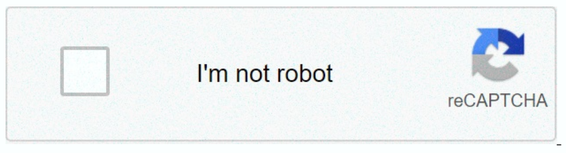
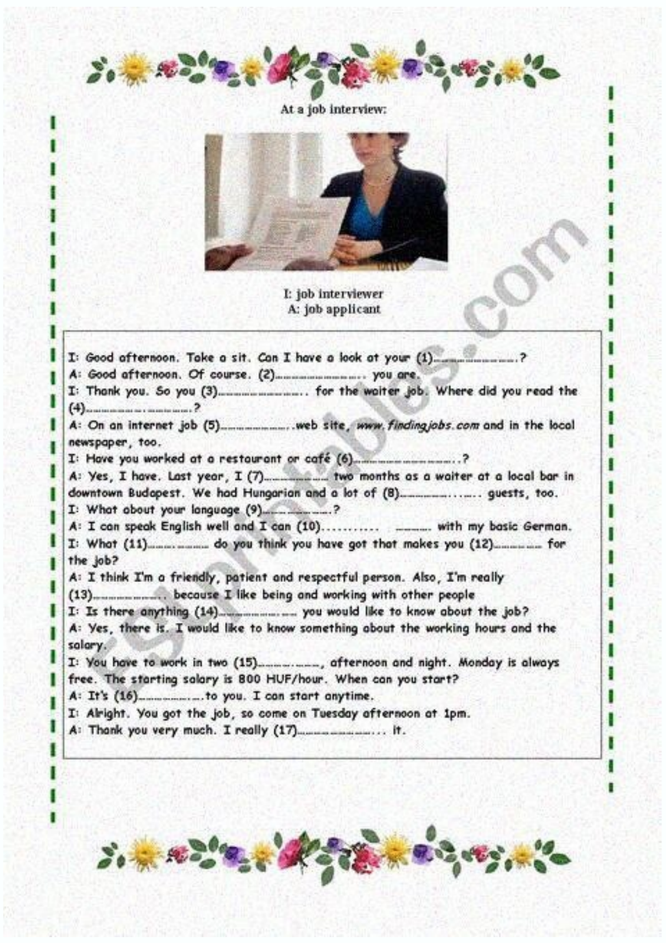


I am not robot!

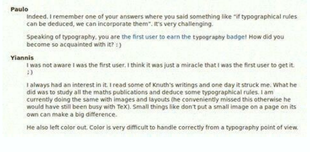
How to write an interview dialogue. Interview opening script example. Example of script interview.

Interviewer: Welcome to ABC Controls, David. I am Tom. Interviewee: Hello, it's nice to meet you. Interviewer: Nice to meet you too, how are you doing today? Interviewee: I am doing well, and yourself? Interviewer: Great, thanks. I hope we didn't keep you waiting for long? Interviewee: No, I had the chance to talk to one of your engineers while waiting.

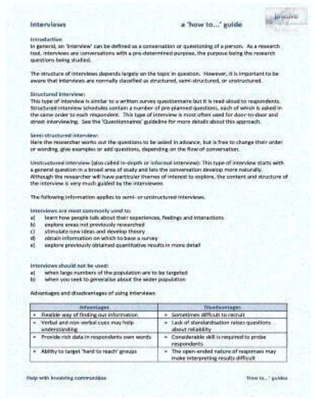


Interviewee: I am doing well, and yourself? Interviewer: Great, thanks.
I hope we didn't keep you waiting for long? Interviewee: No, I had the chance to talk to one of your engineers while waiting.
Interviewer: That's good. David, shall we start? Interviewee: Yeah, sure. Interviewer: First of all, let me introduce myself. I am the manager of our engineering department here and we have an open position, so we have been interviewing applicants to fill the position as quickly as possible. Interviewee: Yes sir, I read about the position on your website, and I think I am a good fit. Interviewer: We currently have several ongoing projects and the team is working hard. We are hoping to keep busy for a long time. Interviewee: What are the essential qualifications required for the position? Interviewer: This is an entry-level engineering position, we do provide a lot of training here. But we do require that you have at least a bachelors degree in computer engineering. Previous experience in the field is a plus. Interviewee: What kind of experience would you count as a work in the field? Interviewer: Even though we provide training, it would be great if you had some hands-on programming experience, knowledge of database systems or skills on developing applications. Interviewee: My final school project was actually developing a mobile application, so I am fairly competent in developing mobile and web applications. Interviewer: That's good to hear, which school did you graduate from? Interviewee: I was a student at DEF University, and I graduated with a bachelor degree in computer science.

Interviewer: That's good.


