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About This Document

owner	HR
access & use	Public
what it is	Reference Guide for staff on best practices and Company policy on conducting interviews
who uses it	HR, Managers, and Staff involved in the recruiting and hiring process.
used with	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ <i>IV-ALL-2520-R. Sample Interview Questions</i> ◆ <i>IV-ALL-2540-M. Q&A-style Panel Interview Questionnaire</i> ◆ <i>IV-ALL-2550-M. Presentation-style Panel Interview Questionnaire</i>

Introduction

Interviews are crucial to the recruiting and hiring process. Regardless of format, the main purpose of any employment interview is to facilitate the exchange of information between interviewer and candidate.

The interview allows the candidate to sell themselves, their skills, and their experience to the interviewer, and allows the interviewer to sell the position, the leaders of the Company, and the Company's mission to the candidate.

This guide is for anyone involved in conducting phone screen and in-person interviews. It describes our Company guidelines and practices related to legislated requirements, as well as how to prepare for and conduct effective interviews.

If you are a new manager, new to interviewing, or feel uncomfortable or nervous in the interviewer role, review this guide to familiarize yourself with Company standards and expectations around interviewing. It contains many helpful tips and tricks that will help put both you and the interview candidate at ease. If you have questions about this guide, or our interviewing process, please contact CUSTOMIZER: Example, HR.

Terminology

The terms below are used throughout this guide.

Applicant	Any individual who applies for a position in the Company. The application may either be solicited (applying for an open, posted position) or unsolicited (applying for a future position without referring to a currently open, posted position)
Candidate	An applicant the Company has contacted for the purpose of exploring the possibility to hire
Incumbent	Person who currently holds the position
Hiring Manager	Person who will supervise the new hire
Phone Screen	Phone or video conversation held with prospective candidates to screen which ones will be invited for an in-person interview
In-Person Interview	Face-to-face interview held with the candidate, usually held in a meeting room on the company premises
Interview Panel	Panel selected to participate in an in-person interview so that feedback on candidate suitability can be given and received from multiple stakeholders
Round 1 Interview	First round of in-person interviews that enables the Company and candidates to learn more about each other and determine if there is mutual value in moving to the next stage
Round 2 Interview	Second round of in-person interviews that enables the Company and candidate(s) to determine if there is a long-term fit
Q&A-style Interview	Most commonly practiced interview type. The interviewer(s) asks the candidate questions and the candidate responds. The candidate is given an opportunity at the end to ask the Company representatives questions.
Presentation-Style Interview	Commonly practiced for senior positions. Candidates are asked to prepare a presentation on a problem relevant to the position. Candidate is given about 20 minutes to deliver the presentation and balance of the interview is reserved for Q&A about the presentation and candidate

General Guidelines for Interviewing

So, you're going to do some interviewing! Whether you're an old pro or this is your first time, it's a good idea to review the general guidelines, tips and cautions in this section. They apply to all types of interviews, and keeping them in mind will help you:

- ◆ Avoid common pitfalls
- ◆ Keep an open mind
- ◆ Make a positive impression on the candidate
- ◆ Get more out of the interview
- ◆ Avoid legal faux-pas

You want several opportunities to interact with the candidate before you hire them, so you can get to know them better and observe them with different people in different settings. Therefore, interviewing is a multi-step process:

1. Phone screen conducted by HR or the Hiring Manager with 6-10 potential candidates
2. Round 1 in-person interview conducted by a small Interview Panel with 2-4 stronger potential candidates
3. Round 2 in-person interview conducted by a small Interview Panel (not necessarily all the same people as for Round 1) with the 1-2 strongest potential candidates.

Top 10 Interviewing Tips

1. GIVE YOURSELF ENOUGH TIME

Make sure you allocate enough time for each interview. Book meeting rooms for in-person interviews, well in advance so you have ample time before and after the interview to set-up and debrief, and so the candidate does not feel rushed.

2. BE PREPARED

Review the candidate's resume and cover letter before the interview. Have your list of candidate-specific questions ready. This will help to keep you focused on the experience, attributes, and skills you are looking for in a candidate.

3. PUT THE CANDIDATE AT EASE

No matter how senior or experienced the candidate may be, it's very likely that he or she is nervous. Your job as the interviewer is to make the candidate as comfortable as possible.

