

Presentation Skills

Presentation skills are the abilities and qualities necessary for creating and delivering a compelling presentation that effectively communicates information and ideas. They encompass what you say, how you structure it, and the materials you include to support what you say, such as slides, videos, or images.

Delivering effective presentations is critical in your professional and personal life. You'll need to hone your presentation skills in various areas, such as when giving a speech, convincing your partner to make a substantial purchase, and talking to friends and family about an important situation.

No matter if you're using them in a personal or professional setting, these are the skills that make it easier and more effective to convey your ideas, convince or persuade others, and experience success. A few of the benefits that often accompany improving your presentation skills include:

- Enriched written and verbal communication skills
- Enhanced confidence and self-image
- Boosted critical thinking and problem-solving capabilities
- Better motivational techniques
- Increased leadership skills
- Expanded time management, negotiation, and creativity

The better your presenting techniques, the more engaging your presentations will be. You could also have greater opportunities to make positive impacts in business and other areas of your life. Few questions to ask yourself as you review this list of some of the most effective presentation skills.

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Verbal communication: How you use language and deliver messages play essential roles in how your audience will receive your presentation. Speak clearly and confidently, projecting your voice enough to ensure everyone can hear. Think before you speak, pausing when necessary and tailoring the way you talk to resonate with your particular audience.

Body language : Body language combines various critical elements, including posture, gestures, eye contact, expressions, and position in front of the audience. Body language is one of the elements that can instantly transform a presentation that would otherwise be dull into one that's dynamic and interesting.

Voice projection : The ability to project your voice improves your presentation by allowing your audience to hear what you're saying. It also increases your confidence to help settle any lingering nerves while also making your message more engaging. To project your voice, stand comfortably with your shoulders back. Take deep breaths to power your speaking voice and ensure you enunciate every syllable you speak.

Posture :How you present yourself plays a role in your body language and ability to project your voice. It also sets the tone for the presentation. Avoid slouching or looking overly tense. Instead, remain open, upright, and adaptable while taking the formality of the occasion into account.

Storytelling : Incorporating storytelling into a presentation is an effective strategy used by many powerful public speakers. It has the power to bring your subject to life and pique the audience's curiosity. Don't be afraid to tell a personal story, slowly building up suspense or adding a dramatic moment. And, of course, be sure to end with a positive takeaway to drive your point home.

Active listening : Active listening is a valuable skill all on its own. When you understand and thoughtfully respond to what you hear—whether it's in a conversation or during a presentation—you'll likely deepen your personal relationships and actively engage audiences during a presentation. As part of your presentation skill set, it helps catch and maintain the audience's attention, helping them remain focused while minimizing passive response, ensuring the message is delivered correctly, and encouraging a call to action.

Stage presence: During a presentation, projecting confidence can help keep your audience engaged. Stage presence can help you connect with your audience and encourage them to want to watch you. To improve your presence, try amping up your normal demeanour by infusing it with a bit of enthusiasm. Project confidence and keep your information interesting.

Watch your audience as you're presenting. If you're holding their attention, it likely means you're connecting well with them.

Self-awareness :Monitoring your own emotions and reactions will allow you to react well in various situations. It helps you remain personable throughout your presentation and handle feedback well. Self-awareness can help soothe nervousness during presentations, allowing you to perform more effectively.

Writing skills:Writing is a form of presentation. Sharp writing skills can help you master your presentation's outline to ensure you stay on message and remain clear about your objectives from the beginning until the end. It's also helpful to have strong writing abilities for creating compelling slides and other visual aids.

Understanding an audience: When you understand your audience's needs and interests, you can design your presentation around them. In turn, you'll deliver maximum value to them and enhance your ability to make your message easy to understand.

TYPES OF PRESENTATION:

Every presentation is different, reflecting your unique business and the information you share. But, some common presentation types are used across various fields and teams. Before diving into specific slides or organization, consider the type that best suits your audience.