Paulo
Indeed. I remember one of your answers where you said something like "if typographical rules can be deduced, we can incorporate them". It's very challenging.
Speaking of typography, you are the first user to earn the typography badge! How did you become so acquainted with it? :)
Yiannis
I was not aware I was the first user. I think it was just a miracle that I was the first user to get it. :)
I always had an interest in it. I read some of Knuth's writings and one day it struck me. What he did was to study all the maths publications and deduce some typographical rules. I am currently doing the same with images and layouts (he conveniently missed this otherwise he would have still been busy with TeX). Small things like don't put a small image on a page on its own can make a big difference.
He also left color out. Color is very difficult to handle correctly from a typography point of view.

Interviewer: That's good. David, shall we start? Interviewee: Yeah, sure. Interviewer: First of all, let me introduce myself.



Interviews a 'how to...' guide

Introduction
In general, an 'interview' can be defined as a conversation or questioning of a person. As a research tool, interviews are conversations with a pre-determined purpose, the purpose being the research questions being studied.

The structure of interviews depends largely on the topic in question. However, it is important to be aware that interviews are normally classified as structured, semi-structured, or unstructured.

Structured interview:
This type of interview is similar to a written survey questionnaire but it is read aloud to respondents. Structured interview schedules contain a number of pre-planned questions, each of which is asked in the same order to each respondent. This type of interview is most often used for door-to-door and street interviewing. See the 'Questionnaires' guideline for more details about this approach.

Semi-structured interview:
Here the researcher works out the questions to be asked in advance, but is free to change their order or wording, give examples or add questions, depending on the flow of conversation.

Unstructured interview (also called in-depth or 'informal interview): This type of interview starts with a general question in a broad area of study and lets the conversation develop more naturally. Although the researcher will have particular themes of interest to explore, the content and structure of the interview is very much guided by the interviewee.

The following information applies to semi- or unstructured interviews.

Interviews are most commonly used to:
a) learn how people talk about their experiences, feelings and interactions
b) explore areas not previously researched
c) stimulate new ideas and develop theory
d) obtain information on which to base a survey
e) explore previously obtained quantitative results in more detail

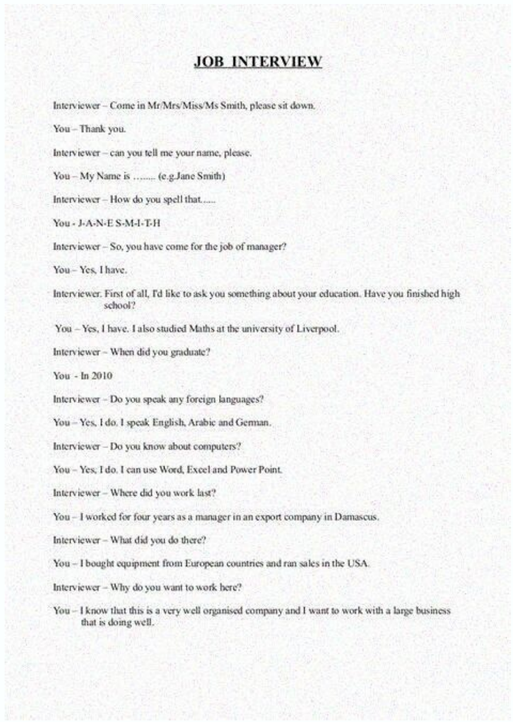
Interviews should not be used:
a) when large numbers of the population are to be targeted
b) when you need to generalize about the wider population

Advantages and disadvantages of using interviews

Advantages	Disadvantages
• Flexible way of finding out information	• Sometimes difficult to recruit
• Verbal and non-verbal cues may help understanding	• Lack of standardisation raises questions about reliability
• Provide rich data in respondents own words	• Considerable skill is required to probe respondents
• Ability to target 'hard to reach' groups	• The open-ended nature of responses may make interpreting results difficult

Help with involving communities How to... guides

Interviewee: No, I had the chance to talk to one of your engineers while waiting. Interviewer: That's good. David, shall we start? Interviewee: Yeah, sure. Interviewer: First of all, let me introduce myself. I am the manager of our engineering department here and we have an open position, so we have been interviewing applicants to fill the position as quickly as possible. Interviewee: Yes sir, I read about the position on your website, and I think I am a good fit. Interviewer: We currently have several ongoing projects and the team is working hard. We are hoping to keep busy for a long time. Interviewee: What are the essential qualifications required for the position? Interviewer: This is an entry-level engineering position, we do provide a lot of training here. But we do require that you have at least a bachelors degree in computer engineering.



JOB INTERVIEW

Interviewer – Come in Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms Smith, please sit down.

You – Thank you.

Interviewer – can you tell me your name, please.

You – My Name is …..... (e.g.Jane Smith)

Interviewer – How do you spell that.....

You - J-A-N-E S-M-I-T-H

Interviewer – So, you have come for the job of manager?