Try to establish a rapport. Make a connection. Look for something in the resume you can connect with. This may be a hobby, somewhere they worked that you know something about, or perhaps there's something else you have in common – university, hometown, etc. Chatting briefly about something of mutual interest before starting the interview will help the candidate relax. The more at ease the candidate is, the more likely you are to get an accurate picture of who they are.

4. SMILE AND MAKE EYE CONTACT

Laughter and music are both common feel-good connectors. Unfortunately, we can't belt out tunes during an interview, but we can insert appropriate humor, and smile throughout the interview. Maintain good eye contact throughout the interview. Nod slightly to show you understand and are listening.

5. PAY ATTENTION TO BODY LANGUAGE

When conducting an in-person interview, pay close attention to body language. Did the candidate walk into the room confidently? Was their handshake firm and confident? Were they doing a lot of shifting and tapping? Did they make eye contact while shaking your hand? Do they sit up straight, or slouching or tilting/rocking their chair? Leaning towards you or away from you? Does the candidate appear disinterested, or are they engaged in the interview?

6. DON'T DO ALL THE TALKING.

Listen. Let the candidate do the talking.

7. DON'T BE AFRAID OF SILENCE.

Give the candidate time to think about a question. Don't feel the need to jump in immediately when there are silences.

8. AVOID 'YES' OR 'NO' QUESTIONS

Try to avoid asking questions that can be answered with yes or no. Your questions should be open-ended, and if possible situational and/or behavioral (see **Situational vs. Behavioral Interviewing**).

9. CONTROL THE TIME

Throughout the interview, keep close track of time (but try not to make it obvious to the candidate by constantly checking your watch!). At the beginning of the interview, advise the candidate you will be checking time occasionally to make sure you stay on schedule, and you may sometimes have to move on to the next question before they've finished an answer.

10. GIVE THE CANDIDATE THE OPPORTUNITY TO ASK QUESTIONS

Be prepared to answer questions from the candidate.

11. NOT A TOP 10. THIS IS WHERE WE REMIND YOU TO BE CAUTIOUS

There's a fine line between coming across as an interviewer making small talk and coming across as someone who may be looking for a personal connection.

If a candidate is uncomfortably nervous, resist the urge to 'ham it up' as this can quickly escalate to inappropriate comments.

Bottom line? Keep it professional at all times.

Common Misconceptions that Sabotage Interviews

Respect the time, talent, and uniqueness of all candidates. Recognize and avoid these common misconceptions before you eliminate potentially excellent candidates.

Misconception	What it Sounds Like	Why it's a Problem
There's a silver bullet	"I will only look at candidates who have the right degree, live in the perfect location, have the exact right niche skills, love the same kind of dogs I do, speak Mandarin, juggle 5 oranges and 3 lemons while skateboarding..."	Your pre-conceptions about things not related to the position success traits may cause you to overlook candidates with good potential. Diversity is a good thing.
A-list players on a shoe-string budget	"I will only settle for the ideal candidate who works for the big competitor, but I'm not willing to compromise on salary."	Think of all-star sports professional. Why would a superstar join your team for a minor league salary?
I can take my own sweet time	"She'll just have to wait. I'm too busy this week to put together an offer, and I'm away next week."	Your best candidates are probably entertaining offers from other employers. Your procrastination is very off-putting.
This job is the holy grail for A-list players	"Candidates want and need to work for us. It's about what they can do for us, not what we can do for them."	Not all candidates are desperate for a job, and the best ones will likely have their pick of several. They know what they can do for you; what they need to know is why they should work here instead of somewhere else.
If you don't walk like me...	"If the candidate doesn't walk or talk like me, think like me, have the same views and leadership style, work 70 hours a week like me...they won't be successful like me."	Focus on the potential candidate's competence, experience, past successes, not his or her similarity to you or your work style.

Two Ears, One Mouth

"We have two ears and one mouth so that we can listen twice as much as we speak." *Epictetus*

Listening is the key to building rapport. It's more important to the success of your interview than the brilliant list of questions you prepare. Remember, you're not getting any information when you're talking.

