

Soft Skills 101x Business Communication

PERSONAL LEARNING ELEMENT: INTERVIEW PLANNING CHECKLIST

This learning element is a summary of the things to consider when planning an interview. It can be used as a checklist to help you prepare for your next strategic conversation or interview.

Location / Time

☐ Always do it at a time that's convenient for the person that you're interviewing

- If you do it in somebody's office, you have the added benefit of seeing what they put in their environment. This can give you useful information when you're doing icebreakers and also clue you into the priorities that they have in the workplace
- To reduce formality, consider conducting your interview in coffee shop or while you're going for a walk. This can be really beneficial if there's a power differential between yourself and the person that you're interviewing

When You Are Interviewing Outside the Workplace Setting

☐ Be aware of noise distractions

- A coffee shop can be a great place for informality, however, if there's a lot of noises coming along with the coffee being brewed, it might be difficult hearing each other

Mode of Interview

☐ Face-to-face remains the gold standard for interviewing

- You can tell if they're listening
- You can have a back and forth
- You can ask follow up questions
- You're in the moment together

☐ Video conferencing

- Video conferencing is not a bad way to engage with people because you have some of the same benefits that you have face-to-face
- Make sure you know your equipment and definitely practice ahead of time
- Apply the same rules and good behaviors that you would to a face-to-face interview

☐ Telephone

- You can catch people in the moment
- You lose the interaction between the visuals. So you can't tell if someone's actually listening or if they're surfing the internet or checking their email or the box scores from last night
- You lose some of that contextual element that you have in a face-to-face or video conference and have to make extra judgments just based on their voice alone

☐ Email

- You lose some of that contextual element that you have in a face-to-face or video conference and have to make extra judgments just based on their text alone
- People are more likely to prepare formal responses for you

Number of People in the Room

☐ When in group settings

- Reframe group interviews as an opportunity to learn more about the people you're working with
- Read the non-verbals of the other people in the room to figure out who they're waiting to hear respond

Be Prepared and do Your Homework

- ☐ Know the names and the positions of the people that you are interviewing with to the best of your ability