You – Yes, I have.

Interviewer. First of all, I'd like to ask you something about your education. Have you finished high school?

You – Yes, I have. I also studied Maths at the university of Liverpool.

Interviewer – When did you graduate?

You - In 2010

Interviewer – Do you speak any foreign languages?

You – Yes, I do. I speak English, Arabic and German.

Interviewer – Do you know about computers?

You – Yes, I do. I can use Word, Excel and Power Point.

Interviewer – Where did you work last?

You – I worked for four years as a manager in an export company in Damascus.

Interviewer – What did you do there?

You – I bought equipment from European countries and ran sales in the USA.

Interviewer – Why do you want to work here?

You – I know that this is a very well organised company and I want to work with a large business that is doing well.

Interviewer: That's good. David, shall we start? Interviewee: Yeah, sure. Interviewer: First of all, let me introduce myself. I am the manager of our engineering department here and we have an open position, so we have been interviewing applicants to fill the position as quickly as possible. Interviewee: Yes sir, I read about the position on your website, and I think I am a good fit. Interviewer: We currently have several ongoing projects and the team is working hard. We are hoping to keep busy for a long time. Interviewee: What are the essential qualifications required for the position? Interviewer: This is an entry-level engineering position, we do provide a lot of training here. But we do require that you have at least a bachelors degree in computer engineering. Previous experience in the field is a plus. Interviewee: What kind of experience would you count as a work in the field?
Interviewer: Even though we provide training, it would be great if you had some hands-on programming experience, knowledge of database systems or skills on developing applications. Interviewee: My final school project was actually developing a mobile application, so I am fairly competent in developing mobile and web applications. Interviewer: That's good to hear, which school did you graduate from? Interviewee: I was a student at DEF University, and I graduated with a bachelor degree in computer science.
I worked as a computer lab tutor in school for about 2 years. Guiding students through their projects helped me get experience in several programming languages. Interviewer: What are you looking for in a job? Interviewee: The job should definitely help me grow in my career. I will be happy to learn and grow as I work in a passionate company like yours. Interviewer: You are right. There is plenty of room for advancement in our company. What are your strengths? Why should I hire you? Interviewee: I am a diligent person and a fast learner. I am very eager to learn. My friends also find me very easy to work with. Interviewer: Very well. Now, do you mind working overtime? Interviewee: No, I do not. Interviewer: Because, sometimes we get overwhelmed with heavy workload. Interviewee: I understand that's the nature of the job. When I was going to school, I took quite a few courses each semester while working at least twenty hours every week. And, I handled that situation very well. Interviewer: Do you have any questions for me?
Interviewee: No, I think I have a pretty good understanding of the requirements. I believe that I can handle it with ease, and the fact that you provide all the training sounds excellent. I hope to have the opportunity to work for you. Interviewer: David, It is nice to meet you.
I can tell that you are a good candidate. Expect to hear from us within a week or so about the job. Interviewee: Nice meeting you too. Thank you for your time. Interviewer: Thank you for coming. GrammarBank Video Exercises ↑▲▲▲▲▲▲↑ Arley's comments: You've done a lot well here. You've organized your information clearly and have given lots of examples and visuals. You've also explained the types of questions that will be in the script. However, when revising, we'll need to look at source use. There are some sentences and phrases from the original sources that have been included in the document, though the author has made an attempt to cite. We will need to paraphrase these. Also, the graphics don't have a Creative Commons license, so we will need to make our own or find other sources. We also might want to give a sample script, so the reader can see how these progress. Judy's comments: There is a lot of good information here which is structured and organized well, making it easy to follow and read. However, the focus here is on interview question vs. focusing on creating a script for the opening and closing of an interview. Moving forward what needs to be done is to review the material from Week 5 which pertains to opening and closing an interview and then research this topic further to create guidelines (or tips) for both opening and closing a job interview as well as prepare and include sample scripts for both. By the end of this section, you will learn Introduction Types of interview questions Open-Ended interview questions Guidelines to prepare open-ended interview analysis objectives of preparing guidelines Sample script of open-ended interview Close-Ended interview questions Guidelines to prepare Close-Ended interview Sample script of Close-Ended interview More information about the open-ended and close-ended interview Conclusion Introduction An interview script refers to a set of questions and answers which is likely to be answered by the candidate, it is more of a streamlined process so that they can be prepared as much as possible. Although those candidates have no idea what type of questions are asked such scripts help to feel more confident and relaxed before attending an interview. Each HR department holds a different interview script to find the right candidate.
There are a few steps to consider while formatting an interview script, to keep it organized firstly, one should prepare interviewer questions and then interviewee answers.
