an actual job interview.

During a mock interview, the interviewer may use a [semi-structured interview](https://www.thebalancecareers.com/what-is-a-semi-structured-interview-2061632) format rather than asking a formal list of questions.

Benefits of Practice Interviews

Practice interviews familiarize users with the interview process and allow users to practice answering common interview questions with confidence. Video practice interviews are particularly helpful in that you can review not only your answers, but your body language, eye contact, and interview attire.

Types of Mock Interviews

Many college career centers and career counselors offer in-person mock interviews. If you're a college student or graduate, check with your career office to see if they provide in-person, phone, or video mock interviews.1

If you're not affiliated with a college or university, a [career coach or counselor](https://www.thebalancecareers.com/how-to-choose-a-career-counselor-or-coach-2059777) is another option for practice interviewing. Also check with your local library—some offer free interviewing coaching and preparation.

You can make an appointment with a mock interviewer, providing them with information on either a specific company with whom you are interviewing or your general career field. This will help them to create mock interview questions similar to those you will eventually encounter in your actual interviews.

The more specific the information you can provide for your mock interviewer, the better. The mock interviewer will often record the interview with a video camera.

Some career centers and career counselors also offer mock phone and online video interviews and will record your interview on a tape recorder or with a webcam.

After the mock interview (which usually lasts about 30 minutes), the interviewer will review the interview with you and provide feedback.

Examples of Mock Interview Questions

The questions asked during a mock interview are typically the more general employer [interview questions](https://www.thebalancecareers.com/job-interview-questions-and-answers-2061204) that are asked during a first-round or screening interview.

When you [schedule a mock interview](https://www.thebalancecareers.com/best-interview-coaching-services-5091913) with your college career center or a career coach, provide them with as much information as possible about your interests and goals. The more information the counselor has, the better able he or she will be to tailor the questions to fit the actual interviews you will have.

**Job-Specific Interview Questions**

For candidates who know what type of position, career field, or industry they are interested in, [job-specific interview questions](https://www.thebalancecareers.com/tips-for-answering-job-specific-interview-questions-2061451) may be asked.

For example, if you are searching for a tech job, the interviewer can ask a series of [tech interview questions](https://www.thebalancecareers.com/information-technology-it-job-interview-questions-2061206) to familiarize you with the types of questions that will be asked and to help you frame good responses.

If you're interviewing for a summer job, as another example, the interviewer can ask you the same [questions](https://www.thebalancecareers.com/job-interview-questions-and-answers-2061204) you will be asked by the people who hire for summer positions.

**Company-Specific Interview Questions**

If you are using a mock interview to [prepare for a job interview](https://www.thebalancecareers.com/practice-interview-tips-and-techniques-2062805) you have scheduled with a company, the interviewer may be able to ask you actual questions that are asked by hiring managers at the company. [Glassdoor.com](https://www.thebalancecareers.com/glassdoor-com-salaries-reviews-and-jobs-2060040) has company interview questions contributed by site visitors for many companies.

Do take the time to prepare responses to the questions you will be asked during a mock interview. This is an opportunity to practice interviewing and to make sure that you have [the interview skills](https://www.thebalancecareers.com/winning-interview-skills-2061350) to make the best impression on your interviewer.

How to Prepare for a Mock Interview

Be sure to take your mock interview as seriously as you would an actual interview. Get ready for the interview just as you would for an interview with a hiring manager:

* Arrive 10 - 15 minutes early, and bring your resume and any other materials you would bring to a real interview.
* Bring a notebook to take notes on what your mock interviewer tells you.
* Dress in professional [interview attire](https://www.thebalancecareers.com/best-interview-attire-for-every-type-of-interview-2061364).
* Be sure all your technology is in working order when you're participating in a video interview.

You should also prepare answers to general interview questions before arriving. Here's more information on these types of [general interview questions](https://www.thebalancecareers.com/top-job-interview-questions-and-answers-2061226), including sample questions and answers you can review to get ready for your interview.

If you have a mock interview to prepare for a specific job or career field, also review these [job-specific interview questions](https://www.thebalancecareers.com/tips-for-answering-job-specific-interview-questions-2061451).

Set Up Your Own In-Person Mock Interview

If you're not in a situation where you can participate in a [mock interview](https://www.thebalancecareers.com/how-to-prepare-for-a-job-interview-2061361) with a professional counselor, you can recruit a family member or friend to help you practice interviewing. The more you prepare, the more comfortable you will be with interviewing.

Just as you would with a professional career counselor, provide your friend or relative with a copy of your resume and lists of the general and job-specific interview questions you think you’ll be asked. Dress as you would for a real interview, and remember to practice using an appropriate tone of voice and [body language](https://www.thebalancecareers.com/body-language-tips-for-your-next-job-interview-2060576) as you respond to your “interviewer’s” questions.

Online Mock Interviews

Another option for mock interviewing is utilizing an online program or application. Online practice interview programs provide job seekers with a pressure-free way to prepare and practice for upcoming job interviews. Some of these programs are very basic; users are given a series of random interview questions (either verbally or in writing) and type in answers. While these programs get users thinking about how to answer various questions, they do not allow users to practice verbalizing responses.

More sophisticated interview practice programs allow users to select questions related to their particular career field or the type of interview for which they are preparing (i.e., [behavioral interview](https://www.thebalancecareers.com/behavioral-job-interviews-2058575), [group interview](https://www.thebalancecareers.com/group-interview-questions-and-interviewing-tips-2061157), etc.). A pre-recorded video of a mock interviewer asks a series of questions; the user must then orally answer each question.

Sometimes users are given a time limit, so they learn to answer questions concisely. The program will record these audio answers, or users may be able to record themselves via video. After the simulated interview, the user can review their recording, or email the file to a friend, family member, or career counselor for review.

Some programs even allow users to conduct live [online interviews](https://www.thebalancecareers.com/online-job-interviews-2064216) with actual career counselors. The interviewer records the interview and then critiques the user's performance.

Use LinkedIn's free [interview preparation tool](https://www.linkedin.com/interview-prep/assessments/urn:li:fs_assessment:%281,a%29/question/urn:li:fs_assessmentQuestion:%2810011,aq11%29/) to practice and record your responses to common interview questions and get feedback.

Fee-Based Interview Programs

Be aware, however, that some online practice interview programs cost money, particularly the programs that record your interview or involve actual career counselors. Thoroughly review any online practice interview program; make sure the program offers what you want at a cost that fits your budget.

Key Takeaways

* Mock interviews are a great way to practice for real job interviews.
* College career centers, career counselors, and career coaches offer one-on-one mock interview services.
* Online interviewing tools provide job seekers with an easy way to prepare and practice for upcoming job interviews.