

LEARNER'S NOTES | 2018 - 2019

# TYPES OF INTERVIEW

- STRUCTURED AND UNSTRUCTURED INTERVIEW
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- INTERVIEWER'S PERSPECTIVE
- QUESTIONS TO ASK/NOT TO ASK

  
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# TYPES OF INTERVIEW

**STRUCTURED AND UNSTRUCTURED INTERVIEW**

**CLOSED QUESTIONS AND HYPOTHETICAL QUESTIONS**

**INTERVIEWER'S PERSPECTIVE**

**QUESTIONS TO ASK/NOT ASK DURING AN INTERVIEW**



## INTRODUCTION

The general thought process for any candidate before getting a job is to know the methods and tricks to get selected in an interview. The focus are more towards either academics or the normal interview tips like body language, facial expressions etc. But to get success in any aspect we must first identify various components of that aspect. Similarly before preparing for an interview concentrate more on the type of interview and the procedures followed in that type

Imagine that you are attending the interview of a multinational company and you have prepared exactly based on all the academic requirements. The panel members start to

ask the questions and you have answered perfectly. Suddenly the interview panel has started asking situational based questions or what if type of questions. You start to be dumbstruck at that moment. This is where knowing the standard method for each type comes into play. Below are the various types of interviews that would really help you to categorize the preparation based on the type.

### INTERVIEW - DEFINITION

Interview as defined by The Oxford Advanced Learner's dictionary:

“A formal meeting at which somebody is asked questions to see if they are suitable for a particular job or course of study of a college/university.”

The objective of interview includes:

- Verifies the information obtained through application form and tests.
- Helps obtain additional information from the applicant otherwise not available.
- Gives the candidate necessary facts and information about the job and the organization.

An interview has the above mentioned objectives but it may be held based on different types.

### TYPES OF INTERVIEWS

There are many types of interviews that an organization can arrange. It depends on the objectives of taking the interview. Some important types of interviews are stated below:

#### • **Personal interviews**

This type of interview is designed to obtain information through discussion and observation about how well the interviewee will perform on the job.

#### • **Evaluation interviews**

The interviews which take place annually to review the progress of the interviewee are called the evaluation interviews.

#### • **Persuasive interviews**

This type of interview is designed to sell someone a product or an idea.

- **Structured interviews**

Structured interviews tend to follow formal procedures; the interviewer follows a predetermined agenda or questions.

- **Unstructured interviews**

When the interview does not follow the formal rules or procedures. It is called an unstructured interview.

- **Counseling interviews**

This may be held to find out what has been troubling the workers and why someone has not been working.

- **Disciplinary interviews**

Disciplinary interviews are occurring when an employee has been accused of breaching the organization's rules and procedures.

- **Stress interview**

It is designed to place the interviewee in a stress situation in order to observe the interviewees reaction.

- **Public interviews**

These include political parties' radio-television and newspaper.

- **Informal or conversational interview**

In the conversational interview, no predetermined questions are asked, in order to remain as open and adaptable as possible to the interviewee's nature and priorities; during the interview the interviewer "goes with the flow".

- **Behavioral interviews**

Behavioral based interviewing is interviewing based on discovering how the interviewee acted in specific employment-related situations.

- **Standardized or open-ended interview**

Open-ended questions are asked to all interviewees; this approach facilitates faster interviews that can be more easily analyzed and compared.

- **Closed or fixed-response interview**

It is an interview where all interviewers ask the same questions and asked to choose answers from among the same set of alternatives. This format is useful for those not practiced in interviewing.

The above mentioned are the types of interviews. In we will focus on the types required for professional purposes.

## STRUCTURED AND UNSTRUCTURED INTERVIEW

### STRUCTURED INTERVIEW

Structured Interview is a type of personal interview, in which the interviewer uses a fixed format, wherein the questions are prepared in advance. It uses **highly systematised techniques of recording**. It is a method of quantitative research used for the purpose of the survey, which aims at presenting the **pre-set questions, in every interview, which the same sequence**. It is also known as a patterned or planned interview.



### IMPORTANCE OF STRUCTURED INTERVIEW

Following are the importance of structured interview.



- Employers use the structured job interview format when they want to **assess candidates impartially because questions**



are **pre-determined**, and there is a ranking system, there is little chance for unfair or subjective assessment.

- This helps interviewers **avoid any legal issues related to unfair hiring practices**.

