

Interview skills

Excellent communication skills is often listed as a pre-requisite for a position as a technical writer personal. Many people get nervous at the very idea of a job interview. However, we can overcome our fear of the interview process by understanding the process and making ourselves ready and prepared for it.

Interview is basically a kind of activity in which the employer tries to find out whether the person interviewed possess the requisite qualities for the job.

Interviews are example of planned interpersonal communication with a purpose. The participants need to prepare themselves for it. The purpose of interview is to gather relevant data about a candidate for a particular job position, promotion, or making a selection panel.

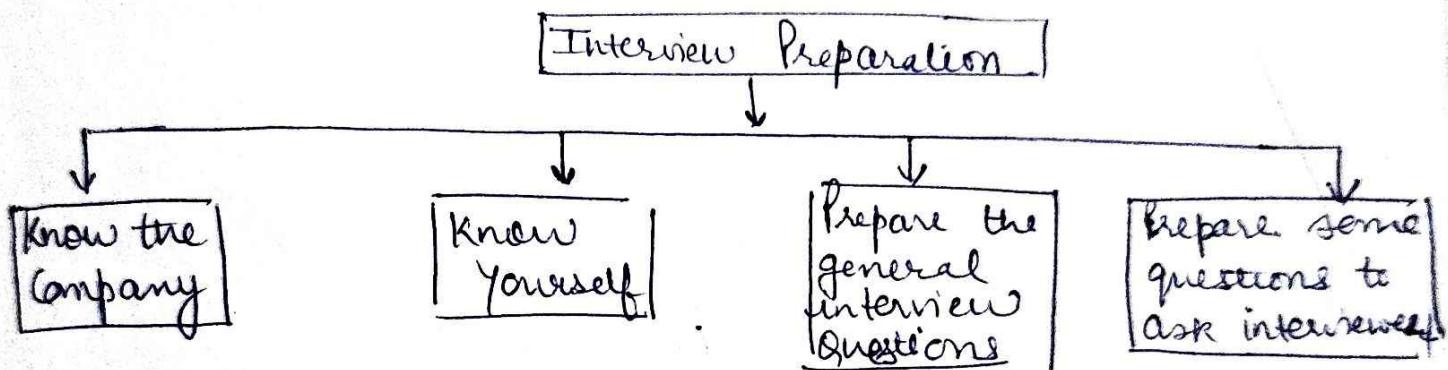
The different kinds of interview are:-

- (1) Selection Interviews → For the purpose of selection
- (2) Promotion Interviews → For the purpose promotion
- (3) Appraisal Interviews → Held periodically or annually for increments.
- (4) Counselling Interviews → Based on counselling
- (5) Grievance Interviews → Determines if employee has complaints
- (6) Disciplinary/Reprimand Interviews → To maintain discipline.

The different kinds of Interview strategies are:

- (1) Depth or Action Interviews → To find out personal interests
- (2) GD Interviews → To see interaction of candidate with each other.
- (3) Stress Interviews → To gauge how well a person can handle work pressure
- (4) Situational Interviews → Candidate is given a situation and asked how he will deal with it
- (5) Video Interviews → To cut down cost of travel or wastage of time.

### Interview Preparation



### Know the Company

You must thoroughly research the organisation you want to join before the interview.

- Go to company website
- Annual reports
- business news papers/magazines
- directly contact the employees.
- growth rate
- new products, services and projects
- work culture and so on.

Some of the questions that can be asked to test your knowledge are

\* Why do you want to join us?

\* What do you know about our company?

\* Our Company was recently in the news. Can you tell why?

## Know Yourself

Self analysis is important when you are preparing for an interview. We must know our strengths and weaknesses properly. It includes analysing our background, identifying our major accomplishments, our special interests and hobbies and analysing our career goals in terms of the contribution we can make to the job we aspire for.

## Prepare general Interview Questions

A set of questions such as Tell me about yourself? why should we hire you? what makes you suitable for this job? must be prepared thoroughly.

## Prepare some questions to ask Interviewer

This gives an impression to the interviewer that the candidate has a sound knowledge and is inquisitive to know the chances of his career growth.

## During the Interview - (DO'S)

- You should be confident
- You should have good communication skills, listen attentively and answer to the questions asked by the interviewer.
- Sit erect without leaning on the desk or slouching in the chair, but don't be stiff and tense.
- Always make eye contact when you speak.
- Don't use too many hand movements and frequent change of facial expressions not in relation to words you have expressed.
- Dress formally and well groomed
- Greet the interviewer and shake hands firmly.
- Wait until you are offered a chair before sitting.

