

CHAPTER 12

INTERVIEW

Learning Objectives

After reading this chapter, you'll be able to:

- * understand the importance of interviews,
- * know about different types of interviews,
- * learn how interviews are faced,
- * know what to do before an interview,
- * learn how to behave during interviews, and
- * find what types of questions are asked by the interviewers.

Introduction

All of us are familiar with the term *interview*. You would have watched the interviews of celebrities or some famous persons on television. They are generally held to know the person's point of view on a particular issue, subject, or problem. Mainly, the term is associated with employment. The job-seekers have to face interview to get a job. In this chapter, we shall learn about various types of interviews, how to behave during interviews, what questions are frequently asked by the interviewers, and strategies to answer the questions.

12.1 Interview

The term *interview* is made up of two words *inter*, meaning 'between or among', and *view*,

meaning 'the act of looking, seeing or observing'. Hence interview means 'to see each other'. It involves the meeting of two or more persons, whether face to face or through some mechanical device. It is a major form of interpersonal communication. It is a platform where questions are asked and answered. One person asks the questions and the other answers them. The person who asks the questions is known as **interviewer**, and the person who answers the questions is known as **interviewee**. The interviewer is considered a part of measurement instrument and has to be well versed. S/he asks questions to elicit facts or statements from the interviewee.

Interview is based on oral enquiry and oral response. It has well defined purpose and structure. It has a beginning, middle, and an end. Each stage is negotiated by the interviewer and the interviewee. Interviews are used for qualitative research, journalism, media reporting, employment, promotion, counseling, and so on.

12.2 Types of Interviews

There are many types of interviews. Type depends on the objective of the interview. Some of the types are stated below:

(a) Personal Interview

Interviews are carried out for various purposes. They can be formal, semi-formal, or informal. The interview that is carried out to meet the personal requirements of the interviewer is known as 'personal interview'. It does not follow any fixed format. The interviewer asks questions in informal manner and the interviewee answers them in a friendly way.

Example:

- (i) You have visited a village for the first time. You are curious to know about village life. You want to interview a farmer. Imagining yourself as the interviewer and the interviewee, write the interview.

Priya : Good morning, uncle! I'm Priya. I've come to a village for first time. I'm curious to know about village life. Will you answer some of my questions to know about the village life?

Farmer : Yes, please ask the questions.

Priya : There are no basic facilities, like internet, computers, mobile phones, etc. in the village. What are the sources of your entertainment?

Farmer : We don't know about computer, internet, etc. But we sit together in the evening time, share jokes and make fun.

Priya : You don't have cemented houses. How do you manage in these houses?

Farmer : We lead a contented life. We manage very well in the houses.

- Priya : Which crops do you grow in your fields?
- Farmer : We grow wheat, pulses, sugarcane, maize and rice. Sometimes we grow vegetables.
- Priya : How do you know when to water the crop, when to use fertilizers, and when to reap the crop?
- Farmer : This is matter of experience. I'm engaged in this profession for more than 20 years. Even I've learnt from my ancestors.
- Priya : What's the source of irrigation?
- Farmer : We draw water from the nearby canal to irrigate our fields.
- Priya : How do you manage with such a meager income?
- Farmer : We've limited requirements. We consume food items that are produced in our fields. We also have income from animal husbandry. We sell milk and get money.
- Priya : Which animals do you rear?
- Farmer : We've cows, buffalos and goats. We sell their milk and earn money. We also have oxen that are used for farming.
- Priya : Thank you for sparing time. The information helped me very much to know about village life.
- Farmer : You're welcome.

Activity : 1

You are Priya. Write a letter to your friend, telling her about village life.

Example:

- (ii) You are a student. You have been assigned a project work to interview five persons. You visit a shop to interview the shopkeeper. Playing the roles of both the shopkeeper and the interviewer, write the interview.

- Seema : Good morning uncle. I've got a project work. I'm to interview five persons. Will you please help me and answer some of the questions?
- Shopkeeper : Sure dear. Why not.
- Seema : How long have you been in this profession?
- Shopkeeper : I've been running the shop for 20 years. Earlier, my father managed the business.
- Seema : What is your educational qualification?
- Shopkeeper : I'm a graduate.