- ◆ Speak only to build rapport and navigate the interview. Impress your candidate with your listening skills, rather than with your talking.
- ◆ Don't oversell the job. Let candidates tell you why they're right for the job. You don't want a candidate walking out the door thinking, "They know nothing about me."
- ◆ Listen to understand, not to reply.
- ◆ Resist the urge to fill in the long awkward moments of silence, even though you know the candidate is feeling the same way. The pause may draw out answers your questions won't. You want thoughtful answers, so give the candidate the time to ponder. It doesn't mean engaging in a 'stare-down'—use the pause to catch up on your notes while the candidate is thinking.
- ◆ Listen for the nugget. An offhand remark could be the tip of an iceberg, the hint at a better story. The nugget can lead the interview in a completely different direction with a different ending.
- ◆ Record yourself in an interview. It's the fastest way to cure you of long drawn out sentences and hijacking the conversation.

Confidentiality

All hiring managers, interviewers, administrators, HR—anyone with access to resumes or applicant information—must remember that resumes and applicant information are private and confidential. Candidates have a reasonable expectation of privacy with respect to their resumes and applications, and it's our responsibility to respect that privacy, both inside and outside the Company.

Candidate names and personal information must not be discussed with anyone other than those directly involved in the hiring process. This is particularly important for managers who have access to candidates' behavioral profiling results. This information is very sensitive and must never be discussed with anyone outside of HR.

For this reason, all competition documents, resumes, and interview notes must be locked and safeguarded until the competition is closed. At that point, all materials are CUSTOMIZER: Insert your process here for safeguarding confidential records and what to do with them once the competition is closed. ConnectsUs is not a fan of paper. We encourage you to follow our recommended electronic filing system for recruiting.

Interviewing & the Law

CUSTOMIZER: Insert your jurisdiction's restrictions and laws. Below is an example that usually applies to all jurisdictions

There are questions you can and can't ask during an interview. The rule of thumb is that questions asked during an interview must be job-related. If the position requires heavy-lifting, then it's appropriate to ask about a candidate's physical health and strength. On the other hand, if you're interviewing candidates for an inside sales job, the same question becomes inappropriate.

PS. Asking if the candidate plans to have children is never appropriate.

TOPICS/QUESTIONS THAT ARE 'OFF LIMITS'

Do not ask questions that are unrelated to bona fide job requirements. Below are examples of topics and questions that should not be asked in **any** interview.

AGE

- ◆ What are your retirement plans?
- ◆ Do you think you are too old to accept an entry level position?

CHILDREN/CHILD CARE

- ◆ How many children do you have? Are they healthy?
- ◆ Do you have a child care problem?
- ◆ What are your family plans?

MARITAL STATUS

- ◆ Is your spouse subject to transfer anytime?
- ◆ Are you married? What does your husband/spouse do?
- ◆ How long do you expect your spouse to be stationed here?
- ◆ Don't assume that your candidate's significant other is of the opposite gender if 'spouse' or 'partner' is mentioned first by the candidate. It can lead to awkward moments that can easily be avoided by eliminating antiquated assumptions.

POLITICAL AFFILIATION

- ◆ Who did you vote for in the last election?

THE SALARY QUESTION

Do not discuss or ask the candidate about salary expectations or their current compensation package. Compensation is only discussed between HR or the Hiring Manager and the candidate, and never during a panel interview. If a candidate has a question about compensation, please refer them to HR or the Hiring Manager.

SUITABLE TOPICS

General examples of the topics and questions that are appropriate include:

- ◆ Education, qualifications
- ◆ Work history, position-related experience and activities
- ◆ Career goals and objectives
- ◆ Plans/goals for self-development
- ◆ Availability to travel
- ◆ Availability to work overtime or adapt to specific work schedules.

NOTE-TAKING DURING INTERVIEWS

A word of caution...be very careful about the notes you make about candidates during interviews. These notes can be requested as discovery material if a candidate ever challenges the Company's hiring decision in court. Keep notes professional and relevant to the criteria for the position.

Situational vs. Behavioral Interviewing

Traditional interviewing techniques tend to be 'situational' and focus on general questions such as *"How would you handle a situation in which..."* or *"What would you do if..."*

We can all guess or inflate how we think we would behave in a hypothetical situation, and can't truly know what we'd do until we've actually encountered it.

When answering these types of questions, candidates can get away with telling the interviewer what he or she wants to hear since, technically, all answers are theoretical and essentially deemed to be truthful.

Behavioral interviewing, however, is very different.