### Don'ts

- Avoid controversial topics
- don't lie
- don't say anything negative about former colleagues, supervisors, or employers.
- Don't answer questions with a simple 'yes' or 'no'
- Don't inquire about salary, vacations, bonuses, retirement, or other benefits until after you've received an offer.
- Don't bring up or discuss personal issues or family problems.

### After Interview

- Thank them for calling you for the interview in person or through a letter or an email
- Indicate that you look forward to hear from them

### Purpose / Objective of a Job Interview

The purpose of a job interview is two fold:

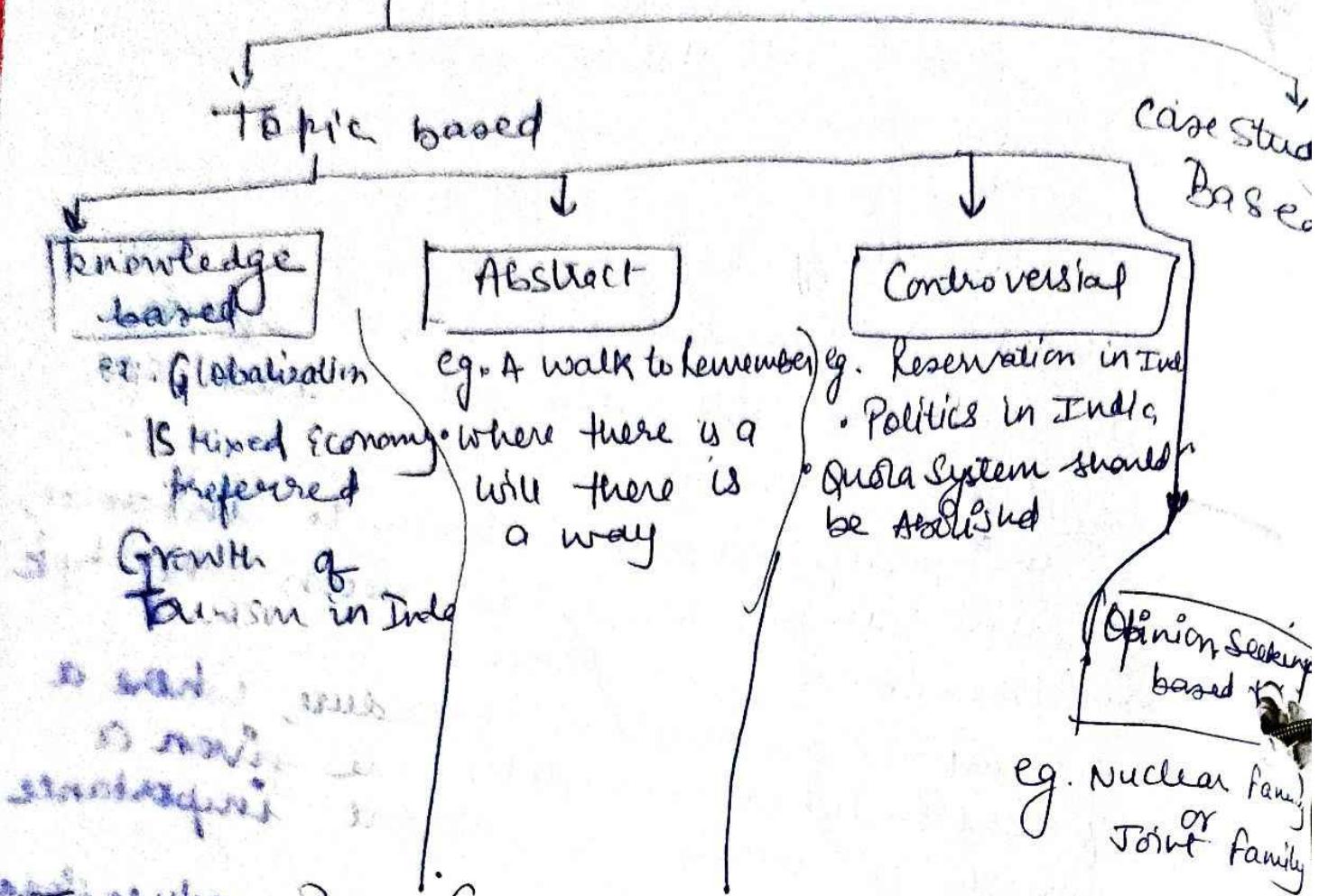
- (1) It offers the employer valuable insight into your personality and abilities
- (2) It allows you to the chance to discern whether your credentials and career goals match up with what the company seeks.

