

HOW TO NAIL A GROUP INTERVIEW



Group interviews can take you by surprise, but more and more, companies are using them to effectively find job candidates and expedite the interview process. And with the rising importance of office dynamics, group interviews aren't going away.

During a group interview you may be asked to answer typical interview questions, but you may also be put to the test. Expect to find a problem solving or work-simulation exercise, along with discussion around the problem, solving process. The purpose of this style of interview is to see how you interact with others, demonstrate your skills in a crowd, and solve problems on the spot.

Your goal in this setting is to stand out (in a good way), so that you can move past this first round and secure a solo interview. Here's how to use the group setting as an opportunity to shine:

Don't shy away from networking:

When waiting for an interview resist the urge to pull out your phone, and instead introduce yourself and ask questions of the others, even if the employers are not in the room yet. How you react to the situation and the group is indicative of many things in an employer's eyes, including how you will interact with the company's team and react to future surprises on the job.

Involve everyone:

While the other candidates may be your competition, they can also assist you on your path to one-on-one. Throughout the activity, having the ability to address others by name will make you stand out and appear like a leader. Use the knowledge you built while waiting for the interview to begin by addressing other candidates by name or referencing a conversation. You'll also want to build off of other candidates' ideas. If someone answers a question, follow it up by addressing their response and adding your own thoughts.

Be yourself:

Many candidates, in an effort to force themselves into the role of a leader and show that they are trying, can come across as overly aggressive. Speaking over others or discounting their opinions will backfire. Yes, you should speak up and make sure you're being noticed, but remember that interviewers aren't looking for the loudest voice in the room.

If it's not your personality to constantly speak in a crowd, be sure that when you do answer a question you do so with purpose. In order to speak purposefully, you have to listen to the interviewers and interviewees and stay engaged in where the conversation is headed. Don't start your answer with an apology for the interjection and don't let your voice trail off halfway through.

Follow up

Make sure you stand out by sending a thank you note and referencing a part of the conversation in which you contributed. The point is to make the interviewer recall your face and your answer (in a positive way).