A structured job interview also allows the employer to focus on the specific skills and abilities that are required for the position

- With questions focused on specific skills, a **structured job interview is often considered a more effective way of testing a candidate's potential performance** on the job.

- This interview format also **allows employers to assess hard-to-measure skills**, like interpersonal skills and oral communication.

Based on the above importance the employees encourage themselves to create structured interview.

### BENEFITS OF STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS

Research shows that structured interviews are twice as effective as unstructured when:

- They include questions based on job analysis.
- Each candidate is asked the same questions.
- They provide checks and balances by involving more than one person.
- Candidates are rated via detailed scales to create subjective data.
- They enhance consistency across candidates.
- They help in assessing the clarity of thoughts of the candidate.

These are some of the benefits of structured interviews.

### HOW TO PREPARE FOR STRUCTURED INTERVIEW

To prepare for a structured interview, make sure you **know how your skills and qualifications fit the particular job**. Look back at the job listing, and underline the job requirements. Then, **make a list of your skills and abilities that match those requirements**. Make sure you know the



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answers for the following structured interview questions.



- Tell me about yourself.
- What makes you an ideal candidate for this job?
- Why are you interested in this job?
- What are your strengths? Weaknesses?
- Would you be willing to travel for extensive periods of time for this job?
- Tell me about an incident during the past year in which you were particularly proud of your performance, and share it with us.
- Tell me about a time when you made a mistake at work. How did you handle the situation? What was the result?
- Describe a situation in which you had to deal with a conflict among team members. What actions did you take? What was the result?
- An angry client comes to your desk and complains that she has not received the reimbursement she was told was in the mail. How will you help her?
- You have an important project with an upcoming deadline, but then you are given a second project to be completed immediately. How would you handle this situation?

The way an interviewer rates candidates in a structured interview varies. **However, there is always a common rating scale for all candidates.** Typically, the interviewer rates candidates' skill level in a few key competencies. **These competencies might include key hard or soft skills necessary for the job.**

## UNSTRUCTURED INTERVIEW

Unstructured Interview is one that **does not use any fixed format**, however, the interviewer may have a few planned questions prepared beforehand.



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It is a qualitative research method, in which the **questions are prepared during the interview**. As the interview is unplanned, it **has an informal approach** where a friendly conversation takes place between the interviewer and interviewee.

The interviewer has the freedom to ask any questions and can also change the sequence or skip some questions that are planned in advance, however, it lacks uniformity. Further, the interviewer should possess deep knowledge and skill on the subject.

### **LIMITATIONS OF UNSTRUCTURED INTERVIEW**

Following are some of the limitations of unstructured interviews.



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- Unstructured interviews flow like an everyday conversation and tend to be **more informal** and open-ended.



- When interviews lack structure and rating guidelines, interviewer decisions can be based on
- Bias
- Including subconscious factors like applicant attractiveness
- Perceived similarities
- Perceived differences
- Halo effects
- First impression biases and more.

Based on the above limitations, the employer's must think twice before introducing unstructured interviews in their interview process.

## KEY DIFFERENCES

STRUCTURED	UNSTRUCTURED
Questions to be asked to the candidates are fixed in advance.	An interview in which the questions to be asked to the candidates is rare and not prepared beforehand.
As the structured interview is a pre-planned and same set of questions are put to all the candidates, so the data collected is quantitative in nature.	As opposed to an unstructured interview, wherein different questions are put to different candidates, and so qualitative data is collected.
In descriptive research, the structured interview is used to collect information, because it is relatively economical and the inferences can be drawn easily.	On the contrary, in exploratory research unstructured interview is used as the basic tool for collecting information.
Structured interviews are used by positivists	Unstructured interview is used by inter-pretivists.
In a structured interview, the	Here characteristics are implicit.



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characteristics evaluated explicit	are	
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After knowing the difference between structured and unstructured interviews, you got to know that structured interview has more advantages and it will obviously be followed by the interviewer. Therefore from your preparation point of view, focus must be given to standard interview questions. For that you need to be familiar with certain categories of questions, which is dealt in the section below.