- A GD is a formal discussion which involves six to 15 participants who sit in a group to discuss a topic or a case given for the purpose.
- It is a methodology used by an organization to gauge whether a candidate possesses certain personality traits or skills that are desired of the candidate.
- In GDs, the group members have to ~~interview~~, analyse, and gauge, so as to discuss the case threadbare as a team.
- GD is a part of a selection procedure, where a group of short-listed candidates are given a topic which is usually of current importance and is debatable.
- Many corporate houses, and even some educational institutions use the GD for screening candidates for recruitment and admissions.

### Traits/Qualities tested in GD / OBJECTIVES

- Ability to work in a team
- Communication skills
- Reasoning ability
- Leadership skills
- Initiative
- Assertiveness
- Flexibility
- Creativity
- Ability to think on one's feet.

# Types of GDI



## Important Points (Do's and Don'ts)

### Do's

Sit comfortably

Keep track of time

Share time fairly

Encourage participation from others

Listen to the topic

Speak at the earliest

Avoid reproach

Allow supporters to back your ideas

Organize ideas

If derailed, bring it back to the track

Feel relaxed and comfortable

Feel and reveal keenness to share

Take mental notes

Steer the discussion smoothly

Transcend personal choices

Maintain eye contact

## Dont's

- Be in a hurry
- Be silent
- Be belligerent
- Speak fast
- Dominate verbally/physically
- Assume the role of a chairperson
- Be curt and dismissive
- Let emotional
- Use slang
- Look stubborn
- Throw all ideas at one shot
- Never start your GD with a decisive, firm stand or a conclusion.
- Indulge in debate
- Move shift excessively

## Importance of GD

- ① It enhances your knowledge
- ② discussion generates good questions
- ③ It shows weakness
- ④ It retrieves your mistakes
- ⑤ It helps you to "how to study and how to make preparation for the exam".
- ⑥ Effective communicator.

Methods for organising a GID  
John Dewey has suggested five-steps of the reflective pattern for the problem-solving groups. These are:

(1) Define and limit the problem

- define important words and phrases found in the problem.
- find materials that help to limit the scope and range of the problem area.

(2) Analyze the problem

- research material related to the history of the problem and place it next to your outline.
- provide information and evidence to highlight specific aspects of the problem.
- gather evidence that reveals and explains the causes of the problem

(3) list all possible solutions.

(4) Evaluate and analyze the solutions.

- exploring the advantages and disadvantages is often helpful
- evidence that examines the effects of all the solutions is normally treated in this portion of the outline

(5) Treat evidence and research

- discusses the best method of putting the solution into practice.

## Objectives of Group Discussion

- (1) Suggestions: Advice and ideas, together with suggestions form the core part of a GD. It is through these tools that a meaningful and practically implementable solution can be reached.
- (2) Wide approach: It helps to provide wide approach to any matter under consideration, it may include members from large number of different sections of a particular business organisation.
- (3) Decision-making: It is the tool for rational evaluation of a problem. It also makes it easier for the head to be able to take even the toughest of decisions with ease because by GD he can know what is supported by other members of organisation.
- (4) Exchange of ideas: GD should be able to tap the working of every mind, engaged in the process by the exchange of ideas put forth.
- (5) Productive activity: It is a method which helps to procure the best possible decision for a concern.

## Listening in group discussion

In GD, listening is as important as is speaking. The role of a speaker and a listener go on changing in a GD. If a person is a good listener, he can have ability to convince the group with his arguments. Some of the points to be kept in mind to be an active listener are:

- Listen other attentively
- Listen in order to reach to other's ideas
- Listen to analyse other's ideas
- Listen patiently and don't interrupt other participants
- Be democratic and don't dominate the entire discussion.

## LECTURE NO. 17

Seminar / Conferences presentation skills: focus, content, style.

Presenting at a conference / seminar is a core part of scientific communication for any researcher or academic. Finding the right conference / seminar with the right audience and successfully communicating your latest findings is a great way to enhance your career prospects, and, in turn, learn about the newest developments in your research field.

A seminar is typically a form of academic instruction at an educational institution and/or a commercial or professional organization.