Research has shown that the most accurate predictor of an individual's future behavior or performance is their past behavior or performance in a similar situation.

In a behavioral-style interview, therefore, the interviewer asks the candidate to provide specific examples of past experiences and behaviors. For example, *"Would you tell me about a time when you found yourself in a difficult work situation?"* *"How did you handle it?"*

This allows the interviewer to probe further to determine if the candidate's behavior, problem-solving abilities, analytical skills, and communication style are a potential fit for the role and for the Company.

We predominantly use behavioral interviewing techniques when interviewing candidates, especially when asking about past experiences

However, if used sparingly, situational interviewing can be advantageous; for example, you might use this approach to ask ‘circumstantial’ questions.

Situational interview questions place an applicant in a hypothetical conflict or problematic situation where they are asked to make assessments and decisions to resolve it. This type of question is good for observing:

- ◆ Critical thinking skills
- ◆ How the candidate would create a positive outcome from a challenge
- ◆ How the candidate approaches an unfamiliar situation

Phone Screen Interviews

Advantages

There are several reasons why telephone screening is a key step in our recruiting and hiring process:

- ◆ **Logistics:** When you advertise a position, you are likely to have many more applicants than you can realistically interview. Preliminary phone interviews allow you to quickly narrow down your pool of potential candidates.
- ◆ **Cost:** Telephone screening saves time and money. Consider the cost of one or more people interviewing first round candidates face-to-face for an hour— individuals we haven’t even spoken to before they arrive for the interview. Depending on the position, a telephone screening interview may take only 15 to 30 minutes.
- ◆ **Efficiency:** It is more effective and efficient for the hiring manager to conduct a short, preliminary telephone interview with the top 6-10 candidates before scheduling Round 1 face-to-face interviews with the top 2-4 candidates.
- ◆ **Candidate screening:** Conducting a preliminary telephone screen helps to quickly filter language and communication barriers, compensation expectations, and other ‘deal breakers’ for the position. It allows the hiring manager to gather information about the candidate’s qualifications and experience, and workplace preferences. With this information in hand, the hiring manager can then quickly eliminate unlikely candidates.

Types of Phone Screens & Who Does Them

There are 2 types of telephone interviews:

Type	Purpose?	Who does it?
Basic Screening	Confirm basic information: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Language skills ◆ Phone skills (if applicable) ◆ Salary expectations ◆ Available start date 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Hiring Manager, HR, or a delegated Administrator ◆ If delegated, the Administrator must be briefed on confidentiality requirements
Detailed Screening	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Confirm basic information as above ◆ Drill down into skills and experience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Hiring Manager, or someone familiar with the position requirements ◆ If cultural fit is an important factor, HR may choose to be involved at this stage

Detailed Phone Screen Interview Goals

Regardless of the position, phone screening interviews have the same basic objectives. Essentially, the goal is to determine the following **before** inviting candidates in to the office:

- ◆ Is the candidate personable, rational, and reasonable? Does the candidate have good communication skills? Does this person sound overly aggressive or defensive? Is this person 'likeable' over the phone?
- ◆ Is the candidate qualified for the position? (It's perfectly acceptable to get into more detail here and ask probing questions about skills and experience.)
- ◆ Does the candidate fully understand the requirements of the position?
- ◆ What is the candidate's availability? Can they start work immediately or is a notice period required? If the candidate does not live in your area, confirm if relocation is an option.
- ◆ Why did the candidate leave their last position, or why are they considering leaving their current job?
- ◆ What does the candidate currently earn and what are their expectations regarding compensation and benefits?
- ◆ Can the candidate sufficiently account for any potential 'red flags' detected in their resume? For example, can they provide an adequate explanation for frequent or long periods of unemployment?

Creating Phone Interview Questions

- ◆ **Include standard questions:** When interviewing candidates for the same role, the same questions should be asked of each candidate. This ensures you rate and compare candidates using consistent criteria. For example, include questions that will help you get a good sense of the candidate's experience in the position for which you are recruiting; their educational background and relevant training/development; and whether or not the candidate would be a good cultural fit.
- ◆ **Include candidate-specific questions:** Insert any specific questions you have about the applicant's cover letter and resume. For example, be sure to address any breaks in work history, particularly long ones.
- ◆ **Include the 'salary expectations' question:** Candidates can be quite uncomfortable disclosing their expected salary, but it's important to get a sense of their expectations, and what they earned in their current or previous similar position. It's a good indicator of both their worth in the market and their level of experience.
- ◆ **Be prepared for probing questions:** Be prepared for the fact that candidates may answer the same questions quite differently, and that their answers may lead you to ask more probing questions. These more specific questions will obviously differ from candidate to candidate.