- Seema : Why did you decide to join your father's business?
- Shopkeeper : I'm the only son of my father. My father's health didn't allow him to work vigorously. That's why I had to join the business?
- Seema : What's your experience as a businessman?
- Shopkeeper : Managing business is a difficult task. One needs to devote maximum time to business. There's no rest. No 9-5 working hours.
- Seema : According to you, what're the essential qualities of a good businessman?
- Shopkeeper : A businessman should first have confidence in him/herself and his/her venture. S/he should be ready to take risk. S/he should have the ability to grab the opportunities. S/he should be decisive.
- Seema : Does education matter in the field of business?
- Shopkeeper : Yes, but illiteracy isn't an obstacle. Even illiterate persons too are successful businessmen.
- Seema : I too want to become a businesswoman. What's your advice to me?
- Shopkeeper : First you should complete graduation. Then you should go for M.B.A. Afterwards you should join a firm as an employee and gain experience.
- Seema : Thank you uncle for sparing your time and giving valuable information.
- Shopkeeper : You're welcome.

Example:

- (iii) You are Sneha. You have been assigned a project-work to interview five persons. You visit your teacher to interview him. Write the interview.

- Sneha : Good morning, sir! I've been assigned some project-work. I'm to interview five persons. I've come to interview you.
- Teacher : Sure, dear.
- Sneha : how many years have you been in this college?
- Teacher : I've been in this college for last ten years.
- Sneha : how did you come to this profession?
- Teacher : Since my childhood I was interested in teaching. I always dreamt of becoming a teacher. Moreover, it's a respectable profession. That's why I decided to try my luck on this profession.
- Sneha : Had you to struggle in finding this job?
- Teacher : Yes! I worked as an ad-hoc teacher for five years before coming to this college. It was a terrible time. There was no surety of job. But I managed anyhow.

Sneha : I, too, want to become a college teacher. What would I have to do to achieve my objective?

Teacher : First, you'll have to complete post-graduation with minimum fifty five percent marks. Then you'll have to qualify NET exam.

Sneha : Is Ph. D. not required?

Teacher : No, either Ph.D. or NET is the minimum eligibility condition for becoming a college teacher.

Sneha : What problems do you face in the execution of your duties?

Teacher : Problems are part and parcel of life. It depends upon us how we take them. That makes the difference. I never take problems as hurdles; rather I take them as challenge. I face the problems with courage and try to overcome them. I always try to find solution of the problems and I find it.

Sneha : What does motivate you to move ahead?

Teacher : Strong will-power motivates me to move ahead. I've never been disappointed.

Sneha : What're your views about the students?

Teacher : Today, students are not serious about their career. They are least interested in studies. They aren't disciplined. They have no respect for their teachers. They aren't hard-working. They want maximum out of minimum effort.

Sneha : What're your views on present education system?

Teacher : I'm not satisfied with present education system. The present system is based on theory. There is very less scope for practical knowledge. The education should be combined with lived reality.

Sneha : Thank you for your thought provoking views. These may be very useful for me as well as other students. Thank you once again for sparing time.

Teacher : You're always welcome.

Activity : 2

On the basis of above, and three other interviews, prepare a report for the project.

Example:

(iv) You are student editor of your college magazine. The college is going to complete twenty five years of its establishment this year. You want to publish an interview with the principal of your college. Imagining yourself as the Principal and the Editor, write the interview.

Student : Good morning madam. I'm Rohit Natrajan. I'm editor of our college magazine.

I've come to interview you. Would you please answer some of my questions?

Principal : Sure. Please be seated.

Student : Thank you madam. Our college is going to complete twenty five years of its establishment this year. How do you feel being the principal of the college?

Principal : I'm very much excited. It's a matter of great pride. It feels very nice to see the college adding another feather to its cap.

Student : Yes, of course, but the journey wouldn't have been very easy. Tell about the ups and downs you faced during your tenure?

Principal : Absolutely right. The journey was not so easy. I joined this college in 2006. There were only three labs in the college. Today the college has seven labs. We had twenty classrooms but today we have fifty classrooms. We had nine hundred students at that time but we have more than two thousand students today. Our college has received prizes for good practices, consecutively for last three years. Our college has been ranked one of best colleges in the University of Delhi. We had to face various challenges but we could get over them successfully.

Student : Of course, it could be possible because of your hard work and vision.

Principal : Hard work is the key to success. All the teachers, non-teaching staff and students worked hard to realize the goal. Everybody has a significant contribution. I alone could do nothing without their support. The staff is very much cooperative and hard working. Sometimes they work beyond their working hours to get the work done.

Student : There were two Principals before you joined the college. How do you find their journey?

Principal : The college started with two rooms. It moved ahead with passing time. All the principals worked hard for the progress. We can't underestimate their contribution. They laid a strong foundation on which we could develop such a big institution.

Student : Certainly madam. What are your future plans?