Here are some questions to get you started: Is your goal to inform or entertain? Who will you be speaking to: colleagues, investors, or potential customers? By thinking about these questions, you can choose the presentation format that best supports your message.

1. Educational Presentations

Educational presentations are a great way to introduce a new topic to people who aren't familiar with it. They can be especially helpful when you want to explain something complex, like a process, or share important facts in a clear way. Whether you're a teacher in a classroom or a trainer at a company, educational presentations can be a powerful tool for learning.

These presentations often use visuals like pictures or diagrams to make things easier to understand. They might also include step-by-step instructions to guide the audience through a process. Companies use them a lot to teach new employees about how things work at the company. The length of the presentation can be short or long, depending on what you're trying to teach.

2. Instructional Presentations

Instructional presentations help people learn more about a topic and sometimes even guide them on what to do next. They're similar to presentations used for education, but they might include some extra details or specific steps for the audience to follow.

Think of webinars or training sessions – these are examples of instructional presentations. They give people new information and help them develop new skills. For instance, if you're in HR, you might create one to explain how employees can sign up for the new insurance plan.

3. Persuasive Presentations

Many presentations aim to convince the audience of something, like a new idea, product, or way of doing things. They often address a specific issue and use facts and figures to explain why their solution is the best. Business proposals and sales talks are common examples.

For instance, a new company seeking funding might create a presentation to convince investors to support their idea. This presentation could explain a problem they see in the market, how their company solves it, and how they plan to make money. A similar presentation could also be used to secure additional funding for growth and future plans

4. Motivational Presentation

Motivational presentations aim to lift up the audience's spirits and help them deal with challenges. They spark interest in a subject and share a particular perspective or message. These presentations can be useful when you want to inspire a group of people. Sometimes, they might even use a personal story to connect with the topic.

Leaders in organizations often use motivational presentations to boost employee morale and encourage them to work harder. Recruiters might also use them to showcase employee success stories and get potential hires excited about joining the company.

5. Problem-solution Presentation

Have you ever needed to present an idea to help people make a decision? Problem-solution presentations are a great way to do that. They focus on explaining a challenge or issue and then offering potential solutions for the audience to consider. While similar to persuasive presentations, the main goal here is to discuss the problem clearly and share research so decision-makers can weigh the options and choose the best path forward. These presentations can include details about

the problem and a few possible solutions. They're a handy tool for many business meetings and discussions within organizations.

6. Project Presentations

Progress presentations are a way to share how a project, campaign, or initiative is moving along. They're similar to progress reports, but in a presentation format.

These presentations typically cover a few key points:

- **Important measurements:** This could include numbers or data that show how the project is doing.
- **Current status:** An update on where things stand at the moment.
- **Potential roadblocks:** Any challenges that might come up down the line.
- **Tasks still to do:** What needs to be completed next.

Project teams often use progress presentations to share updates on their work. This allows clients, colleagues, or other interested parties to stay informed and ask questions if needed.

7. Storytelling Presentations

Presentations that use a story format can be a great way to connect with your audience and share information in a more engaging way. This approach can be useful in many settings, from classrooms to company meetings. It can be especially helpful when you want to grab the attention of a specific group of people and make them feel involved.

Storytelling presentations might include personal stories or examples that relate directly to the main topic. For instance, if you're in marketing, you could use a story format to present a case study to your colleagues about a competitor's product and its success.

8. Visual Presentations

Presentations come in many forms, but some rely mostly on pictures, charts, and other visuals instead of text. These are called visual presentations. They're a good choice when you have limited time or your topic is easy to understand with pictures.

The goal of a visual presentation is to help people grasp the information quickly and keep them engaged. Businesses often use them to show what their products or services can do. For instance, a company selling shampoo might use before-and-after pictures to show the results.