(LaRock, 2019) In this section, we are going to get a deeper insight into the opening and closing interview scripts, as these are the main areas where we can analyze the personality or presentation of our candidate. /950×0/filters:max_bytes(150000):strip_icc():format(webp)/job-interview-questions-and-answers-2061204-Final-109bcdbb88a34d1a9746a56c96d6c3a4.png Types of Interview Questions It is important to get prepared well before taking an interview as it is the responsibility of the interviewer to analyze and understand the skills and talents of the candidate, which required asking both open-ended and closed-ended questions rest all the questions come along while conversing with the candidate. The interview questions are classified into 4 as follows: Open-ended interview questions Closed-ended interview questions Hypothetical Interview questions Outside-the-box interview questions Open-ended Interview Questions Open-ended questions are usually the questions to make the candidate feel relaxed and comfortable, these questions require thought and are obliged to reveal the job seeker's attitudes and opinions, for example, behavioral questions. Here, the candidate demonstrates more about their communication skills, for this, the interviewer asks some personal and past experience-related questions. (Half, 2020) Examples of Open-ended questions "Can you describe how you handle tight deadlines on the job?" "Can you give me an illustration of how you improved productivity at your last job?" "Why do you want to work for this company?" "What are your methods for avoiding errors?" "What are your greatest strengths and weaknesses?" "What's the biggest challenge you've ever faced in any job?" "What direction do you see your career taking in five years?" "What does your ideal job look like?" "What could your current company do to be more successful?" (Half, 2020) When to use it? These above-mentioned questions should be asked frequently throughout the interview process.
This will help you be freer between certain questions or case types, and the interviewer should always ensure that these questions are combined with closed-ended questions. (Half, 2020) Pitfall to avoid: The interviewer must ask the candidate to understand and answer the question, otherwise they may lose their way and probably will not answer the closed-ended question because both questions must be sufficiently linked. (Half 2020) Benefits of Open-ended questions Allow Unlimited Answers – These questions will open a way to ask another set of questions.
The interviewer has a great opportunity to gather a lot of information about the candidate. Different candidates carry out conversations in different ways from different angles.
Provide Unexpected New Insights- Open-ended questions help elicit unexpected answers from different perspectives that the interviewer may never have thought of. For example, suggestions or solutions to different problems can allow the interviewer to understand the potential of the candidate. Provides more detail- Here, the responses prepared by the interviewer are just the way the candidate speaks, providing more nuance, explaining them more fluently, and leading to less ambiguous responses.
Provides more detailed qualitative data- These types of questions provide more qualitative answers and help interviewers read between the lines and understand them as individuals. Express your views and opinions- Open-ended questions will allow interviewers to analyze the emotions, feelings, and personality of the person as they discuss the path or ideas based on their personality/point of view. Tracking the entire customer journey- Interviewers need to have a general understanding of their candidates to provide feedback and make them satisfied with their performance in the interview. (Learn, 2021) Limitations of Open-ended questions Time-consuming– Here, the candidate is likely to talk about his life or personal experience in detail, which may lead to extended conversation time and the interviewer may not be able to complete the interview on time. Low response rate-If the candidate takes a long time to answer open-ended questions, this may result in fewer answers to closed-ended questions, and they may answer some questions prepared for closed-ended questions. Difficult to compare– Because the answers are objective, it will be a difficult task for the interviewer to compare and recall all answers with data points and consistent results. Irrelevant information– Some candidates may provide irrelevant information, which can lead to missing clues to the question and confusion when answering. Difficult to analyze-These problems are more difficult to analyze because they contain unstructured data and therefore are not easy to calculate. (Learn, 2021) Guidelines to prepare an open-ended interview: Use Relevant Examples: Every question is answered with unlimited responses, but they won't all get you the work. Tailor your response to suit the position by using relevant examples. When asked "If you'll have the right job, what wouldn't it be?" use the responsibilities related to the position to make your dream description, rather than sharing your fantasy of becoming a rocker.
Be Specific: Interviewers ask vague inquiries to see where you'll accompany them. Offer an in-depth response to color a transparent picture of the rationale you're the simplest choice for the work.
The more pointed your response is, the better it'll be for the hiring manager to measure your fit. Rambling and veering off-track will only earn you a rejection letter.
Practice Replies to Common Inquiries: Expect to be asked standard questions like "Tell me about yourself" and "Why are you the simplest person for the job?" Anticipate these inquiries before time and prepare a winning response. It is often difficult to consider an excellent reply on the spot, so do your homework and are available to the interview able to give your well-rehearsed reply. Let Your Personality Shine: Many companies ask quirky questions like "If you were an animal, which one would you be?" to urge a glimpse of your personality and see if you'd be an honest fit for their company culture. You can't really anticipate these inquiries, so be able to think fast. Let your true personality show, because that's what the interviewer wants to ascertain. If you're an honest fit for the position, then great. If not, it's better to understand now than after accepting an employment offers. (Connelly, 2015) What words are used? When people speak, their communication often exceeds their intentions. Pay attention to the connotation of the words used by the interviewee. Look for ambiguous words that can have multiple meanings. What is the context? The interview did not happen in a vacuum; everything the interviewee said happened in a certain context. Sometimes, the context can have a significant impact on the results. For example, comments may be influenced by factors such as widespread media attention on related topics, local news about education cuts, etc. To what extent are these beliefs, feelings, or thoughts shared? One of the biggest challenges of qualitative research is to understand the level of attention paid to various comments. What is a major discovery, what is a minor discovery, and what is not a discovery at all? Here are some simple guidelines to help you make these distinctions: Frequency and amplitude. How often does this view appear in interviews? How many people agree with this view? A widely held view or experience can be an important discovery, while a view that appears only once may not (unless it is a good idea or knowledge). Strength. How strongly do people feel about this view? Is the interviewee enthusiastic about a particular point of view, or is it neutral and carefree? Specificity. Are the interviewees' feelings and beliefs based on specific personal feelings and experiences, or do they generally refer to "what most people say"? For example, in a particular OST program, the specific anecdote of injuries due to poor supervision should have more weight than the interviewee's "everyone said that the place is not good". (Workbook E, Page 17) Open-Ended Interview script Manager: Hi Daniel. Thank you for being here today. This is Gracey Katlyn Pleased to meet you. Applicant: Hi, I am Daniel Cortez. Nice to meet you too. Manager: Tell me about yourself.