A Conference is a formal meeting for discussion, problem solving, or consultation. Therefore, the main difference between seminar and conference is that seminar is academic in nature whereas a conference can be of various formats such as business, trade, academic, press conference etc.

### Difference between Seminar and Conference

#### seminar

• Seminar is a form of academic instruction that brings together a small group of people to learn about a specific subject

#### Conference

Conference is a formal meeting whose typical aims are discussion, problem-solving, and consultation.

one day though they can be recurrent

Conferences can last for several days.

Seminars are less formal than Conference

Conference is a formal meeting

In some conferences, discussions are not allowed

→ Discussion is a key feature in seminars

Focus is on particular issue for General theme

Here, presentation and discussion occurs

Participants exchange views  
\* Present their work as a talk or as a poster  
\* Talks by prominent speakers

### for conducting Seminars

1. Plan ahead. Allow at least a month few days to book time in people's diaries to design and set up for a seminar.
2. Select good speakers who could keep the audience engaged.
3. Provide the speaker/presenter with relevant information about the audience
4. Keep tab on time.
5. Ensure that the stage equipment, such as LCD screen, microphones, lights and sound work properly

### for conducting Conferences

1. Plan ahead
2. Have clear-cut objective set as an outcome.
3. Have clear cut theme
4. Select the speakers carefully

5. Decide the logistics before the objective and content as you may be scrapping the barrel to fill a two-day programme, when only a day could serve the purpose.
6. Select the venue judiciously.
7. Put yourself in the delegates' shoes. Imagine the logistics
8. Put yourself in delegates' shoes. Image all the possible logistics (noise level, movement between rooms, availability of telephones etc) when dealing with delegates
9. Ensure that some senior level manager takes ownership of the programme, so that the standards are consistently high.
10. Avoid poor pacing. An ideal conference includes a mix of subjects and presentation styles.
11. Place strategic breaks where the programme needs them, not when the venue 'designs' to grant them.

MODULE IV: TECHNICAL COMMUNICATION (KAS-301)  
COMMUNICATION SKILLS

LECTURE NO. 17

### Argumentation skills

Argument is a logical chain of propositions that yield valid results. Valid result means a reasonable and convincing outcome that is obtained on the basis of logical premises or statements.

Argumentation is the thought process used to develop and present arguments. It is closely related to critical thinking and reasoning.

We live in 21st century and we face complex issues that require careful, balanced reasoning to resolve. Here, the speaker is often keen to challenge the established notion by presenting his logical thoughts. So, we need to establish the argument that is reason-based and not governed by our subjective opinions or emotions.

It is self-evident that arguments have usual leaning towards a pattern and are subject to some kind of system of expression. Following are the tenets or bases of expression:

- (1) Induction → When we want to arrive at some finding or conclusion we naturally start considering individual facts. After a thorough study of facts, we sum up our argument and arrive at general communication. It is called inductive method.
- (2) Deduction → When we deduce specific conclusion from some general truths, then it is called

(3) Interrogation → When we question the existing facts or situations and tries to prove, disprove, confute and refute those notions which bothers us, then ~~is for~~ this argumentative order is called interrogative or questioning. It is helpful in all types of scientific enquiries or investigation of facts.

(4) Exploration → When a person is inclined towards knowing the genesis of things and their evolution process, then he is being explorative in nature.

(5) Enumeration → In this order, the argument proceeds in serial pattern with one-by-one analysis of facts. This method of argumentation is followed specially for narrative accounts. It facilitates logical analysis to pin down accurate standing of proposition and their truth. It helps to bring out objective picture of the situation.

(6) Evaluation or Appraisal → In this, we arrive at healthy conclusion or evaluation by a method of comparison, or contrast. We evaluate the facts and judge it in so far as they disagree with existing facts. Thus, in this method both agreement and disagreement are applied. It is helpful in making integrated description or analysis of facts.

(7) Exposition → In this order of argument, the emphasis is more on definition, explanation, comment rather than on illustration with a cogent blend. The argument proceeds from general to particular. Hence in this method, the dual processes of elaboration: induction and deduction are adopted to balance the statement.

Critical Thinking

Critical thinking is the ability to think clearly and rationally about what to do or what to believe. It includes the ability to engage in reflective and independent thinking. Someone with critical thinking skills is able to:

- ⇒ understand the logical connections between ideas
- ⇒ identify, construct and evaluate arguments
- ⇒ detect inconsistencies and common mistakes in reasoning.
- ⇒ solve problems systematically
- ⇒ identify the relevance and importance of ideas
- ⇒ reflect on the justification of one's own beliefs and values.

