

INTERVIEWS

Interview I

Screening Questions

Name: Shamila Nicole

Age: 22

Occupation: Student, UON Kisumu Campus, studying Environmental Science

Residence: Kisumu

Location: UON Kisumu Campus grounds

Time: Saturday, 1.30 P.M.

Frequency: Once or twice a year with classmates

Interview Notes

1. Tell me about the last holiday you took with your friends. What was the experience like?

- Last semester break, five of us from my Environmental Science class took a 4-day trip to Kakamega Forest. We stayed at a research station and spent our days hiking, bird watching, and learning about the unique ecosystem. It was both educational and fun to explore Kenya's only tropical rainforest together.

2. What aspects of planning a group holiday do you find most challenging?

- As students, our biggest challenge is always the budget. We have to be very creative to find affordable accommodations and activities. Also, coordinating everyone's schedules around part-time jobs and family commitments can be tricky.

3. Can you describe a moment of tension or disagreement during a group holiday? How was it resolved?

- There was a disagreement about how much time to spend on structured research activities versus free exploration. We resolved it by creating a flexible schedule that included both, and allowed people to opt-out of activities they weren't interested in.

4. How do you and your friends typically make decisions about activities or itineraries during the trip?

- We usually create a WhatsApp group where everyone can suggest ideas. Then we have a meeting to discuss and vote on the options. We try to ensure that everyone's top choice makes it into the final itinerary.

5. What strategies have you found effective for maintaining harmony within the group during a holiday?

- We've found that assigning roles helps a lot. One person is in charge of navigation, another handles the budget, someone else is responsible for meals, and so on. This way, everyone feels involved and responsible for the trip's success.

6. Tell me about a particularly positive experience you've had while on holiday with friends. What made it special?

- During our Kakamega trip, we had an unexpected encounter with a group of colobus monkeys while on a hike. Watching these rare primates together and discussing their behavior was an incredible bonding experience that combined our shared academic interests with the excitement of wildlife viewing.

7. How do you handle differences in preferences or travel styles within your group?

- We try to be upfront about our preferences before the trip and find compromises. For example, some of us are early risers while others like to sleep in, so we often plan morning activities that are optional.

8. What roles does technology play in group holiday experiences, from planning to during the trip?

- We rely heavily on our smartphones. WhatsApp for planning and communication, M-Pesa for splitting costs, Google Maps for navigation, and iNaturalist for identifying plants and animals

during our trips. We also use Instagram to share our experiences with friends back home.

9. If you could change one thing about your past group holiday experiences, what would it be and why?

- I wish we had better ways to divide tasks and responsibilities. Sometimes it feels like the same people always end up doing most of the planning and organization, which can lead to resentment.

10. What advice would you give to someone planning their first holiday with a group of friends?

- Start planning early and be clear about expectations, especially regarding budget and the type of activities everyone wants to do. Also, build in some free time for unexpected discoveries or just relaxing. Some of the best moments happen when you're not following a strict schedule.

Interview II

Screening Questions

Name: Winnie Achieng' Otieno

Age: 28

Occupation: Teacher, Kisumu Girls High School

Residence: Ahero, Kisumu

Location: Café at Mega Plaza, Kisumu

Time: Wednesday, 5.30 P.M.

Frequency: Thrice a year

Interview Notes

1. Tell me about the last holiday you took with your friends. What was the experience like?

- Last December, I went on a 5-day trip to Mombasa with four colleagues. We stayed at a beachfront hotel in Nyali and spent our time exploring the beaches, visiting Fort Jesus, and enjoying the coastal cuisine. It was a wonderful break from our usual routines in Kisumu.

2. What aspects of planning a group holiday do you find most challenging?

- Coordinating everyone's schedules is quite challenging, especially since we all work at different schools with varying term dates. Also, agreeing on a budget that works for everyone can be tricky, as we have different financial situations.

3. Can you describe a moment of tension or disagreement during a group holiday? How was it resolved?

- We had a disagreement about whether to spend more time at the beach or exploring the Old Town. We resolved it by splitting into two groups for a day, allowing each group to do what they preferred, and then sharing our experiences over dinner.

4. How do you and your friends typically make decisions about activities or itineraries during the trip?

- We usually create a WhatsApp group before the trip where everyone can suggest activities. Then we discuss and vote on the options, trying to ensure that everyone gets to do at least one thing they're really excited about.

