Acing a Panel Interview

You’ve been called to interview for your dream job—congratulations! As soon as you hear the news you’re flooded with excitement... until you hear some not-so-exciting news: your interview will be a panel interview. Panel interviews can be overwhelming—you have to impress not just one, but multiple people—but don’t worry, we’ve got your back! Follow these tips and you’ll impress them all:

A. **Ask the right questions when you get the call.** When you get the call for the interview, ask how many people will be interviewing you, who will be interviewing you, and what their position title will be. Having this information beforehand can help reduce the anxiety you might otherwise feel. Plus, once you have this information you’ll be able to research each of the panelists (via LinkedIn and Google) to get more information about who they are and how they fit within the organization.

B. **Prepare for the interview like you would any other interview.** Practice answering potential questions in the mirror or with a friend to get comfortable and gain confidence. Talking about yourself may seem hard at first, but it’s the key to a great interview. Review the job posting and company website beforehand for a quick refresher on everything you researched. Practice makes perfect, and preparation goes a long way!

C. **Introduce yourself to each panelist.** Start the interview off on the right foot by introducing yourself to each panelist to build a positive rapport (and leave a great impression) with each person. Even if you’re nervous, it’s important to act calm and confident, so remember to use a nice firm handshake, make eye contact, and smile.

D. **Be direct but inclusive.** When answering a question, make eye contact with the panelist that asked the question and scan the room to keep each person engaged in your answer. If one panelist asks you a question that you can connect with a previous question, be sure to make the connection. Referring back to previous questions and answers can show that you’re paying attention to the interview and can really help you stand out in a positive way.

E. **Ask great questions.** At the end of the interview, ask questions to each panelist (assuming there is time) and keep their department and interests in mind. This is a great way to include them in the conversation and let them know you’re interested in what they have to say and how they contribute to the organization. For more information, check out our resource Questions to Ask at a Job Interview.

F. **Follow up and thank each panelist individually.** Instead of sending one thank you note to the office, call or email each panelist individually to thank them for the interview. Show your appreciation for their consideration and reiterate your interest in the position. Using specific details from the interview is a great way to make a lasting impression!