Tips for Delivering an Effective Presentation

1. **Taking Notes:** To help remember what to say during your presentation, jot down some brief notes. Keep them simple and focused on keywords or short directions. This will allow you to connect with your audience and avoid missing any important points.
2. **Knowing Your Audience:** A little research about your audience before your presentation goes a long way. Understanding who they are and what they might be interested in helps you tailor your presentation to better address their needs and expectations.

3. **Planning for Interaction:** Think about how much audience interaction you want based on the length, purpose, and type of information in your presentation. This may involve allocating more time for questions and discussion.
4. **Know yourself:** Think about how comfortable you feel speaking in front of a group, especially if you don't know everyone. Consider your strengths and weaknesses as a presenter and how you can play to your strengths and improve on your weaknesses.
5. **Practice Makes Perfect:** Practicing your presentation beforehand, regardless of your experience level, can boost your confidence and help you identify areas for improvement. Go through each slide while talking to solidify the flow. Recording yourself can also be helpful.
6. **Be Prepared:** Technical problems can happen, so having a plan can help you avoid delays. If it's an in-person presentation, arriving early allows you to check the venue and ensure the equipment works properly.

Participating in meetings

Basic expectations are:

- A clearly defined purpose to your meeting
- Ask questions such as; why are we meeting? What are we trying to achieve? Meetings can also achieve interpersonal objectives like teambuilding, brain storming or problem solving.
- Make sure you clearly communicate the meeting purpose well in advance to give attendees time to prepare.
- Advise people of the meeting in time for them to be able to attend
- Lack of planning and sufficient notice can mean important people are missed out of meetings.
- Set an agenda
- An agenda aims to keep discussions on track and to keep everyone focussed on the issues. The agenda should be distributed to attendees before the meeting. Stay focused on the topic under discussion.
- Start and finish on time
- Make sure the meeting starts and finishes on time so participants feel that their time is valued and that they can plan for effective meeting participation to fit in with their work load.
- Manage the participants
- It is important that every person feels their attendance and contribution is valued. People must be given the opportunity to express their opinion as well as recognising they must also listen to others without interruption.

Tips for meeting attendees:

- ✓ respond in a timely manner to requests for agenda items

- ✓ be on time
- ✓ be well prepared:
- ✓ be familiar with the agenda and objectives
- ✓ if uncertain about the purpose or your role, ask beforehand
- ✓ review minutes of previous meeting, if any
- ✓ read or gather background information ahead of time
- ✓ have action items assigned to you at prior meetings completed
- ✓ bring a copy for yourself (and others if appropriate) of the agenda and other materials distributed in advance
- ✓ be concise and to the point
- ✓ participate in a constructive manner, don't interrupt, listen to others and be respectful
- ✓ stay on topic
- ✓ volunteer your time, talent and expertise to get things done
- ✓ be realistic in your availability and ability to carry out action items
- ✓ bring your diary for scheduling future meeting

CONFERENCING-SEMINARS-VIDEO CONFERENCING

CONFERENCING -SEMINAR:

A Conference is a large gathering of attendees, learning about a topic, over the course of a few days. The attendees usually attend the conference because they all have a common interest in the conference topic. Guests can also give their opinion and feedback on the topic at hand. Because conferences take place over the course of a few days, conferences also allow for networking between the guests and the presenters.

A seminar is an academic meeting where the guests not only learn new information, but they are given targeted training on the specific topic. Seminars can be small or large, depending on how many people you have registered. Seminars are typically held for only one day and for just a few hours. The guest speaking you have at your seminar are typically experts in their field, and there are usually 1-3 speakers per seminar. Each speaker can speak about the topic in their area of expertise, and guests can have multiple viewpoints on the topic!