Conducting Phone Interviews

Some tips to help the interview go smoothly:

- ◆ Have the candidate's cover letter and resume at hand so that you can refer to it and probe for more details when required.
- ◆ Tell the candidate you'll be keeping close track of time, and ask them to be succinct in their answers. At the start of the conversation, advise the candidate that in order to adhere to schedule, you may sometimes have to move on to the next question before they have finished answering.

Discussing Salary Expectations

- Gather information about the applicant's current compensation package and their compensation expectations during preliminary telephone interviews.
- Understanding the compensation requirements is an important filter. If the applicant's compensation expectations are considerably outside the compensation range for the position, they are not likely to make it to the final rounds of interviews.
- Be wary of candidates who tell you that money doesn't matter. It always matters! The only variable is the degree of importance a candidate places on monetary compensation. Psychologically, money is directly related to what someone believes they are worth in the market—and eventually in the Company.
- Unemployed candidates may be impulsive and discount their customary wage to gain employment. This could present a challenge in the future—the candidate may accept a position with you for significantly less compensation, but may leave if they find a better paying position. Use your judgment in this situation.

- ◆ Conduct the interview using a headset or speaker phone so you can type notes into the *Phone Interview Questionnaire* created for the candidate.
- ◆ Take detailed notes, just as you would for an in-person interview, but remember that notes taken during interviews can be requested as discovery material if a candidate ever challenges the Company's shortlisting decisions in court. Keep notes professional and relevant to the criteria for the position.
- ◆ Let the candidate know that the 'salary question' is part of the phone screening process and is required. The question is straightforward. "What are your salary expectations?", or "What have you earned in a previous similar position?" If you encounter continued resistance, ask the candidate to provide a salary range. For example, \$75 to \$85k.

In-Person Interviews

Round 1 & Round 2 Interviews

Round 1 interviews are held after the Phone Screens. The primary objective is to meet candidates and:

- ◆ Assess their knowledge, skills and abilities
- ◆ Assess their professionalism
- ◆ Evaluate their verbal communication skills
- ◆ Evaluate general cultural fit with the Company and team
- ◆ Evaluate how they compare to other Round 1 candidates
- ◆ Narrow the talent pool down to 2 or 3 top candidates

As the name suggests, Round 2 interviews are held after Round 1. The primary objective is to:

- ◆ Continue to evaluate the candidate's knowledge, skills and abilities, experience and behaviors to determine fit
- ◆ Follow-up on any lingering questions
- ◆ Assess the candidate's cultural fit
- ◆ Evaluate the candidate's presentation skills (if this format has been chosen)
- ◆ Evaluate how they compare to other Round 2 candidates
- ◆ Select the final candidate

Do not use the same questions for Round 2 interviews that you used for Round 1, unless there are new members on the Round 2 interview panel and there's a particular question you want them to hear the candidate answer. In general, if the presentation portion of the interview focuses on the candidate's

skills and experience, you'll want to focus the Q&A on other topics, for example, behavioral competencies.

Panel Interviews – Pros & Cons

Phone screen interviews are usually done one-on-one. For Round 1 & 2 interviews, however, we use a panel interview approach to take advantage of the different perspectives brought by a varied group of stakeholders.

Pros for the Company:

- ◆ If managed well, the panel interview can speed up the hiring cycle. Instead of scheduling separate interviews with Company representatives who will be part of the interview process, a panel interview can be convened.
- ◆ Everyone on the panel has the opportunity to hear the responses provided by the candidates.
- ◆ Buy-in from panel members for the hiring decision; that is, those involved in the process are more likely to support the decision and the candidate once hired.

Cons for the Company:

- ◆ Many interviewers do not do well in this type of interview format. Most people are not naturally skilled interviewers. Asking inexperienced interviewers to participate in a panel will be just as nerve-racking for them as it is for the candidates, and often does not provide any value.
- ◆ Interviewing-related costs are substantially higher.

