

Preparing for a panel interview is slightly different than other interviews. Some steps are the same, but there are a few extra areas to focus on when preparing, so I'm going to walk you through how to prepare to ace your panel interview from start to finish.

Here are our 9 best panel interview tips. Let's get started...

How to Prepare for a Panel Interview:

When preparing for your panel interview, you'll want to cover all of the [typical interview preparation steps](#) for any interview – like [researching the company](#), reviewing your resume, coming up with examples and stories you can share to highlight your past accomplishments, etc.

Yet there are some additional things you should do and keep in mind if you want to ace your panel interview and walk in fully prepared for this specific type of interview process.

So let's look at the areas to spend extra time focusing on...

1. Practice great body language and eye contact

Be ready to maintain eye contact with the whole panel, with slightly more attention toward whoever asked the question you're answering.

And practice your body language in general – eye contact, posture, keeping your hands and feet still (not tapping), etc.

If you don't feel confident or don't have good [body language habits](#), it's going to become a bigger problem in a panel interview or group interview because it's more pressure, more people to make eye contact with and interact with, etc.

2. Ask a lot of questions

It's important to ask a lot of questions in a panel interview. So a big portion of your effort in preparing for the panel interview should be writing down [great questions to ask them](#).

I recommend bringing the questions in a notebook and asking the interviewer if it's okay to bring it in with you.

Example of what you can say: "I brought a notepad with a few questions. Is it alright if I bring this into the interview?"

99% of the time they'll say "yes".

When you ask your questions, you can direct a question to a specific person or the entire panel.

How many questions should you ask in your panel interview? I'd say you should take the total number of people on the panel, and then add 1-2 to that number. That's how many questions to ask. So if the panel is 4 people, prepare 5-6 questions.

3. Try to find out who will be on the panel in advance

If you want to prepare to ace your panel interview, you should spend some time learning as much as you can about the people on the panel.

How many people are you meeting with? What are their names and job titles?

If you're not sure, ask the person who scheduled the interview (the [recruiter](#), HR person, hiring manager, etc.)

Then do some research on [LinkedIn](#) and find out what type of background these people have. Do they have a more technical background? Is it mostly people from HR and non-technical areas? Does anyone on the panel have the job title you'd have if they hire you? (e.g. someone who is your peer?). And who are the more senior-level people on the panel, such as your future boss?

All of this will help you feel more [confident and relaxed in the interview](#), and [give better interview answers](#). So don't neglect this part of preparing for your panel interview.

Note: Treat everyone the same in the panel interview. Just because one person is "lower" in the company does not mean you should act any differently or address their questions any differently.

In fact, this is good advice for any interview process, and it's something we recommend in the advice [across our site](#). Why? Because you never know who the hiring manager is going to ask an opinion from before making the yes/no decision on whether to hire you. This includes the receptionist too!

4. Bring a resume copy for each person on the panel

This is a simple and easy way to look prepared and make sure everyone in the panel interview is familiar with your background or can quickly catch up at the start of the meeting. So when you [prepare for your interview](#), print out enough copies of your resume so that you're sure you'll have enough to hand out at the beginning.

In fact, bring a few extra copies in case someone unexpectedly joins the panel.

Sure, they might have copies already. That's fine. Do this anyway; it'll make you look great.

5. Be ready to take notes

Earlier I mentioned you should bring a notepad with questions to ask.

Well, you can write your own notes too. **You're going to be taking in a *lot* of information in the typical panel interview so this is important.** You'll need to remember key facts about the position when you follow up, when you ask questions later, and when you prepare for future interviews or discuss the role further.

So take notes, but remember one rule: I call it the 90% rule. Maintain eye contact 90% of the time throughout the panel interview.

That means less than 10% of your time should be spent looking down or taking notes.

Don't do more than this ratio or it'll disrupt the flow of the interview and hurt your chances of getting the [job offer](#).

6. Build rapport and try to make a strong connection

Do your best to build a connection with as many people in the panel interview as possible.

Find common areas of interest when preparing for the interview, share stories, and mix your questions into the flow of the interview... instead of waiting until the end (this makes it feel more like a back-and-forth conversation, and less like an interrogation).

Also, make sure to learn everyone's name and use their names in the conversation.

Remember in any interview, and especially a panel interview, they're not just evaluating your skills and experience – they're looking to see how you'll fit in with the current team, company culture and more.

This is also a reason [researching the company](#) when preparing for your panel interview is so important.... because you can learn about their current team, company culture and more on their website and social media. Then you can use this information to build a stronger bond and show them the [traits they're looking for](#).

But you can't do that if you don't research the company when you prepare for the interview.

7. Learn the names of your interviewers

Make note of each person's name when you first sit down in the panel interview. This can be difficult, but the best way to remember is to repeat the person's name back to them after hearing it.

Then, within the first few minutes of answering their interview questions, try to use their name. This will make you far more likely to remember it long-term.

Then when you're finishing the interview, you'll feel a lot more confident thanking them if you remember their names.

That brings us to our next tip for how to ace your panel interview...

8. Thank each panel member with a handshake at the end of the interview

Whether you successfully remembered each person's name or not, look them in the eye, shake their hand, and thank them for their time at the end of the interview.

Do this with each person on the panel.

This will ensure you leave a great final impression before leaving them to discuss what they thought of you. While this won't save you if the rest of your [interview went badly](#), it can sway the panel's decision or make them view you slightly more favorably.

9. Know who to follow up with before leaving

Don't leave your panel interview without asking, "Who will be in touch regarding next steps, and when can I expect to hear feedback?"

That way you'll know when to [follow up after the interview](#), and who to get in touch with if you have questions.

Otherwise, you'll be a lot more stressed at home waiting for an update, and you'll be unsure who to follow up with if that update doesn't come.

Also, make sure to send ["Thank you" notes](#) the day after the interview. You should send an email to each person you met with.

Use These Panel Interview Tips to Get More Job Offers

If you follow the tips above and have a general understanding of how to answer common [panel interview questions](#), you should be in great shape to ace your panel interview!

Don't let the fact that you're meeting with multiple people stress you out; it's the same concept as any interview.

Study the job description, know about their company, and be prepared to talk about how your past skills and past work will set you up for success in this specific job.

If you do this while also asking great questions of your own and building rapport by learning the interviewer's names and getting to know them, you'll have a great shot at turning your panel interview into a job offer.