




How to Succeed on Your Second Interview

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PREPARING FOR YOUR SECOND INTERVIEW

Congratulations! Pat yourself on the back! You've had your first face-to-face interview, you impressed the company, and now they want you to come back for a second round of interviews.

Second interviews (...and sometimes, third and fourth interviews) are completely common. In fact, rarely does a candidate get hired after only the first face-to-face interview. Now is the time for confidence but not for complacency or arrogance. Remember that there are certainly several other candidates who are also being asked back, so your job remains to be memorable and to stand above your competition as the best fit for the job.



Inside This Guide

- ☐ Why Companies Use Second Interviews
- ☐ Our Top 10 Second Interview Tips

A young woman with dark hair tied back, wearing a white short-sleeved shirt and a dark grey vest, is sitting at a light-colored wooden table. She is smiling warmly at someone off-camera to her right. Her hands are on the table; her right hand holds a black pen over a white notepad, and her left hand rests on the table. In the foreground, the back of a person's head and shoulders, wearing a white shirt, are visible. The background consists of a large window looking out onto a green lawn and a tree. The text "Why Companies Use Second Interviews" is overlaid in the center-left of the image.

Why Companies Use Second Interviews

Companies use second round interviews for a variety of reasons, including:

Meeting Additional People

You could be meeting people up the organizational chart. For instance, the manager of the person you'd be reporting to, potential peers, or the people you'd be managing if you got the job.

In-Depth Probing Into Your Skills, Knowledge, and Abilities

While the first interview might have covered the basics, second interviews are often designed to probe more deeply. The interviewer might want to ask more rigorous questions about your background and past experiences, or to talk more in-depth about the challenging aspects of the work that needs to be done.

Assessing Areas of Concern

If your first interview left your interviewer with any questions or worries, a second interview will be the place she'll try to address them. For example, your interviewer might have realized that she needs a better understanding of your experience with X or your approach to Y, and a second interview allows for those conversations to happen.

Getting to Know You Better

The interviewer might want to gain a better understanding of who you are and what you're all about. Sometimes second interviews are intended to simply get to know you more; in which case the conversation might be lighter, without the rigorous type of questions you might have experienced in the first meeting.

Whatever the purpose behind the second interview, you want to be just as focused on putting your best foot forward as you were the first time around. Career experts estimate that once you've secured a second interview, your chances of getting the job are between 25-50%, so prepare carefully to get those odds working in your favor.



Success

JUST AHEAD

Our Top 10
Second Interview Tips

REFLECT

Think back on your first interview.

- **What made you shine the first time around?** *Plan to do more of the same in your second interview.*
- **Don't make the same mistakes twice.** *Note any questions that you found difficult to answer during your first interview and think about how you will handle those questions if they come up again.*
- **Brainstorm on new information you can incorporate.** *Refer to new accomplishments, new examples, and new evidence of how much you know about the employer.*
- **What do you wish you had said?** *Was there something you wish you had mentioned during your first interview? The second interview will provide you with the opportunity to expand upon your responses from the first interview. Review the notes you took during the first interview to see what you might have missed talking about and what you can clarify or add.*

PREPARE EVEN MORE THAN YOU DID FOR THE FIRST INTERVIEW

Take the time to delve even deeper into your research. Check your LinkedIn connections to see if you know someone who works for the company, or seek out your school's alumni association to see if any alumni work for the organization. Ask them what you should know about the company.

Think carefully about what you have learned about the organization and its people. Do your research again and use the intelligence you gained to inform it. The interviewer will appreciate that you've learned from your first meeting.

Make sure you've asked for a list of people you'll be meeting with. Research each person on LinkedIn so that you are clear on each person's role and whether you have any connections in common, which could make for interesting conversation during the interview. Don't be surprised if you interview with several people.

The second interview might be several one-on-one interviews or one interview in a group setting. Ask the hiring manager for a schedule so that you know which scenario you'll be facing.

PREPARE A STRONG LIST OF QUESTIONS TO ASK

You should have more opportunity to ask questions in the second interview and you'll be expected to ask more sophisticated questions than you did in the last meeting.

DON'T BE LATE

Such basic advice, but so true. If you're interviewing at a new location, look it up on Google Maps or take a practice run so you know exactly where you're going and how long it will take to get there.

DRESS PROFESSIONALLY

Even if the workplace is casual, until you get the job, you should dress for success. If the person scheduling the interview mentions dressing down, business casual attire would typically be most appropriate (for fantastic ideas on business casual outfits, visit [Advanced Resources on Pinterest!](#))

BE PREPARED FOR A LONG DAY

Second interviews are typically longer because you often meet with several people. Get a good night's sleep the night before. If you have a break between interviews, take a brisk walk to get rejuvenated. Bring a snack in case there is no lunch break. Be armed with breath spray, mints, and/or water.

CONSIDER LUNCH/DINNER INTERVIEWS

Lunch and/or dinner may be included on the agenda, either because you're scheduled for a full day or simply because the interviewer wants to see you in a different setting.

Employers frequently use lunch/dinner interviews to see your communication, interpersonal skills, and manners in action. Dine carefully and thoughtfully. Order appropriately and brush up on your dining skills and your manners.

DON'T BE CAUGHT OFF GUARD IF THE INTERVIEWER BRINGS UP SALARY & BENEFITS

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IF YOU DON'T GET AN OFFER, ASK ABOUT THE NEXT STEPS

Find out when you will hear back, and be sure to reiterate your interest and suitability for the job.

DON'T FORGET TO SEND THANK YOU EMAILS

Send thank you emails to each person you've met with. You can write the same basic message to each person, but you should personalize each email, since your interviewers are likely to compare notes.

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