## CLOSED QUESTIONS AND HYPOTHETICAL QUESTIONS

### CLOSED QUESTIONS

Closed questions are questions which are answered by a **simple one word answers** or Yes/No answers. Some of the questions asked in interviews maybe closed questions. Following are some of the examples of closed questions:

- "How many years did you work for your last employer?"
- Did you enjoy it?"
- "Did your job involve traveling?"
- "Which enterprise resource planning (ERP) systems are you familiar with?"
- "What training have you had that's related to this position?"
- "Have you ever worked in a different industry?"
- "Are you willing to move if offered the right job?"
- "Are career advancement opportunities one of your priorities?"
- "Have you carefully reviewed our starting salary ranges?"
- "What's the longest you've worked for any employer?"
- "Is a company's work environment important to you?"

It is essential for you to practice the above mentioned Closed questions before approaching the interview hall.

### HYPOTHETICAL QUESTIONS

An interviewer will use situational/hypothetical questions to

**establish how you would react to and handle real-life situations on the job.** For situational/hypothetical questions, candidates must have a **good understanding of the job and its requirements.**



Here are some examples of this type of question:

- If you had met your project deadlines and your direct supervisor was unavailable, describe how you would remain busy.
- You are the manager of a small marketing team, and one individual is continually late for work and taking extended breaks. How would you approach the issue?
- During construction, a contractor unexpectedly finds a very large object in one of the trenches where he is about to dig. He requests that you tell him how to proceed. How would you deal with this situation?
- You plan a workshop to teach newcomers to the country how to use word processing software. Unfortunately, only four people have registered and you are required to have a class of ten. It is five days before the class is scheduled to begin. What do you do?
- You have a conflict with someone who is senior to you and is not your supervisor. Describe how you would handle it.

So it is essential to be prepared for these kind of questions with a suitable answer.

The preparation part is done now and imagine you performing well and answering to all the questions as mentioned above. But still you end up rejected. Can you guess the reason? It is the microscopic details that are being noted from the instant you open the interview door. For that you must know how

to get the positive perspective of interviewer.

## INTERVIEWER'S PERSPECTIVE

### INTERVIEWER'S PERSPECTIVE

The reality exists that all interviewers form an initial impression of the candidate within the first two minutes of the interview. Many people in the field consistently form a final impression during that first critical two minutes of an interview.

### IMPORTANCE OF KNOWING INTERVIEWER'S PERSPECTIVE

Following are the importance of knowing interviewer's perspective.

- Many people argue that answers to questions during an interview is the key to success.
- But majority of impression on us is determined in the first few minutes of interviewer's perspective on us.
- The opening minute or two of the interview technically has little to do with your ability to perform in the role for which you are interviewing.
- Yet it does matter in how the interviewer forms an initial first impression of you.
- If you form a positive first impression, you can continue to build upon it over the course of the interview.
- However, if you form a negative first impression, you will likely face an uphill battle digging your way out during the interview.

After knowing the importance next step is to know the methods to get the positive perspective.

### WAYS TO GET A POSITIVE PERSPECTIVE

Below are the few things that the interviewer looks for in the first few minutes of the interview.



- **Timeliness**

Interviewers are busy and the interview itself is a non-standard part of the work day. In addition, the amount of time allotted for the interview is limited. So it is **critical that you, as a candidate, do not have a strike against you at the outset by being late for the interview.** Plan to arrive to your first interview at least 15 minutes early.

- **Appearance**

Interviewers are assessing both **competency fit as well as cultural fit.** The cultural fit can often be assessed in part based on how you are dressed for the interview. Do your research in advance to make sure you are **dressed per employer expectations for the interview.** If you're not sure, ask the person who is scheduling your interviews.



- **Posture**

You may already be seated in the interview room when the interviewer arrives. **Always stand to shake hands.** Some candidates



remain seated, a definite miss and negative first impression.



- **Handshake**

Simple enough, yet many candidates fail this simple act of greeting. Your **handshake should be firm enough to match the grip of your interviewer**, no more and no less. Extend your hand to meet the interviewer's hand at the soft part between your thumb and pointer finger, then grip as the interviewer grips, release as the interviewer releases.

- **Eye contact**

If you are **unable to maintain eye contact**, especially in the first few minutes of the interview, it will **convey a lack of confidence** and/or enthusiasm for the role. Make consistent eye contact with the interviewer throughout the interview, but especially at the outset.

- **Facial expressions**

Smile. Not a big open mouthed grin, but a pleasant **slight smile that conveys interest**, warmth, confidence and a positive personality on your part.