5. What strategies have you found effective for maintaining harmony within the group during a holiday?

- We've found that having some flexibility in our plans helps a lot. We also make sure to have some downtime where people can rest or do their own thing. And we always have a group check-in each evening to discuss the next day's plans and address any concerns.

6. Tell me about a particularly positive experience you've had while on holiday with friends. What made it special?

- During our Mombasa trip, we took a sunset dhow cruise along Tudor Creek. The combination of the beautiful scenery, the gentle sea breeze, and the laughter and stories we shared made it an unforgettable experience. It really brought us closer as friends.

7. How do you handle differences in preferences or travel styles within your group?

- We try to balance different preferences by alternating activities. For example, we might visit a historical site in the morning for those interested in culture, then spend the afternoon at the beach for those who want to relax. We also allow for some individual or small group activities.

8. What roles does technology play in group holiday experiences, from planning to during the trip?

- We rely heavily on WhatsApp for planning and communication. During the trip, we use Google Maps for navigation and apps like TripAdvisor for finding restaurants. We also use M-Pesa a lot for splitting costs and paying for activities.

9. If you could change one thing about your past group holiday experiences, what would it be and why?

- I wish we had a better way to document and share our experiences during and after the trip. We take lots of photos, but they often end up scattered across different people's phones and social media accounts.

10. What advice would you give to someone planning their first holiday with a group of friends?

- Communication is key. Be clear about expectations, budget, and what kind of experience everyone is hoping for. Also, be prepared to compromise and go with the flow sometimes. Remember, the most important thing is enjoying time with your friends, not sticking rigidly to a plan.

Interview III

Screening Questions

Name: Otieno Ochieng'

Age: 35

Occupation: Manager, Kisumu Ports Authority

Residence: Mamboleo, Kisumu

Location: Dunga Beach, Kisumu

Time: Saturday, 10.23 A.M.

Frequency: 2-3 times a year with family or friends

Interview Notes

1. Tell me about the last holiday you took with your friends. What was the experience like?

- Last August, I went on a week-long safari to Masai Mara with five friends from work. We stayed at a tented camp and spent our days on game drives, watching the wildebeest migration. It was an incredible experience to witness such a spectacle of nature together.

2. What aspects of planning a group holiday do you find most challenging?

- The biggest challenge is usually aligning everyone's leave days. Working at the port means we have different shift patterns, so finding a time when we can all get away together can be quite a puzzle.

3. Can you describe a moment of tension or disagreement during a group holiday? How was it resolved?

- During our Masai Mara trip, there was a debate about whether to splurge on a hot air balloon ride. It was expensive, and not everyone was keen.

We resolved it by having those who wanted to do the balloon ride pay for it themselves, while the rest of the group did an early morning game drive.

4. How do you and your friends typically make decisions about activities or itineraries during the trip?

- We usually have a group meeting each evening to plan the next day. Everyone gets a chance to suggest activities, and we try to reach a consensus. If we can't agree, we sometimes split into smaller groups for different activities.

5. What strategies have you found effective for maintaining harmony within the group during a holiday?

- Respect for each other's preferences is crucial. We also make sure everyone gets a chance to choose an activity or a restaurant. Having some alone time or downtime is also important to prevent tensions from building up.

6. Tell me about a particularly positive experience you've had while on holiday with friends. What made it special?

- One evening in the Mara, we had a bush dinner under the stars. Sharing a meal, listening to Maasai stories, and gazing at the incredible night sky together was magical. It was one of those moments where you feel deeply connected to your friends and to nature.

7. How do you handle differences in preferences or travel styles within your group?

- We try to have a mix of activities that cater to different interests. For example, some of us are early risers who love morning game drives, while others prefer to sleep in. We accommodate this by having some optional early morning activities.

8. What roles does technology play in group holiday experiences, from planning to during the trip?

- We use WhatsApp for planning and staying in touch. During the safari, we used wildlife identification apps to learn more about the animals we saw. We also use mobile banking apps like M-Pesa for splitting costs.

9. If you could change one thing about your past group holiday experiences, what would it be and why?

- I wish we had done more research on the local culture and customs before our trips. While we always try to be respectful, having more knowledge would have enriched our experiences and interactions with local communities.

10. What advice would you give to someone planning their first holiday with a group of friends?

- Be open-minded and flexible. Things may not always go according to plan, but often these unexpected moments become the best memories. Also, make sure everyone is clear on the budget from the start to avoid any financial tensions during the trip.

