

2.1: Introduction

The Interview

Many of us have or will sit in a waiting room with our best clothes on awaiting a job (or school) interview. You can feel your palms sweat and thoughts race as you wait for your name to be called. You look around at the office environment and imagine yourself walking through those doors everyday. People walk by and smile, and overall, you have a really good first impression of the organization. You hope they like you. You tell yourself to remember to smile, while recalling all your experience that makes you the perfect person for this job. A moment of self-doubt may occur, as you wonder about the abilities of the other people being interviewed and hope you have more experience and make a better impression than they do. You hear your name, stand up, and give a firm handshake to the HR manager. The interview has begun.

As she walks you back to a conference room, you think you see encouraging smiles as you pass by people. She asks you to take a chair and then tells you what the interview process will be like. She then asks the first question, “Tell me about yourself.” As you start discussing your experience, you feel yourself relax, just a little bit. After the interview finishes, she asks you to take a quick cognitive test, which you feel good about. She tells you she will be doing reference checks and will let you know by early next week.

To get to this point, the hiring manager may have reviewed hundreds of résumés and developed criteria she would use for selection of the right person for the job. She has probably planned a time line for hiring, developed hiring criteria, determined a compensation package for the job, and enlisted help of other managers to interview candidates. She may have even performed a number of phone interviews before bringing only a few of the best candidates in for interviews. It is likely she has certain qualities in mind that she is hoping you or another candidate will possess. Much work goes into the process of hiring someone, with selection being an important step in that process. A hiring process done correctly is time-consuming and precise. The interviewer should already have questions determined and should be ready to sell the organization to the candidate as well. This chapter will discuss the main components to the selection process.

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