Applicant: I am an excellent team member. I like to collaborate and contribute as much as possible during the project. If I finish my homework and have free time, I will ask my colleagues if I can do something for them. I always try to take the time to answer any questions, especially questions from new team members. I believe that teamwork and collaboration can help create better and more efficient results. " Manager: What are your greatest strengths?
Applicant: "I have always been a born leader.
I also regularly hone my management skills through 360 reviews and candid meetings with the team, and I know that continuing to develop my leadership skills is the goal of my next position. " Manager: What is your motivation?
Applicant: One of my biggest motivations is the end-user experience. In my current role as a front-end developer, I know how many details can improve the product.
I want to make sure that each button is in the best position, that the drop-down menu is correct, and that each page can be enlarged. Receiving positive feedback from clients or clients motivates me to do my best. " Manager: What makes you a suitable candidate for this job? Applicant: Judging from the information I have gathered about your company; your company has a strong work system and you need organized employees to manage day-to-day operations. My Work experience shows that I have a history of success in organizing and communicating with employees. I look forward to using my skills to benefit the organization.
" Manager: Where will you be in five years? Applicant: Five Years later, I believe that I am in a middle management position in this company, and I have a strong view of top management. If possible, I want to take on the role of product manager and then maybe take a coaching position. I have worked hard to improve my leadership skills for success and growth, and this company is the ideal environment to do so. Indeed Editorial Team (November 30, 2020) Close-ended Interview Questions The close-ended questions are usually simple answers which might be yes or no, multiple types, ordinal, interval, and ratio type questions which will help you to gain factual information. They can be complicated and confusing based on the answers given in open-ended questions. (Half, 2020) • Examples of Closed-ended questions: "How many years did you work for your last employer?" "Have you ever worked in a different industry?" "What's the longest you've worked for any employer?" "Are you comfortable working remotely?" "Do you have much experience with social media?" (Half, 2020) When to use it? These types of questions are best while eliciting or setting a stage for complex questions as they might get a path to answer or can make them feel relaxed while ending pleasantly. (Half, 2020) Pitfall to avoid: The interviewer should not ask too many close-ended questions as the candidate can feel interrogated especially when the interviewer is not able to link the entire process. (Half, 2020) Benefits of Close-ended questions Easier and quicker to answer: These type of questions can be answered easily and faster as they are one option or one-word answers and does not need much time. Help in obtaining measurable and quantitative data: These questions can be easily measured or corrected as there is only one answer and the candidates selected with the right one can be hired or called for the next round. Better understanding through answer options: The candidate doesn't need to know the answer for all the questions but when they look at the options available it's easy for them to identify the right one. Customers are more likely to respond: It takes only less time to answer given questions as they just need to select the answer and don't have to give any explanation.
Help to get rid of irrelevant answers: This type of question is structured data with predefined relevant answers. Comparable answers: The answers provided by the candidate are easy to compare with other candidates. Can be customized easily: these questions are easy to replicate and modify based on the type of survey, organization, or business. (Dawer, 2019) Limitations of Close-ended questions Unable to provide detailed information: Although these questions can be answered easily the interviewer won't be able to acquire the exact answer or reason why they have opted for certain options. Cannot help to receive customer opinions: The candidate cannot provide the reason why they have rated the products or services of the company and this can hamper the interviewer from selecting the right candidate. It is not possible to cover all possible answers: All the candidates are different from each other and might not have the option as per their knowledge or thinking this can limit their options or opinions about certain services or products provided by the company. More choices can create more confusion: Providing more than 3 options can confuse the candidate and they might end up in some answers which they are sure of.
Can suggest answers which the customer may not be thinking: Some candidates might not even be thinking the same way as the questions and options are given but the options will make them think differently. Customers having no opinion will also answer: In some cases, the candidate might not even have any idea about the questions given but to complete the survey and get the feedback they might tick or select one option other than leaving it unattended. Not possible to find out if the question is misinterpreted: If the candidate misinterprets the answer in a closed-end question this will make the interviewer realize their mistake when answered the open-ended questions. (Dawer, 2019) Guidelines to prepare close-ended interview First, the closing signals the termination of the interview but not the relationship. Second, the closing may express supportiveness to enhance the relationship and bring the interview to a positive close. Third, the closing may summarize the interview. A summary must accurately reflect the important elements of the interview. Be sincere and honest. Do not rush the closing. Do not introduce new topics or ideas during the closing. Leave the door open for future contacts. Avoid false closings when the interview is not really over. Avoid failed departures when you