Seminar vs Conference: A comparison chart

Basis For Comparison	Seminar	Conference
Meaning	Educational, shared information through communication, general discussion	Large gathering, specific topic, guests have common interest in the topic at hand
Session	Interactive	Consultative
Objective	Educate, train guests and discuss topics	Create solutions and gather opinions from guests on the topics covered
Participation of Audience	Active participation	Limited participation
Organized At	Seminar room, pre-planned space	Hotel, conference room, large meeting space, central location
Duration	One hour or more	Over the course of a few days
Type of Work	Presentation and discussion, learning and educating	Presentation, exchange of views, gathering of thoughts and ideas
Mode of Delivery	Academic and educational	Consultative
Audience	Can be large or small, guests willing to learn	Larger audience, active learning, sharing opinions and thoughts
Formality	Relatively formal	Very formal

Size

The size difference between a seminar and a conference can be quite large! A seminar is typically smaller than a conference, and a seminar can usually be held in one room. This space is usually set up with chairs facing the guest speakers, and all of your guests are sitting for the duration of the seminar. In contrast, a conference is much larger than a seminar. Guests typically attend the conference from all over, and the conference can even be broken up into smaller sections! Conferences are held in large conference rooms, specifically in a hotel or right in your workspace building, if you have a room that is large enough to accommodate everyone.

Dress code and formality

The dress code for seminars is similar to the dress code for a conference. Seminars are a bit less formal than conferences, so the dress code can be business casual. You will want to wear something appropriate for the workplace, but you don't need to dress completely formal. Conferences are larger gatherings of people, and you don't know who you may meet or the connections you may make. You may want to dress more professional during a conference, as you may make connections with some high-profile guests.

Duration

Seminars are much shorter in length than conferences, which typically last a few days. Seminars normally last for a few hours, usually between 1-3 hours. The information given at a seminar is able to be shared within those couple of hours, with guests asking questions at the end, if time allows. Conferences are held over a few days, as there is much more information to learn and share. Guests of a conference have more information they need to learn, and there can be several aspects of the conference that the guests need to attend. The maximum number of days a conference should be is 3.

Topic

Seminars typically have one topic to cover, with the guest speakers sharing all of the information they know on the topic. The topic can be chosen by the seminar hosts, and guests can attend if they are intrigued by the topic and want to learn more. Conferences also have a topic that is being covered, and the guests attend the conference because they all have a common interest in the topic. Guests of a conference can also share their thoughts, ideas and gather solutions to the topic.

Place

Seminars, while they're smaller, should be held in a smaller room, complete with chairs, tables and microphones. The setup of the seminar room can be changed, based on your event goals or the size of the group. If you want your guests to sit at tables and interact with one another, that can be done! If you want them to sit and absorb the information being presented, then you can eliminate the tables and just have chairs facing the speaker. For conferences, they are usually held in larger rooms, made specifically for conferences. This allows for many more guests to attend the conference, and for every guest to have room to move around. This space also allows for any networking events that may happen at the end of the conference. Whether you choose to host a

seminar or conference, keep in mind that geographical location is also important. 41.1% of event planners would only attend a physical in-person event if it was local, according to EventMB.

Session type

Seminars are interactive, with guests being able to ask questions and engage with the guest speakers. Depending on the topic chosen for the seminar, your guests can be interactive in the learning and teaching process from the guest speakers. Conferences are more consultative, with the attendees listening to the information being shared and then sharing their thoughts and ideas at the end.

Mode of delivery

Seminars are meant to be educational and informative to everyone! Depending on the topic, the guest speakers can educate the guests through presentations, demonstrations and hands-on activities. If you choose to host your seminar in a training mode, the guests attending the seminar will all have the exact same training, so there will be no questions in the future. (The training seminar can be recorded to be used as reference in the future). For conferences, the speakers can also share their information, and the guests can break into smaller groups to gather thoughts, share ideas and brainstorm solutions.

Certification

Seminars, where they are a smaller type of event that is still used to train attendees or share information, have the ability to certify the guests! The guests can acquire new skills and knowledge during these training sessions, and once the seminar is completed, the guest can receive a certificate of completion. This certification may have an expiration date, so be sure to keep your guests aware when their certification expires and encourage them to attend another seminar to re-certify themselves. In terms of conferences, there is no certification that comes along with attending. The discussions that happen during a conference are just that, and there is no certification or training that comes with a conference.

