



## Interviewing Strategies Guide | Interview Types

### Phone Interviews

Phone interviews are short interviews designed to serve as a first round interview before bringing the candidate on-site. To help you maintain your focus during a phone interview:

- If possible, perform the interview in a quiet room to minimize distractions.
- Turn off call-waiting to avoid any interruptions.
- Minimize background noise, e.g., avoid typing, playing music in the background, or taking the call on speakerphone.
- Answer the phone by stating your name. “Hello, this is \_\_\_\_\_.”
- Have your resume and a short list of accomplishments nearby to remind you of things to mention during the interview.
- Smile. Even though your interviewers cannot see it, smiling brings energy and excitement to your voice.
- Be concise. You will not have non-verbal cues from the interviewer about when to stop speaking.
- Ask for clarification on questions if you need it.

### Virtual Interviews

Virtual interviews help companies save resources while still seeing your personality and mannerisms. Here are some tips to make your virtual interview a success:

- Be sure that your username or handle is professional.
- Make sure your profile picture is appropriate.
- Ensure that you are in a quiet, well-lit location with a solid internet connection.
- Close other applications on your computer, especially if they might make noise during the call.
- If you are using a laptop, be sure that you are plugged into an outlet.
- Address any technology problems immediately. It’s better to stop the interview than to give an inaccurate answer, because you didn’t understand the question.
- Dress like you would for an in-person interview.
- Be sure your background is not cluttered or distracting to the interviewers.
- Avoid wearing patterns like stripes, hounds tooth or gingham. They have an odd effect on the camera that can be distracting.
- Look directly into the camera, not the screen. It gives the impression of making eye contact.
- Be sure that the camera frames your face, shoulders, and hands. Body language and nonverbal cues are important, so you want to be sure that the upper half of your body is visible.
- Smile and try to keep a pleasant facial expression for the duration.
- Use your notes sparingly. The interviewer can see your eyes, so it is important that you are not obviously reading from your notes.



## Panel Interviews

Panel interviews allow companies to gain multiple perspectives in an efficient manner. Below are some tips on how to navigate group settings:

- Bring multiple copies of your resume.
- Greet each person with a smile and handshake.
- Assume each person will weigh in on your hiring decision.
- Ask for the names and titles of those who will be in the interview in order to prepare and conduct company research. Persons from different teams or divisions may be in attendance.
- Remember scheduling can be complex as the interview affects multiple persons' schedule. Be considerate and accommodating.
- Balance your attention between all persons throughout your interview session. It is easy to concentrate on one person such as the person who asked you the question or the one who appears to be the most senior in the command.
- Take the opportunity to showcase how you navigate group dynamics.

## Competency Based or Technical Interviews

Competency based interviews are largely focused on the demonstration of the specific skillset and knowledge needed to perform on the job. Below are helpful strategies to navigating this setting:

- If possible, gauge an understanding of the skills that will be evaluated.
- Assess your proficiency with the skills you marketed on your resume. Refresh your skills through practice and study if needed.
- Showcase your certifications and credentials where appropriate.
- Practice your situational and behavioral based questions. Being able to be comfortable answering "what would you do if" or "Give me an example of" or "How would you" is helpful. Remember practical application is favored over theoretical approaches.
- Be prepared to complete a task or showcase your problem solving skills.
- If possible, develop and bring work samples to demonstrate the work you have completed in the past.
- Be knowledgeable about the trends and technology affecting your industry and the position.
- Create space. Typically the questions asked during this interview will require thought, so take time to think it through and provide a thoughtful answer.

## Practice

The best way to feel more comfortable during an interview is through intentional practice. Fortunately, the Career Connections Center can help! Make a Career Planning Appointment to practice with a Career Connections Center career coach through Gator Career Link.