Pros for the Candidate:

- ◆ Allows the candidate to meet a wide cross section of Company representatives.
- ◆ Depending on how many interviewers need to participate in the interview process, it may reduce the amount of time the candidate needs to spend in the interview process.
- ◆ May provide the successful candidate with a sense of confidence that most, if not all, of the panel members were in favor of the hire.

Cons for the Candidate:

- ◆ Many candidates find this type of interview format very nerve-racking. It is stressful, even for individuals who are usually confident and have excellent presentation skills.
- ◆ The candidate may not perform as well as they would in a one-on-one interview, and you may end up eliminating a good candidate for the wrong reasons.

PREPARING IN-PERSON INTERVIEWS BEFORE THE INTERVIEW

Prepare and distribute an interview questionnaire well ahead of the interview. Refer to [IV-ALL-2520-R. Interview Questions](#) for a list of sample interview questions. Transfer 10-12 of these questions into the [IV-ALL-2540-M. Q&A-style Panel Interview Questionnaire](#) template to create a set of standard interview questions for the position.

Round 1 interview questions are typically more general, whereas Round 2 questions are much more specific and geared towards really getting to know the candidate. Do not choose the same questions selected for the Round 1 interviews.

Assign questions in rotation to interview panel members. Make sure panel members know which questions they will be asking, and are comfortable doing so.

Remind panel members:

- ◆ To review the company guidelines and expectations for interviewing in this Guide, particularly the legal dos and don'ts
- ◆ To review the candidate's resume and cover letter, as well as the interview questions, in advance
- ◆ **Not to** ask the candidate about salary expectations or their current compensation package

Make sure each panel member has copies of the following documents for reference and brings them to the interview:

- ◆ Candidate's cover letter and resume
- ◆ Interview Questionnaire created for Round 1
- ◆ Position job posting and job description (if applicable)

DURING THE INTERVIEW

When conducting in-person interviews, we recommend you follow these five steps:

Introduction and welcome. First impressions count – for you as well as for the candidate. It's common courtesy to introduce yourself and welcome the candidate.

Obtain relevant and position-specific information. Use the questions you prepared in the Interview Questionnaire.

Discuss the position. Provide full information about the Company, culture, work environment, duties and responsibilities of the position including possible travel or overtime requirements.

Respond to the applicant's questions. Be prepared for the candidate to ask questions about the Company. Typically, they want to know more about the organizational structure, culture, training and development opportunities, and so on.

End the interview. Thank the candidate for their time, and let them know what to expect following the interview.

- If this is a telephone or Round 1 in-person interview, tell them when selections for the next round of interviews will be made.
- If this is a Round 2 interview, tell them when the final candidate selection will be made.
- Let them know how they will be notified of the decision – email or telephone call.

Don't forget to give the candidate the opportunity to ask their own questions. The questions a candidate asks can be revealing. How much do they know about the Company? Have they done their research? In fact, if a candidate does not have a few questions, this may be a sign that they have not sufficiently prepared for the interview.

The candidate may also ask for an opportunity to meet with the person to whom the role reports; be prepared for this.

If you run out of time and cannot provide the candidate with time for questions, apologize for running out of time but tell them it was worth it to learn more about them. Advise the candidate they will have opportunity to ask more questions either in a follow up telephone call, or in a Round 2 interview, if they are selected.

Presentation-Style Interviews

Most interviews use a question and answer (Q&A) format. Questions are prepared in advance and the same questions are asked of each candidate so you can compare responses. This is certainly the preferred style of interview for Phone Screens and Round 1 in-person interviews. However, for senior-level or sales/marketing-type roles, it's not uncommon in Round 2 interviews to ask candidates to prepare and deliver a short presentation. We call this a presentation-style interview.

In a presentation-style interview, the candidate is asked to make a short presentation to the interview panel, followed by another Q&A period. The presentation length can vary but shouldn't exceed 20-30 minutes. It's up to you to decide what presentation tools or mediums the candidate can use.

Example presentation topics:

- ◆ Fit to the Company – ask the candidate to present their skills and experience, and how they would add value to the open position and to the Company.
- ◆ New Product or Service – ask the candidate to make a pitch about a new product or service.

- ◆ Problem-solving – provide the candidate with a position-related problem and ask the candidate to present 2 or 3 solutions.