- **Warm up greeting**

Most interviewers will ask a warm up question unrelated to the interview itself as you are both being seated, such as: "How was the traffic coming in this morning?" or "How have the other interviews gone for you so far today?" **Keep you answer short, positive and concise.**

Therefore always keep in mind that the perspective is what is going to help you during the entire interview process. So focus

on doing the best right from the start of the interview.

## QUESTIONS TO ASK/NOT TO ASK DURING AN INTERVIEW

### ASKING QUESTIONS

The process of getting cleared of already existing ambiguity regarding job or any doubts related to job is known as asking questions during an interview.

### BENEFITS OF ASKING QUESTIONS

Many people hesitate to ask questions to the interviewer thinking that the interviewer would take it in a bad way. Instead go through the following benefits that would change your perspective.

- Asking questions shows that you're truly interested in the job.
- Someone who is uninterested in the job would not take the time to develop questions.
- Such a person would sit for the interview and leave as soon as possible.
- Your questions tell the hiring manager that you have considered the position to the extent that you have exhausted the resources that you can find.
- Show You've Researched the Organization
- Good questions show that you have done your research.
- A warning here is to make sure actually have done your research.

Now that you know the benefits the next step is to know what questions will really impress the interviewer.

### QUESTIONS THAT CAN BE ASKED

Here's a list of suggested questions to ask the interviewer so you can ensure the company is a good match for your qualifications and interests.



- How would you describe the responsibilities of the position?
- How would you describe a typical day and week in this position?
- Is this a new position? If not, what did the previous employee go on to do?
- What is the company's management style?
- Who does this position report to? If I am offered the position, can I meet him or her?
- How many people work in this office/department?
- How much travel is expected?
- Is relocation a possibility?
- What is the typical work week? Is overtime expected?
- What are the prospects for growth and advancement?
- How does one advance in the company?
- Are there any examples of a career path beginning with this position?

Make sure you remember the above mentioned standardized questions during an interview for your benefits.

### QUESTIONS NOT TO ASK

There are some questions that you should avoid asking, since they won't present you in a positive light.

- What does this company do? (Do your research ahead of time!)
- If I get the job when can I take time off for vacation? (Wait until you get the offer to mention prior commitments)
- Can I change my schedule if I get the job? (If you need to figure out the logistics of getting to work don't mention it now)
- Did I get the job?

The above mentioned are the common questions that candidates would ask and indulge themselves in trouble.

- Can I do this job from home?
- What does your company do?
- When can I take time off for vacation?
- Did I get the job?
- What is the salary for this position?
- How long would I have to wait to get promoted?

In case asking appropriate questions is difficult for you prepare as many times you want to get it perfect.

### GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR ASKING QUESTIONS

Following are some of the guidelines that will help you to ask acceptable questions to the interviewer.

#### • **Avoid "Me" Questions**

"Me" questions are those that put yourself ahead of the employer. These include questions about salary, health insurance, vacation time, work hours per week, and other concessions..

#### • **Ask One Question at a Time**

Avoid multi-part questions; they will only overwhelm the employer. Each question should have one specific point.

#### • **Avoid "Yes" or "No" Questions**

Most questions with a "yes," "no," or other one-word answer could likely be answered by searching the company's website. Instead, stick to questions that will create a dialogue between yourself and the employer.

#### • **Ask Questions About Multiple Topics**

Avoid asking questions about just one subject. For example, if you only ask questions about your manager and his managerial style, the interviewer may assume you have an issue with authority figures. Ask questions about a variety of topics to demonstrate your curiosity and interest in all aspects of the position.

#### • **Nothing Too Personal**

While it is a good idea to try to establish a rapport with your interviewer, do not ask personal questions that are not public

information. However, avoid overly personal questions about the interviewer's family, race, gender, etc.

The approach to interview process can be categorized into knowing the type of interview, approaching closed and hypothetical questions and gaining the positive attention of the interviewer. Finally to sum it up ask suitable questions that would give an impression that you are interested in the job. So follow all those steps in sequential order to perform well in interview.

### MAKE SURE YOU REVISE

- ✓ DEFINITION OF STRUCTURED INTERVIEW
- ✓ DEFINITION OF UNSTRUCTURED INTERVIEW
- ✓ BENEFITS OF STRUCTURED INTERVIEW
- ✓ HOW TO PREPARE FOR STRUCTURED INTERVIEW
- ✓ DIFFERENCES BETWEEN STRUCTURED AND UNSTRUCTURED INTERVIEW



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