Interview IV

Screening Questions

Name: Truphena Atieno Owili

Age: 42

Occupation: Boutique owner, Kisumu CBD

Residence: Kisumu

Location: Impala Sanctuary, Kisumu

Time: Sunday, 3.00 P.M.

Frequency: Twice to Four times a year

Interview Notes

1. Tell me about the last holiday you took with your friends. What was the experience like?

- Last year, we took a 4-day trip to Rusinga Island on Lake Victoria. There were six of us, all small business owners from Kisumu. We stayed at a lakeside lodge, went fishing, visited local communities, and had long, inspiring conversations about our businesses and lives.

2. What aspects of planning a group holiday do you find most challenging?

- As business owners, it's challenging to find a time when all of us can step away from our shops and responsibilities. We also have different ideas about how much to spend, which can be tricky to navigate.

3. Can you describe a moment of tension or disagreement during a group holiday? How was it resolved?

- There was a disagreement about how much time to spend on 'business talk' versus pure relaxation. We resolved it by setting aside specific times for business discussions and brainstorming, leaving the rest of the time free for relaxation and other activities.

4. How do you and your friends typically make decisions about activities or itineraries during the trip?

- Before the trip, we have a planning meeting where everyone suggests ideas. We then vote on the top activities and create a loose itinerary. We always leave some free time for spontaneous decisions or relaxation.

5. What strategies have you found effective for maintaining harmony within the group during a holiday?

- We've found that assigning different responsibilities to each person helps. One person might be in charge of finding restaurants, another handles bookings, etc. This way, everyone feels involved and valued.

6. Tell me about a particularly positive experience you've had while on holiday with friends. What made it special?

- During our Rusinga Island trip, we spent an evening with a local women's cooperative, learning about their beadwork and sharing business experiences. It was inspiring and gave us all a fresh perspective on our own businesses back in Kisumu.

7. How do you handle differences in preferences or travel styles within your group?

- We try to balance structured activities with free time. Some of us like to plan everything, while others prefer spontaneity. By having a mix of both, everyone feels their travel style is accommodated.

8. What roles does technology play in group holiday experiences, from planning to during the trip?

- We use a shared Google Doc for planning and budgeting. During the trip, we use WhatsApp to stay connected and share photos. We also use apps like M-Pesa for easy bill splitting and payments.

9. If you could change one thing about your past group holiday experiences, what would it be and why?

- I wish we had more opportunities to connect with local communities in a meaningful way. While we do try to support local businesses, I feel we could do more to understand and contribute to the places we visit.

10. What advice would you give to someone planning their first holiday with a group of friends?

- Make sure everyone's expectations are aligned before the trip. Discuss budget, accommodation preferences, and the balance between planned

activities and free time. And most importantly, remember to be patient and enjoy the company – that's the whole point of a group holiday!

Interview V

Screening Questions

Name: Sheila Chepkorir

Age: 24

Occupation: Student at UON Kisumu Campus, studying Business Administration

Residence: Eldoret

Location: UON Kisumu Campus Grounds

Frequency: 1-2 times a year

Interview Notes

1. Tell me about the last holiday you took with your friends. What was the experience like?

- During the last long holiday, six of us from the Business Admin program took a week-long trip to Lamu. We rented a traditional Swahili house and spent our days exploring the old town, relaxing on the beaches, and taking dhow trips. It was a perfect mix of culture, relaxation, and adventure.

2. What aspects of planning a group holiday do you find most challenging?

- The most challenging part is usually getting everyone to commit to dates and pay their share of the costs on time. As the unofficial 'planner' of

the group, I often find myself chasing people for confirmations and payments, which can be stressful.

3. Can you describe a moment of tension or disagreement during a group holiday? How was it resolved?

- We had a disagreement about whether to spend more on accommodation or activities. Some wanted a more luxurious place to stay, while others preferred basic lodging and more money for experiences. We resolved it by finding a mid-range option and agreeing to cook some meals ourselves to save money for activities.

4. How do you and your friends typically make decisions about activities or itineraries during the trip?

- Before the trip, I usually create a shared Google Doc where everyone can add their must-do activities. Then we have a group call to discuss and prioritize. During the trip, we have a quick check-in each morning to finalize the day's plans.

5. What strategies have you found effective for maintaining harmony within the group during a holiday?

- We've learned to be flexible and to build in 'alone time' for everyone. We also have a rule that if someone has a complaint, they need to also propose a solution. This helps prevent negative attitudes from spreading.