soon meet up again with the party after having concluded the interview. (Ch4 Structuring the Interview, 2017) Manager: Have you at any point been terminated from a task? Indeed or no? Clarify. Applicant: No. There has never been any justification a business to release me. Manager: Do you get a kick out of the chance to work under tension? Indeed or no? Clarify. Applicant: Yes. Obviously, it relies upon the sort of pressing factor yet when in doubt I would need to answer that I do. I find that pressing factor will in general further develop my presentation since it builds my assurance to take care of business. I feel that I am a self-starter however pressure gives me that additional motivation or push that we as a whole need every once in a while. Manager: With what number of different associations have you met? What are their names? Applicant: This is the solitary meeting I have had up until now. I'm by and large amazingly specific. Manager: Do you realize how to utilize or work on (typewriter, PC, drill press, the 3 C's of selling, SWOT examination, and so forth)? Indeed or no?
Clarify. Applicant: Yes. I utilized (a typewriter, PC, drill press, and so on) in my last work and turned out to be intimately acquainted with it. I additionally found that I did very well with it and came to appreciate utilizing it. Manager: Are you looking for work in an organization of a specific size? Indeed or no? Clarify. Applicant: Yes.
I might want to work for an organization that offers me an opportunity to create and utilize the entirety of my abilities. I feel an enormous organization can allow me that opportunity. Manager: Are you satisfied with your experience with us? Applicant: Yes. I am looking forward to hear from you. Thank you for your time, Daniel. We will disclose the results soon.
(The Closed-Ended Questions during an Interview, 2014) Difference between Open-Ended Interview and Close-Ended Interview (Dossetto, 2014) Conclusion To conclude, the open and closed-ended questions play an important role in an interview as they offer both quantitative and qualitative answers despite all the case type questions asked, as it is essential for a company to know and understand the communication skill of the employee to attract more customers and for that the employee should able to talk briefly and sufficiently rather than providing some irrelevant answers. These types of characteristics can be only analyzed in the open-ended questions as they will share their personal and professional experience and in the case of close-ended questions, they share more of their feelings or emotions towards certain aspects of situations. Therefore, an interviewer has to be fully prepared and expect surprising answers from the candidates. Qualitative data: Qualitative data focuses on the characteristics. It is generally used when the descriptive form of data is needed to be collected. Quantitative data: Quantitative data is measured in terms of numerical values. It is collected when there is a need to analyze the statistical data. Hypothetical interviews: Hypothetical data are a kind of theoretical data based on assumptions. Out-of-the-box interviews: Out-of-the-box interviews mean being more creative and innovative. It means to think logically. Reference LaRock, H. (2019, December 13). How to Write an Interview Script.
Bizfluent. Half, R. (2020, August 26). 4 Types of Job Interview Questions to Help You Dig Deeper.
4 Types of Interview Questions Employers Ask | Robert Half. learn, monkey. (2021, January 25).
What Are Open-ended Questions? Advantages & Disadvantages. MonkeyLearn Blog. Connelly, S. (2015, November 30). Tips for Answering Open-Ended Interview Questions. SPARKS GROUP. ~:text=Use%20these%20guidelines,a%20job%20offer.
Indeed Editorial Team (November 30, 2020) Dawer, N. (2019, October 9). Advantages & Disadvantages of Closed-Ended Questions in Feedback Forms. Zonka Feedback. (Open-Ended Questions [vs Close-Ended] + 7 Examples, 2014) ~:text=%F0%9F%91%87%20Closed-ended%20question%20example,are%20looking%20for%20today%3F Dear Liz, I really like the idea of a candidate-driven job interview that you talk about in your columns. I wish I had a better sense of how that kind of job interview would play out. Can you share a sample script to illustrate the flow of a non-scripted interview? Thanks in advance! Yours, Brett Dear Brett, Your wish is my command! Here is an example of the Interviewing with a Human Voice process. As you know, the hiring manager Brittany has already let the candidate, Gustavo, know that he is welcome to bring his questions with him to the interview and also that he'll have the opportunity to ask Brittany his questions before they talk about anything else. Of course, this is just an example. Every interview will proceed differently because Brittany will be responding to the conversation as it unfolds, rather than asking questions from an interview script. Brittany is eager to hear Gustavo's questions and answer them, and to see Gustavo's brain working as he and she talk about the issues that need attention in Brittany's department and Gustavo's ideas for handling them. Brittany and Gustavo are chatting in Brittany's office. Her door is locked and she's put a Do Not Disturb - Interview in Progress - Thanks! sign on her door. Her phone is off. She won't be interrupted. Brittany has come out from behind her desk and she and Gustavo are sitting at her little conference table, with cups of coffee. All the best, Liz Sample Script: Interviewing With A Human Voice Brittany: So, Gustavo, have a seat! It's nice to meet you.
Gustavo: Wonderful to meet you too, Brittany. Your office is great. What a view! Brittany: Thank you! I look out the window when my brain is too full and it calms me down. Gustavo: How long has the company been headquartered here? Brittany: We moved into this building in 2012 when our old building downtown got too crowded. Gustavo: I've been reading about the company. It's quite a story! Brittany: It's a great story and we're having a lot of fun.
Of course, every organization has its challenges! Let's get into your questions for me. I'm eager to hear them! Gustavo: For sure. You're looking for a Payroll Supervisor, and that's my experience. I'm curious. Why do you need a Payroll Supervisor? Do you process the payroll in-house? Brittany: No, we use ADP for our payroll, but because we have people all over the country and we also employ people seasonally, we end up having more payroll issues and projects than perhaps other companies our size do. The title is Supervisor, and there is one employee in the Payroll department, who is a mix of clerical and IT-focused if that makes sense.