Participation

Seminars have participation from the guests throughout the seminar! Guests can ask questions and engage with the guest speakers as the seminar goes on; it's all a part of the educational process! Seminars, as we know, are educational in nature. Guests can become certified in the topic being discussed, as the participation and style of presentation helps guests learn in a more hands-on manner. According to 95 percent of marketers live events enable real connections with prospective customers. Conferences can sometimes have high participation, but in a different way. Attendees of the conference can use the information being shared to brainstorm ideas and devise solutions to any issues there are. Conferences usually have a portion of give and take between the guest speakers and the guests, so everyone has a chance to participate.

VIDEO-CONFERENCING:

Organizations are quickly adapting to the needed ecosystem for video conferencing. Meeting rooms are set up with cable internet connection and Powerful audio systems high definition

cameras and peripherals. By using hardware that is specifically designed for video conferencing meetings the experience of the users is amplified along with seamless voice and video conferencing software.

Considering the extensive use of this communication mode, two types of video conferencing have emerged: point to point conferencing and multipoint conferencing.

1. Point-To-Point Conferencing

In this method only two participants can communicate in real time despite their geographic locations. In this type of video conferencing feature, the participants use the platform for face to face discussions. For example, it is an ideal method for job interviews to be conducted as top employers are able to speed up the hiring process and can complete the hiring procedures especially the job interview virtually through video conferencing.

This is already a much popular option in the covid situation and brings a lot of flexibility to companies that operate remotely. It also improves the modern customer experience that businesses offer at a personalized level and streamlines the overall CS process. The ideal software and the video conferencing hardware always provide the actual connection between any concerns and enquiries raised by clients as well.

2. Multipoint Conferencing

In this method of video conferencing 3 or more participants are involved in interaction creating the essence of group video conferencing. This is essentially a feature that is different from the traditional three-way calling that is typical of business phone systems.

In multipoint conferencing the host will provide links for participants to join meetings in larger groups. For example It supports businesses in several office locations and remote workers by becoming an office bridge for multipoint conferencing. For software and hardware bridging, creating a hub for large conference calls, multiple point conferencing is a solution.

Video conferencing software is essentially VoIP Technology where transfer of audio and video signals between the two locations is based on special algorithms called codecs or coder decoder. In the first stage of data compression the image of the meeting or conference is captured by the camera analogue video Signals and speech and audio signals are all packaged into data packets for the internet to understand and transfer to begin.

In data the compression or decoding of the transfer of the data over the internet and tourist destination is reached and changes back to analogue video and audio signals for attendees at the

other side to hear and see. Video conferencing app are focusing on echo cancellation and other sound delays.

There are several features that makeup video conferencing software which are discussed in the following sections:

Screen Sharing

In video conferencing solutions, screen sharing is a critical must-have feature. It is necessary for sharing documents in common while presenting or discussing or representation of graphs or images during the online video calling. Screen sharing enables the whole discussion to be centered on the visual on the screen while the speakers continue to speak about the contents on the page or referencing it for discussions.

It enables the whole team to brainstorm and effectively contribute to the discussion. It provides for a sufficient information exchange for the large group to arrive at necessary decisions. Point to be noted here is that some apps allow only the host to share the screen and others are allowed upon permission to present.

Simultaneous Annotation

In this feature the need to annotate on a shared screen is supported. In the middle of discussions and exchange of ideas points or concepts need to be annotated and shared on screen for discussion points to be made. Hence it is important that simultaneous annotation features are enabled for a video conferencing solution. Some apps allow only the host to annotate and simultaneous annotation is enabled upon permission.

Chat Box

In this feature the chat box supports multiple conversations between the participants. This allows a chat box to appear allowing the participants to mention and suggest without interrupting the speaker.

This could be for discussions among the listeners or for the speaker to observe and included within the conversation bus stop new paragraph while most apps offer private as well as group chat option apart from chat logs being saved at the end of the video conference.