Principal : We are going to start two new courses very soon. We are also planning some vocational courses to impart technical knowledge to the students. Our goal is to provide best education to the students.

Student : Where do you find the college in five years?

Principal : Ours is one of best colleges of University of Delhi. We are trying our best towards its progress. I find the college ranked number one not only in the University but also in India.

Student : I congratulate you on completing twenty five years and thank for sparing your valuable time.

Principal : Thank you. Congratulations not only to me but also to all the students, teachers and staff members.

Activity : 3

On the basis of above interview, write an article to be published in the magazine, highlighting growth of the college as well as future plans.

(b) Conversational Interview

This type of interview is held either face to face or through some mechanical device. Generally, two persons- the interviewer and the interviewee- take part in the interview. It is semi-formal in nature. No predetermined questions are asked by the interviewer. Tone of the interview is conversational.

Example:

Situation: Interview with parents, at the time of their child's admission in a school.

- Father : May we come in, madam.
- Principal : Yes, please.
- Father : Good morning, madam.
- Principal : Good morning! Please be seated.
- Father : I'm Dr. Nishant Gupta and she's my wife, Shreya. We have come here for the admission of our son, Rishabh.
- Principal : What do you do Mr. Gupta?
- Father : I'm a medical practitioner. I have my clinic at Dilshad Garden.
- Principal : Good! Do you too work Mrs. Gupta?
- Mother : No, madam, I'm a housewife. Earlier I had been working as a manager with a multinational company.
- Principal : Why did you leave the job?
- Mother : I was quite happy with my job, but I had to leave the job to look after my son. Moreover, my office was far away from my house. I couldn't manage both my house and office simultaneously.
- Principal : What are your academic qualifications?
- Mother : I'm M. B.A.
- Principal : Excellent! But I have a few questions regarding the admission of your son in this school. Hope you won't mind answering them.
- Mother : Certainly not.
- Principal : Who does teach Rishabh at home?

Mother : Both of us. But his father remains busy with patients; hence I spend more time with him.

Principal : How much time do you spend with your son daily?

Mother : At least one hour. My husband also spends about half an hour talking to him about various things that interest him.

Principal : Mr Gupta, would you tell me what you talk about with Rishabh?

Father : Madam, he is more interested in scientific inventions. We generally talk about them. Sometimes we also talk about natural objects.

Principal : Rishabh, do you want to be a scientist in future?

Rishabh : Yes, madam.

Principal : Do you know you'll have to study hard to become a scientist?

Rishabh : Yes, madam. I'll do that.

Principal : Rishabh, please come to me. (Rishabh comes closer to the Principal). Very Good! Now tell me what do you like to eat?

Rishabh : Chocolate, madam.

Principal : Do you know chocolate is harmful for health?

Rishabh : Yes, madam. But I brush my teeth after eating the chocolate.

Principal : OK, now tell me where do you live?

Rishabh : At Dilshad Garden.

Principal : How many friends do you have?

Rishabh : Rakesh, Sushma, Vicky and.....

Principal : can you count them?

Rishabh : Yes, (he counts) 7.

Principal : Who is your best friend?

Rishabh : Sushma.

Principal : why?

Rishabh : She always shares her colors with me.

Principal : Do you know how many colors are there in the sunlight?

Rishabh : 7-violet, indigo, blue, green, yellow, orange and red

Principal : Excellent! Who told you this?

Rishabh : Papa.

Principal : Very good. Now the last question please. (Pointing to the wall clock) what is the time now?

Rishabh : It's quarter to twelve.

Principal : Very good, Rishabh. (Turning to Mr and Mrs. Gupta) Congratulations! You can deposit the fee in the office. Here is the permission slip!

Mother : Thank you very much madam!

Principal : You're welcome.

(c) Public interview

You would have watched press conferences and face to face interviews with some famous persons on television. Many a times, reporters call up over the phone to ask about their success stories or their alarming anomalies. Media conducts interviews with the people in power, celebrities, and experts in order to get their views, interpretations, clarifications, and disseminate information to the public on their life style and achievements. They help viewers to get quick updates on the issues. They are also called 'media interviews'.