You'd be responsible for making sure the payroll is processed correctly including withholding, commissions, W-2s at the end of the year -- the whole enchilada. Gustavo: And so the person who works in the payroll department now ...? Brittany: That is Monica, and later in this interviewing process you will meet her if it makes sense and we are all moving along together. Monica is an ace but she is not interested in running our payroll process. She is a wizard at creating reports, using our HRIS and analyzing payroll data. This role is a lot more involved with our relationship with ADP and our department managers as well as our employees and of course, the HR staff. Gustavo: Can you tell me about how the HR department is organized? Brittany: Definitely! I'm the Director of HR.
I report to our CEO, Mike Chambers, and I'm responsible for HR, Payroll, Training and Administration. There are seven of us in the department all together -- this new Payroll Supervisor, Monica, me, two HR Generalists, one Training person and one Administration person who works with our department admins and receptionists. Those folks are not in the HR department but we work very closely together.
Of course, we work closely with Finance too, and as we go forward in this process our CFO, Geeta, will be part of the interviewing team for this position. Gustavo: So would it be fair to say that as Payroll positions go, this one is very HR-focused? Brittany: That's exactly right. Geeta and I agreed that we wanted Payroll in HR because it's an employee service function to us. The point of running the payroll as far as we're concerned is to make sure that people get paid correctly and on time and that their questions get answered. Of course we work hand-in-hand with Finance but apart from expense reimbursements, our Finance folks don't work as closely with our team as we do in HR.
Gustavo: Great. That really helps. Can you tell me about the major issues you're facing in Payroll? Brittany: Well, we're doing great with ADP who also handles our HRIS, but like I said we have employees coming and going quite often, because we hire for seasonal roles in our centers around the country and here in our office, we process the payroll for all of them. We have people working in fourteen states so there are all kinds of state requirements to deal with. There's long-distance communication with employees we seldom talk to about other HR issues, although we try to be open and available to everyone. So the payroll connection to those remote employees and even to our teammates here is incredibly important. It's the number one way they connect with HR and vice versa. As you know, not every Payroll department in the world is viewed as an employee-service function. Gustavo (with a chuckle): That is true. I like the idea of being available to employees.
When I was at Acme Explosives, I held monthly lunchtime meetings where people could come and ask questions about payroll. You wouldn't think anyone would come but they did, because they wanted to understand their deductions and 401(k) matching and so on -- all kinds of things. I brought up topics and explained them, things like garnishing payroll and other sometimes-sticky topics so that no one should be embarrassed to have to ask. That reminds me -- you went through the staff roster and their roles but you didn't mention benefits. How do you handle employee benefits? Brittany: There is a person in Finance named Nancy who works with our benefits providers.
I'm glad you mentioned that because she would be an important person to you and vice versa if you come to work here. Our two HR Generalists work with the employees on their benefits issues but everything is administered outside, by our benefits partners. Gustavo: And is there a benefits hotline or online portal for your employees to get benefits answers from? Brittany: Definitely. One fun thing we do is that our two Generalists and our Administrative person, Gretchen, come up with lots of ideas for new 'soft' benefits for our employees all the time -- like discounts at local restaurants, free tickets to local performances and so on. We have a very wide-reaching definition for "benefits," way beyond health and 401(k) and so on. We figure that having 350 employees in one building has got to give us some clout that we can use for our employees' benefit! Gustavo: So there must be deductions from paychecks for some of those benefit plans -- Brittany: Yes, and luckily a lot of that is automated. Tell me about your plans -- why this is a good next opportunity for you? Gustavo: I ran a Payroll department from 2002 to 2011 for the City of Townsville. They outsourced their payroll process completely in 2011 and I started consulting, but I missed being on a team. I learned a tremendous amount consulting, so that was great. I took a contract job running the payroll for the Townsville Shakespeare Festival for two years but it was quite a placeholder job, in that there are no plans to grow the staff size or update the processes or innovate in HR and that makes sense for the Festival organization, but of course there wasn't a lot of challenge for me. I was interested in this opportunity when I heard about it at the Payroll Managers Association meeting because of your growth and your innovative approach to HR. You have a great reputation! Brittany: That's great to hear and I will also "Back atcha" because several HR people I know have recommended you to me. Gustavo: Glad to hear that! Can I ask you a question about your plans for growth in headcount? Brittany: Yes, we have 350 people here now and another 400 spread out across the country. We have a Regional Operations Manager named Bruno who reports to our Director of Regional Operations but wears an HR hat, too. He is the de facto HR generalist chief for our folks in the regions and there are Operations people in each of our 15 offices who sit in on our HR meetings and function as generalists, part-time. You'd be working closely with those folks, too.
We plan to add another 100 people in the next year. Gustavo: Only because I've been through growth-and-contraction cycles before, I wonder, will any of that hiring be contingent or will everybody be on the payroll? Brittany: That's a brilliant question and a topic we talk about all the time.
It's a double-edged sword. We want to make the commitment to people that they are fully part of the team and entitled to employee benefits and everything that comes with full-time employment, but as you say, nothing is certain and we don't want to be in a headcount reduction situation if we can possibly avoid it. We hire very conservatively here. Everybody is stretched thin and we also hire temps and interns, much more freely than we do full-time employees, to cover the gaps. Gustavo: And of course those people are paid through temp firms. Brittany: Yes, but they still participate in some of the things we do for fun here while they're on the team on a temporary basis. They are our principal source for new hires, also. Gustavo: Fantastic! And how do you view pay ranges? Is there a philosophical point of view on that?