File Sharing

This is one of the important features of video conferencing as it allows for secure transfer of files between participants on the live video call. It helps in providing the complete document transfer are video audio recording within the meeting itself and will not have to depend on third party solutions.

The most important aspect here is that a secure ecosystem is available for the transfer of data since businesses constantly use confidential documents with use for audio bytes.

Video Call Recording

A video conferencing solution is a necessary procedure for business operations. Firstly, recorded video calls will help those who have not attended the meeting or for others to evaluate and gather information, or gather business insights for further referencing and documentation purposes or simply streaming at a later point of time.

Typically, this video call recording feature is a must for documentation purposes and for later discussions.

Device Switching

One of the key features in video call recording is device switching. Device switching is a seamless ability to continue the video conference across different devices. An essential feature is that there is no description of a meeting needed, and the participants can have mobility and better access to quality internet that's enough for device switching conferences.

Advantages Of Video Conferencing:

- **Improved Productivity**

Collaborative work options are enhanced in video conferencing essentially allowing for screen sharing group chat system transfer collaboration which brings about improved output. It also builds on audio conferencing email SMS where everybody is able to synchronize and arrive at informed decisions at a faster rate and efficiently.

- **Humanized Conversations**

Communicators are able to see each other, in the video conferencing solution this visual aspect helps in improving the video conferencing experience and has become one of the most engaging forms for exchange of conversation. It helps in building body language and facial expressions and does not need a face to face interaction.

- **Superior Communication**

It is a fact that visual data is processed faster by humans than text data or audio data. Hence, in a video conference the participants have better understanding and information retained is also comparatively better to a telephonic call or a teleconference. At the same time, visual communication ensures that all participants are alert and there is focus on the discussion points.

- **Well-Structured Meetings**

It is identified that video conferencing are scheduled and follow strict start and end time. The participants have time bound discussions and conversation and the primary focus on their gender is updated consistently.

Disadvantages Of Video Conferencing:

- **No Personal Interaction**

While video conferencing is a good solution, it fails in the one aspect of perception – that of personal interaction. The virtual space face to face interaction is highly technology -laden and possibilities of missing out on the vital body language in a pixelated image and stuttering videos.

- **Technical Issues**

The most important factor of video conferencing is the difficulties of technical glitches. Whenever there is a failure in hardware or software on a network there are no smooth transitions available. This results in failure of remote connections and hampers the change in the settings of the video calls.

- **Expensive to Set Up**

Video conferencing solutions are very expensive to set up. The simple features available on a tight budget will be insufficient to support advanced features that require substantial expenditure in the process.

- **Different Time Zones**

Fundamental issues with video conferencing are the different time zones in which year the communicators are attending. However, this is not really a video conferencing solution drawback but more towards the working capacities of the organization. The comparison of the advantages and disadvantages of video conferencing solutions leads to the conclusion that the advantages far outweigh the disadvantages. Business using video conferencing solutions is of vital importance both strategically as well as monetary.

Technical Paper Presentation:

Presentation skills are the skills you need in delivering effective and engaging presentations to a variety of audiences. These skills cover a variety of areas such as the structure of your presentation, the design of your slides, the tone of your voice and the body language you convey.

Structure is important because a well-organized presentation creates an impression that you know what you are talking about-you will gain the audience's trust and they will be more likely to listen to you. A structure provides a logical flow so that you can provide the information that the audience needs to follow your presentation. The structure will help you become more comfortable following this flow. There is a natural structure to presenting and the following structure formalizes this process.

Purpose

To determine your purpose, ask "What are the main points I want my audience to take away from my presentation"? This provides focus for you and the audience is clear on what they will gain listening to your presentation.

Audience pre-assessment

Audience pre-assessment

It is important to identify the characteristics, knowledge and needs of your audience so that you are delivering the 'right' presentation to the 'right' audience. Know who your audience is, what they want/need to know and what is their background. This step is done before the presentation or throughout.

