

Conducting Behavioral Interviews

INTERVIEW FLOW OVERVIEW

1. OPENING THE INTERVIEW

Welcome and Introductions

Begin by greeting the candidate and helping them feel at ease. A warm, friendly introduction can set a positive tone: “Hi, it’s great to meet you. How are you today?” or “Thanks for joining today. Just to confirm, is everything working on your end?”

Outline the Process

Set clear expectations for how the interview will proceed: “Let me walk you through what to expect today. I’m [your name and title], and I’ll be conducting this first-round interview. If selected to move forward, you’ll meet with [name of hiring manager] in the next round.”

2. BUILDING RAPPORT

Start with Light Conversation

Take a moment to engage in small talk and help the candidate settle in. A few informal questions can go a long way in creating a comfortable atmosphere.

Explain Note-Taking

To avoid confusion or discomfort, let the candidate know that you’ll be taking notes: “I’ll be taking some notes as we go to ensure I capture your responses accurately.” If you’re conducting the interview over Zoom, clarify whether you’ll be typing or writing your notes.

Balance the Conversation by Using the 80/20 Rule

Aim for the candidate to speak approximately 80% of the time. Your role is to listen and guide the discussion with follow-up questions as needed. Your goal is to gain a deep understanding of the candidate’s experience and qualifications.

3. DIGGING INTO THE DETAILS

Use a Mix of Question Types, including Behavior-based

Incorporate open-ended and probing questions to dig deeper into the candidate’s background and behaviors. Examples of probing questions:

- “What were the results of that action?”
- “What did you take away from that experience?”
- “How did you go about achieving that goal?”

Give Space for Reflection

It’s perfectly fine if there’s a pause after you ask a question. Allow the candidate time to think. You might say: “Take your time if you need a moment to think it through.” Avoid filling silence with unnecessary conversation and give the candidate room to reflect and respond thoughtfully.