Brittany: We don't have formal pay ranges. They are too many variables even between two people who perform the same roles. Our Administrative person Gretchen does our EEO reporting and she makes sure that people are not unfairly paid based on their EEO status but we pay people based on their role, its impact, their experience, and what the market dictates for their qualifications. Over time we reward people who do an outstanding job. We don't have a pre-set annual increase schedule. Our managers budget for salary increases and when their budgets are approved, they negotiate salary increases with each person. Gustavo: Negotiate? Can you tell me more about that?
Brittany: It's a negotiation. We collaborate with our teammates on everything, so a manager is not going to say "Here's your raise -- end of conversation!" They have already started to talk about the next year's compensation before the new year arrives. Sometimes people don't get a pay raise and they understand why. It's not that we don't value them but the role may not warrant a pay raise and in that case, if there is a step-up role available we try to give them a crack at it. Sometimes people leave us because of pay issues and we understand that. Our voluntary turnover is about three percent per year and we have almost no involuntary turnover, because we hire people very carefully. Gustavo: Apart from the temp firms, what are the other principal sources for your new hires? Brittany: Temp firms and employee referrals are our two biggest sources. We pay bonuses between $100 and $500 for new hires that our employees bring us, once they stay three months. After that it's job ads and word of mouth. Gustavo: What would you like to know about me and my background?
Brittany: I'd like to know more about how you would interface with our regions, for starters. You talked about those lunchtime meetings and that sounds great. Our two HR Generalists and our regional Operations folks who double as HR people would be interested in anything educational that will give our employees more of the information they want. Can you suggest some ways that you'd build a bridge between our headquarters office and our regions, where people are often on a bonus plan and a commission plan on top of their salary? End Of Script Brittany and Gustavo will spend a pleasant hour talking about problems, solutions and opportunities and letting one another see how the other person's brain works.
Will Brittany hire Gustavo? It's hard to say - she has three more candidates to meet after today and Brittany and Gustavo haven't talk about salary yet (but the salary range was in the job ad)! Do you think Brittany should hire Gustavo? Leave a comment and let us know!