



TenStep Supplemental Paper

27 January 2004

Panel Interviews

Panel interviews have historically been closely associated with the rigid recruiting processes of large bureaucracies. Panel interviews are a time-efficient approach to candidate selection, although they sometimes intimidate candidates.

The most effective panels are those that are comprised of three to four stakeholders, preferably the candidate's prospective manager, a key customer, an HR representative and a prospective peer. The HR executives should coach all panelists in behavioral interviewing techniques.

Prior to the interview, panelists should agree upon the mix of competencies (knowledge, skills and attitudes), the job role and the desired degree of proficiency expected in each area. Interview questions should be relevant to these areas.

One panelist should facilitate the interview process. His or her responsibilities will include introducing panel members to prospective recruits, explaining the interview process, facilitating clear communication during the interview, keeping the interview on track, ensuring all competencies are satisfactorily probed, and making sure no one panel member dominates the discussion.

Questions that are asked initially should help relax the candidate and establish the flow of conversation. For instance, recent work experience, educational background, family background, etc. would be appropriate subjects. Then, panelists should begin to ask the previously determined questions.

At the end of each interview, panelists should instantly evaluate candidates, first independently and then as a group. This helps develop a group consensus. Panel interviews are not universally appropriate, but their advantages make them worthy of serious consideration.

A few tips for effective interviews:

- A minimal number of panelists who are trained in collecting the necessary information, evaluating relevant data, and making good hiring decisions
- Begin with an icebreaker and a little background information about the company and its position to build rapport before asking questions
- The rapport-building should take place throughout the interview and not just the first five minutes
- Order the questions in such a way that there is a natural flow
- Ask questions until the candidates either eliminate themselves or demonstrate that they are worthy of the job
- The interview should be controlled at all times without making the candidate feel uncomfortable



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- Good candidates should be given more time so that realistic situations and cases can be given to test them on certain skill sets.

The most important thing to remember while conducting the interview is to remember that the company needs the candidate as much as the candidate needs the company.