There are many advantages to this format. It:

- ◆ Tests the candidate's ability to present in front of a small audience, build relationships, and influence.
- ◆ Tests the candidate's communication style and ability to be succinct.
- ◆ Allows you to see first-hand how the candidate performs under pressure.
- ◆ Reflects the effort the candidate has put into preparation, which is a good indicator of the individual's approach to assignments.

Be clear about what you are evaluating in the presentation, and give candidates clear direction. This will be a stressful situation for them; help them prepare by anticipating and answering as many questions as you can for them.

Just because the candidate is doing a lot of preparation for the interview, it doesn't let you off the hook. Presentation-style interviews require more preparation on your part, not less.

Use the [IV-ALL-2550-M. Presentation-style Panel Interview Questionnaire](#) and [Interview Questions](#) to help you prepare. The Interview Questionnaire contains a print-ready presentation-style interview guide that includes sample presentation criteria.

Tips for Interviews using Skype or Video Conferencing

A Skype (or video conference) interview is a good alternative to an early stage phone interview that is used to vet the main deal breakers for a position. It allows you to better connect with the candidate and observe body language and mannerisms.

Skype interviews can also be conducted for second interviews if proximity is a challenge, but final interviews should be conducted in person whenever possible.

As the interviewer, you have the responsibility for maintaining the professional standard for the Company. When Skyping, it's sometimes easy to forget that you're not chatting with a friend and that a Skype interview should be conducted with the same care as an in-person interview.

Here's a checklist that you can use to get the most out of a Skype interview:

- ◆ **Review your Skype name.** You would consider it a red flag if you're conducting a business interview with an otherwise solid candidate whose skype name is KingMarijuana. Make sure your user name is also appropriate.

- ◆ **Practice before conducting your first video conference interview.** Make sure you are very familiar with the technical settings and are prepared for connection, sound or video problems that may occur and learn how to fix them ahead of time. Practice video conferencing with a co-worker or a friend.
- ◆ **Get the time zones right before the interview begins.** It's your responsibility to ensure that a 9:00 am interview for you isn't a 2:00 am interview for the candidate.
- ◆ **Make sure you have a secure, solid broadband connection.** Avoid using wi-fi which can be flaky and the connection can often drift in and out.
- ◆ **Dress the part.** Your attire should be no different than if your candidate came in for an in-person interview.
- ◆ **Consider your physical surroundings.** Does the whiteboard behind you include sensitive information? Is your desk or office cluttered? If necessary, book a conference room if that's what you would normally do for an in-person interview.
- ◆ **Consider the lighting.** Test your lighting with your own webcam to see what you and your surroundings look like to the candidate. Avoid lighting that produces shadows or is too bright or too dark which may create a dingy atmosphere.
- ◆ **Use a headset.** Your computer picks up a lot of background noise. By using a headset, the candidate will be able to hear you more clearly, especially if you're in a public place or shared space.
- ◆ **Eliminate any interruptions.**
 - Place an "Interview in progress" sign by your door.
 - Turn off any notifications on your computer including your email client, social media, and change your Skype status to "Do not Disturb".
 - Silence your phone.
- ◆ **Make eye contact.** While it may seem counterintuitive to look into the webcam instead of on the screen, it will reinforce that you're present and friendly. It also ensures that you're not distracted by watching yourself in the bottom corner. To get a more becoming angle of yourself, place the camera so that it's eye level.
- ◆ **Watch your body language.** On Skype, the main cues of your engagement come from your body language. Lean forward as you're communicating. As with an in-person interview, this will engage your candidate as you exhibit interest, concern, eagerness, and willingness to listen.
- ◆ **SMILE!** Remind yourself of this most important tip by placing a stick-it note on your screen.
- ◆ **Calmly handle any technical glitches.** Tech glitches will occur, no matter how prepared you are. Handle them with grace and resist the urge to get frustrated and curse at the software! This leaves the candidate feeling tense and uncomfortable. It's also very acceptable for the call to be restarted when real-time troubleshooting doesn't resolve the challenges.
- ◆ **If appropriate, record the interview.** Most video conferencing tools include easy-to-use features for recording your sessions. The recording can be played back to stakeholders if you're

recommending that the candidate move to the next steps and saves everyone considerable amounts of time. Be sure to always obtain the candidate's permission in writing before the video conference begins.