

Navigate interview formats

Knowing what to expect before an interview can relieve a huge amount of pressure on you. But not every interview is the same! Depending on the type of role you're interviewing for, your experience could vary widely in terms of content and format.

Here are common interview styles you may encounter—behavioral, technical, case study, and panel—and some tips on how to navigate the expectations and formats successfully.

Please note that some interviewers use a combination of styles—likely asking some behavioral questions followed by some technical questions in an interview for a specific technical position, for example. Understanding the basics of each style will help you better prepare for an interview that combines techniques.

Behavioral interviews

Behavioral interviews are a common method used across nearly all industries and roles—from entry-level to executive—to assess vital competencies such as teamwork, problem-solving, communication, and adaptability. For example, an interviewer for a customer service position might ask about a time you managed a challenging customer. Your answer could then illustrate how you effectively navigated the situation, perhaps by remaining calm under pressure and finding a resolution.

Behavioral interviews typically require specific answers, so here's how to get ready:

- **Prepare and tailor your stories:** Brainstorm past experiences from work, academic projects, or extracurricular activities that demonstrate key skills relevant to the role, like teamwork, problem-solving, leadership, or communication. Carefully review the job description to select one or more examples that specifically align with the position's responsibilities and the competencies the interviewer is likely seeking.
- **Structure your answers clearly and emphasize your role:** Use the STAR method (Situation, Task, Action, Result) to frame your experiences. This framework helps ensure you provide a clear, concise, and compelling narrative by covering all crucial aspects of your experience. Within your STAR stories, consistently use “I” statements to highlight your specific actions, individual contributions, and the direct impact you had on the outcome.