Opening your Presentation/Bridge: This is also known as the hook. It is designed to grab the audience's attention and provide them with a reason to be interested in the presentation

Body of Presentation: This is the major portion of the presentation. It is necessary that it connects directly to your purpose or bridge. Cover enough points to achieve your purpose (no more) and be sure to support your points clearly and concisely.

Closing your Presentation: This is the final impression that you will leave with your audience- make sure it is a strong one. Connect back to your purpose and let them know where you have been. Leave your audience with a clear understanding of your points.

Giving presentations is already nerve wracking. Non-native speakers face the additional challenges of language and cultural barriers to communication. Non-native speakers can dramatically improve their presentation skills and become significantly more understandable to the audience by focusing on three key areas of English communication: phrasing, intonation and stress. English-speaking audiences expect to hear certain patterns in these areas. If they do not hear these patterns, they will have a difficult time understanding you, and may lose interest in your presentation. Phrasing and Thought Groups Thought groups put information in understandable chunks to help lead the listener through the speaker's message. Clear boundaries showing where the phrases start and end, not only make it easier for your audience to follow your message but make your speech sound less choppy and more fluent.

TECHNICAL PAPER PRESENTATIONS

Structure: Title

- Abstract
- Introduction
- Background Material
- Description of the Proposed Work (e.g. algorithm, architecture, protocol, etc.)
- Results and Discussions
- Conclusions
- References

Some Tips for Good Presentation

- Do not put too much text in slides.
- Font size should be around 32.
- Try to use as many pictures, figures and charts, as you can instead of using texts.
- There should be 1 or 2 slides for each minute of talk.
- Don't read your slides. However, from time to time you can look at your slides.
- Don't stand at one place while talking. Try to move around while talking.
- Have some body motion.
- Maintain eye contact with the audience.

INTERVIEW TECHNIQUES, ETIQUETTE

Definition

Interviewing is the meeting of two people for the purpose of exchanging information and ideas through questions and responses. This exchange involves communication and leads to joint understanding about a particular topic.

Purpose

The purpose of interviewing is to discover what is on/in someone's mind, not to put ideas in the person's mind. The type of questions that the one asks in an interview is instrumental in determining the value of data collected in interviews. Care must be taken not to lead the person being interviewed in a particular direction. Consequently, the quality of information gained in an interview is based very much on the skills of the interviewer. Interviewers must proceed with the assumption that the knowledge and experience of the person being interviewed is of value, and it is the interviewers job to uncover that knowledge and experience.

Interviewing Strategies

- Begin an interview by explaining succinctly the purpose of the interview and how the information will be used. Example: The purpose of this interview is to get information that will help us design a system that will be easy to use and meet the needs of those using it.
- Keep the interview on track. Maintain control of the interview by knowing what you want to find out, asking the right questions to get that information, and giving appropriate feedback to the interviewee. Time for interviews is usually limited, so it is important to redirect responses that are irrelevant and to control the length of time devoted to lengthy digressions.
- Allow interviewees to respond to questions in their own words and to express their perspectives. Avoid leading questions or questions that slant the answers given in a particular direction. The way a question is worded is very important in how the interviewee will respond to the question.
- Questions should be open-ended allowing the interviewees to respond in their own words. There are a few exceptions, such as demographic questions and knowledge questions.

- Minimize or intersperse demographic questions with other type questions to avoid making interviewees uncomfortable.

- Avoid phrasing questions so that they suggest a "yes" or "no" answer. Instead of asking "Were you the trainer for this program", ask "what was your role in this program?"

- Avoid jumping in to fill silences. Give the interviewee time to formulate answers. The interviewer should not do more talking than the interviewee. The interviewee should not be simply confirming or denying statements made by the interviewer.

Assume the interviewee has something to say, and phrase your questions to indicate that. Instead of asking "have you learned anything from using this application", ask "what have you learned from using this application?"