(Anil Kumar)

Importance of Critical thinking

- (1) It is a domain-general thinking skill.
- (2) It is very important in the new knowledge economy
- (3) It enhances language and presentation skills
- (4) It promotes creativity
- (5) It is crucial for self-reflection
- (6) Good critical thinking is the foundation of science and democracy.

Critical thinking involves:

- (a) Analysis
- (b) Clarification

- (c) Evaluation
- (d) Explanation
- (e) Inference
- (f) Interpretation
- (g) Judgement
- (h) Objectivity
- (i) problem solving
- (k) reasoning

Nuances (Modes of discourse)

LECTURE NO. 18

(1) Exposition → It is a type of communication (spoken/written) where the purpose is to explain, inform or even describe. It analyzes information by presenting an idea, relevant evidence and appropriate discussion.

- In narrative contexts (history and fiction), exposition provides information to teach or entertain.
- In technical communication, the purpose is to teach and inform (letters, reports, technical papers, journals, news articles)

(2) Narration → is story telling. The purpose of narration is to tell a story or narrate an event or series of events. Narration is an especially useful tool for sequencing or putting details and information into some kind of logical order, traditionally chronological (anecdote, autobiography, novel, biography, oral history)

(3) Description → The purpose of description is to re-create, invent or visually present a person, place, event or action so that the reader can picture that which is being described. It tells what things are like according to the five senses. It also try to evoke an <sup>emotion</sup> mood of atmosphere, and this is added by the use of simile and metaphor.

(Journal writing, poetry)

## Effective Business Communication Competence

If a language learner is asked what they think the goal of a language course is, they would probably answer to teach the grammar and vocabulary of the language. However, if they are asked what their goal is as language learners, they would answer to be able to communicate in that language. Fortunately, the focus of second language teaching has moved from purely teaching grammar and vocabulary, to providing the skills for effective communication.

Let us first understand what is communicative competence?

Communicative competence is a term coined by Dell Hymes in 1966 in reaction to Noam Chomsky's notion of 'linguistic competence'. Communicative Competence is the intuitive functional knowledge and control of the principles of language uses.

In other words, a language user needs to use the language not only correctly (based on linguistic competence), but also appropriately (based on communicative competence).

(1) Grammatical Competence → includes the knowledge of vocabulary and the

rules of creating meaningful sentences. Use of grammar rules develop a habit of thinking logically and clearly among learners. They tend to become more accurate when using language. This also helps a learner to organize and express the ideas in his mind without difficulty.

(2) Discourse Competence → is the knowledge of how to produce and comprehend oral or written texts in the modes of speaking/writing respectively. It is knowing how to combine language structures into a cohesive and coherent oral or written text of different types. Thus, it deals with organising words, phrases and sentences in order to create conversations, speeches, poetry, email messages, newspaper articles etc.

Cohesion refers to using linking expressions, such as conjunctions or adverbial phrases, to connect ideas. A Coherent text is one that makes sense. This concept includes clearly and logically indicating relationships, such as cause-effect and problem-solution, between ideas or events.

Example: Cohesion: - in other words, as a result, for this reason

Coherence: "Air pollution is a serious problem. It causes health problems and harms the environment." (A natural flow with the use of pronoun 'it'.)

(3) Socio-linguistic Competence → refers to the ability to use language that is appropriate to social contexts. Social context refers to culture-specific contexts that include the norms, values, beliefs and behavioural patterns of a culture. For example, thanking a friend in a formal speech is different than it is done over a meal.

Socio-linguistic competence also refers to the ability to select topics that are appropriate for a communicative event. For example, expressing a

Strong views about politics and religion over dinner is generally avoided. This rule is also moderated depending on the relationship between the guest and the host. If politics and religion are their favourite topics and if they know each other very well, these topics might be appropriate.

(4) Strategic Competence → is the ability to recognise and repair communication breakdowns before, during, or after they occur. For instance, the speaker may not know a certain word, thus will plan to either paraphrase, or ask what that word is in the target language. During the conversation, background noise or other factors may hinder communication; thus the speaker must know how to keep the communication channel open.

If the communication was unsuccessful due to external factors (such as interruption); or due to the message being misunderstood, the speaker must know how to restore communication. These strategies may be requests for repetition, clarification, slower speech, or the use of gestures, taking turns in conversation, etc. (TV talkshow TV interviews)