6. Tell me about a particularly positive experience you've had while on holiday with friends. What made it special?

- In Lamu, we participated in a local cooking class where we learned to make traditional Swahili dishes. Laughing together as we tried to perfect our biryani and sharing the meal we created was a highlight of the trip. It gave us a deeper appreciation of the local culture and created lasting memories.

7. How do you handle differences in preferences or travel styles within your group?

- We try to balance different preferences by alternating activities. For example, we might spend one day sightseeing and the next day relaxing on the beach. We also sometimes split into smaller groups for certain activities and then reunite to share our experiences.

8. What roles does technology play in group holiday experiences, from planning to during the trip?

- We use a mix of apps - Google Docs and Sheets for planning, WhatsApp for communication, Splitwise for tracking expenses, and Instagram for sharing photos. During the trip, we also use TripAdvisor for finding restaurants and activities.

9. If you could change one thing about your past group holiday experiences, what would it be and why?

- I wish we were better at sticking to our budget. We often end up overspending, which can cause stress and arguments towards the end of the trip. Having a more robust system for tracking expenses in real-time would be helpful.

10. What advice would you give to someone planning their first holiday with a group of friends?

- Be clear about expectations from the start - discuss budget, accommodation preferences, and the balance between planned activities and free time. And don't try to do everything together all the time. It's okay, and often beneficial, to split up for some activities.

Interview VI

Screening Questions

Name: Bryant Khamunde

Age: 34

Occupation: Tech Entrepreneur and Lecturer at Maseno University

Residence: Maseno, Kisumu

Location: Maseno University Faculty Lounge

Time: Friday, 11.00 A.M.

Frequency: 1-2 times a year with colleagues or tech industry friends

Interview Notes

1. Tell me about the last holiday you took with your friends. What was the experience like?

- Last summer, I went on a 10-day tech-focused trip to Nairobi and Konza Technopolis with five other lecturers and tech entrepreneurs from Kisumu. We attended a conference, visited several startups, and had brainstorming sessions about bringing more tech opportunities to Western Kenya. We also managed to squeeze in a weekend safari to Nairobi National Park.

2. What aspects of planning a group holiday do you find most challenging?

- The biggest challenge is usually aligning everyone's schedules. As lecturers and entrepreneurs, we all have different commitments and deadlines. Also, balancing the professional development aspects of the trip with leisure activities can be tricky.

3. Can you describe a moment of tension or disagreement during a group holiday? How was it resolved?

- There was a debate about whether to extend our stay in Nairobi for more networking opportunities or stick to our original plan and return to Kisumu. We resolved it by taking a vote and agreeing that those who wanted to stay longer would do so at their own expense.

4. How do you and your friends typically make decisions about activities or itineraries during the trip?

- We use a collaborative project management tool, usually Trello, to list all potential activities and appointments. Each person can add, comment, and vote on ideas. We then have a video call to finalize the itinerary based on the most popular and feasible options.

5. What strategies have you found effective for maintaining harmony within the group during a holiday?

- We've found that setting clear objectives for the trip helps a lot. We also make sure to schedule some downtime and social activities. Having a mix of structured and unstructured time keeps everyone engaged without feeling overwhelmed.

6. Tell me about a particularly positive experience you've had while on holiday with friends. What made it special?

- During our Nairobi trip, we had an impromptu brainstorming session one evening that led to the idea for a new ed-tech startup. The energy and creativity in the room were incredible, and it reminded me why I love traveling with this group. We're not just friends, but also collaborators and innovators.

7. How do you handle differences in preferences or travel styles within your group?

- We try to accommodate different preferences by having a mix of activities. For example, during our free day, some of us visited the Nairobi National Museum while others preferred to meet with local entrepreneurs. We then reconvened in the evening to share our experiences.

8. What roles does technology play in group holiday experiences, from planning to during the trip?

- As tech enthusiasts, we leverage a lot of tools. We use Trello for planning, Slack for communication, Splitwise for expenses, and various travel apps for bookings and navigation. We also often use our trips to test new apps or technologies we're developing.

9. If you could change one thing about your past group holiday experiences, what would it be and why?

- I wish we were better at documenting and following up on the ideas and connections we make during these trips. Often, we have great discussions and meet interesting people, but the momentum can get lost once we return to our daily routines.

10. What advice would you give to someone planning their first holiday with a group of friends?

- Especially for a group with diverse professional interests like ours, it's important to establish a clear purpose for the trip while also leaving room for spontaneity and fun. Also, leverage everyone's strengths and connections in the planning process - you might be surprised at the unique experiences you can create together.