

Interview Preparation

by Sophia Tutorial



WHAT'S COVERED

In this lesson, you will learn about the use of interviews as research material and how to prepare for them. Specifically, this lesson will cover:

1. Preparing for Your Interview
2. Question Preparation
3. Preparing for Interviewers

1. Preparing for Your Interview

An **interview** is a conversation between two or more people where questions are asked by the interviewer to elicit facts or statements from the interviewee.

Interviews are used for purposes that range from evaluating job candidates to collecting market research and creating news stories. Interviews are usually led and completed by the interviewer based on what the interviewee says.

They tend to be far more personal than questionnaires and surveys, as the interviewer works directly with the interviewee. The format also ranges depending on the context, purpose, and constraints for both parties.



TERM TO KNOW

Interview

A formal meeting in person, for the assessment of a candidate or applicant.

2. Question Preparation

Once you've figured out everything you need to know about your interview subject or interviewer, it is time to prepare your questions. There are two approaches to this.

First, you can make a list of **talking points**. These aren't necessarily specific questions, however they serve as a guide for main points you want to make sure you hit over the course of your interview.

Alternatively, you can be even more prepared by coming up with a set of questions for your interview subject or interviewer. Make sure you ask enough questions to get the information, or to demonstrate your

knowledge of a certain subject or industry.



HINT

Keep in mind timing and pacing during the interview. It is easy to overwhelm or appear aggressive if you ask too many probing or irrelevant questions.

As an interviewer, you may use open-ended and close-ended questions. Close-ended questions typically have a yes or no answer, or some kind of definitive fact. Open-ended questions are those that are open to interpretation and experience.



TERM TO KNOW

Talking Point

A specific topic raised in a conversation or argument which is intended as a basis for further discussion, especially one which represents a point of view.

3. Preparation for Interviewers

Even if you are planning to interview the foremost expert in your subject field, you should always do some research into your interview subject no matter how famous they might be. You'll want to do this for a couple of reasons.

First, you'll want to establish rapport right away with your interview subject, even from the very first communication you have with the person asking if they'll consent to being a primary source for your research.

Second, you'll want to evaluate that you have in fact selected the best person with the most credibility and authority to speak to that information for which you seek.



SUMMARY

In this lesson, you learned about **preparing for interviews** that you may conduct as part of the research process. Thoroughly doing your homework on a potential interview subject not only helps you to build rapport with him or her during your interview, it helps to confirm whether or not your interviewee makes an appropriate primary source. Whether you write out talking points or specific **questions**, make sure to pay attention during your interview to look for opportunities to ask follow-up questions. Both **interviewers** and interviewees should keep in mind factors such as timing and pacing to keep the discussion focused.

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