- Ask clear, singular questions.. Avoid asking multiple questions without giving the interviewee a chance to respond to each question individually. Avoid asking "How easy is the program to use and what do you like and dislike about it?"

Break the question into a series of three questions.

- Ask questions that are understandable to the interviewee. Use correct terminology if specialized terminology is used in the setting, and know what terminology interviewees use among themselves with respect to the application. Avoid using jargon unless you are sure the jargon are used in the setting and that you are using the jargon correctly.

- In general, avoid why questions that seem to challenge the interviewee. Why questions might imply that a person's response is not appropriate. "Why do you say that?"

- Try to establish a rapport with the interviewee by asking neutral questions - questions that encourage the interviewee to respond honestly without feeling you are judging the answers.

- Sometimes it helps to phrase clarifying questions in the form of an example. The examples should be balanced between positive and negative kinds of responses. Some employees have told me that they never use the documentation for this application, while others have told me that they cannot use the application without

regularly using the documentation. What has been your experience using the application?

- Make a transition statement when the direction of the questions is going to change. "We have been talking about the documentation for the application, now I'd like to ask you some questions about the actual application itself".
- Even if you tape record an interview, it is important to take observation notes as well. A headshake does not record well.
- Take an interest in what the interviewee is saying. Be sensitive to and respect the person being interviewed.

Formal interview

Formal interviews are commonplace at larger organisations and could include the company's chief executives sitting in on the discussion. These interviews typically involve fewer personal questions, focusing more on a prospective employee's experience rather than their personality. If you have an upcoming interview with executives, understanding how they work allows you to prepare for one successfully. In this article, we look at what formal interviews are, explain why companies use them and detail what you can expect.

Why do companies use formality in an interview?

Multiple factors could lead to an organisation adopting this interview style, usually a mix of logistical needs and company benefits. Some of these reasons or factors are:

The urgency of the position

When an organisation has just a limited amount of time to find someone for a role, especially one critical to the company's continued operation, it helps to have informal interviews that can support this process. While using a thorough interview in a formal setting has obvious benefits, it can take weeks, even months, to complete throughout a rigorous screening process. Some positions don't require an urgent hire, but the organisation may consider it worthwhile and even necessary to use this process to test for a strong candidate. If the firm can take more time, interviews with executives can be useful in finding the most suitable person for the job.

The employee level

Organisations can sometimes headhunt high-level employees directly or have someone in mind for this job from within their company. Some employees, such as manual labourers, are more easily replaceable and more likely to have an informal interview, which doesn't take much time. Mid-range positions and some entry-level office jobs can usually represent more risk for an organisation, particularly if they involve specialist skills. When skills are such an important factor

in the role, a lengthy interview process that emphasises experience and suitability could be a good approach.

The organisation's size

Smaller businesses may only have the resources to conduct informal interviews, or they may not want to alienate a potential hire with an overly formal atmosphere. Larger organisations have a greater ability to devote more time to each interviewee and can find other internal employees to cover the role's responsibilities temporarily. Bigger companies might also find it difficult to oversee every employee because of their size, so they want to be confident in every hire. These organisations may have different standards, and their work may be too essential to take any chances on a single hiring manager's opinion.

INFORMAL INTERVIEW:

An informal interview, also known as a conversational or informal chat interview, is a non-formal job interview, often held in a neutral setting such as a café, usually over food or drink. Informal interviews can also be virtual. If you are invited to 'come in to have an informal chat about the role/learn more about the role' or to see 'how the role could work for you', it is likely to be an informal interview. They are less likely to be part of the formal graduate recruitment process for a large company; where they do occur, they are usually conducted at the end or the beginning of the recruitment process. They are most likely to happen for part-time jobs and entry-level roles at smaller organisations.

ETIQUETTE:

1. Prepare in advance
2. Act professionally
3. Use positive body language
4. Use clear and detailed sentences
5. Direct the conversation towards your attributes
6. Express gratitude