This type of interview is conducted for media reporting or publication. The interviewer works directly with the interviewee. The interviewer must know a great deal about the person s/he is going to interview. S/he must prepare a list of questions that s/he wants to ask. S/he must do her/his homework before the interview. S/he must ask such questions which nobody knows about the interviewee and are of reader/listener's interest. If s/he asks the questions whose answers everybody already knows, no one will be interested in listening/reading the interview. For example, if someone is to interview Sachin Tendulkar, s/he should ask him the following type of questions:

1. Good evening, Sachin. You have played cricket for twenty four years. How have you been feeling after your retirement from cricket?
2. What are your future plans?
3. Would you like to see your son, Arjun, playing cricket?
4. Who can take your place in the Indian Cricket Team?
5. You have made a pile of records. Is it possible for someone to break your records? If possible, who can do so?
6. With the passing time, the format of cricket has been changing. Players and audience are more interested in T20 and One Day cricket. What future of Test cricket do you find?
7. The new generation needs the guidance of senior players like you. Would you like to start a Cricket Academy?
8. Which is the most memorable moment in your career?
9. You are Member of Parliament. What contribution would you like to make towards abolition of corruption from India?

10. Thank you Sachin. The cricket lovers can never forget you. What message would you give to your fans?

Activity : 4

You are to interview Virat Kohli. What questions would you ask him?

Here are some tips which should be followed before and during the interview:

- Schedule the interview at a time and place convenient to the interviewee. Confirm the date and time a couple of days ahead of the scheduled interview to make sure the time still works for the interviewee.
- Do some homework before the interview. Know about the interviewee's background, area of interest, experience, and his/her views on the subject that you are going to talk about. Prepare a long list of questions to keep the conversation flowing.
- Handover the list of questions to the interviewee before the interview. It may help the interviewee to give more thoughtful answers.
- Ask open-ended questions. Close-ended questions (based on yes or no responses) yield limited information. Ask the questions that start with *why* or *how*. Such questions give the interviewee a chance to tell the background, relate details, and give his/her opinion.
- Listen to the interviewee actively. Do not interfere in between or give your observations. Let him/her complete the answer. But you can react by smiling or nodding.
- Greet the interviewee in the beginning and thank at the end of the interview.
- Make notes immediately after the interview.

Example:**Situation: Interview with Shahrukh Khan**

- Amita : Good morning! We know about young and charming Shahrukh. Would you please tell us about your student life?
- Shahrukh : I was admitted in St. Columba's school. It was a strict disciplinarian school run by Irish brothers. I was a naughty child. I have the memories of my school days in my mind even today. We were given black and golden stars for our behavior and test results. Five black stars meant lying across Mrs. Bala's lap and getting spanked three times. Being quite naughty, I was spanked a lot. Others might take it as punishment, but it was pleasure to me. I had my share of spanking, and was often made to stand in the corner with finger on my lips.

Amita : You are a romantic hero. Were you romantic in your childhood? Tell us some event that you even remember today.

Shahrukh : I can recall my first day at school. My teacher, Mrs. Bala, interviewed me on the very day. She told me that I had very cute dimples and then asked me to kiss her. That was my first kiss.

I also recall another incident. I remember sitting on the wall and blowing flying kisses to the schoolgirls passing by. Once a girl came complaining to my dad, but my father was sure that it could not be me as I was too young. He made the girl wait so that she could see me and realize that it was the neighbor's son who was teasing her and not me. But to my father's embarrassment, I walked in without my pants on, and on seeing the girl, blew her a flying kiss, and told my dad that she was my sweetheart.

Amita : What was the turning point that changed your life?

Shahrukh : I was very bad in Hindi. I used to get 2 or 3 on 10 and always got fail in this subject. Once, my mother told me that if I got full marks in Hindi, she'd take me to see a Hindi film in the theatre. I'd never been to a movie hall before. So I stayed up all night, studied Hindi and managed to get full marks. My mother took me to a theatre to see my Hindi film. It was a turning point in my life.

Two things happened because of this incident. One, I became quite the Hindi pundit and later always did very well in this language. Secondly, I got the feel for Hindi films. My command over the language helps me immensely to essay my roles in films today.

Amita : How did you manage extra-curricular activities in the school?

Shahrukh : I was quite a good student, though I never studied throughout the year. The only time I studied was the night before the exam, when I wouldn't sleep a wink and go straight for the exam. I did rather well and this gave me the opportunity to do a whole lot of interesting stuff in school.

Amita : Which was your favorite subject?

Shahrukh : Electronics was my favorite subject at my A levels and I think I got the highest marks in it when I passed out. English, and especially Shakespeare, was my other favorite.

Amita : Which was your weakest subject?

Shahrukh : Mathematics was my weakest subject in school and I still have a problem with numbers. If someone tells me a phone number, I have to ask for it several times before I can write it down on paper. I even forget my office and residence phone numbers.

Amita : You are a super star. Who is your favorite sport star?

Shahrukh : My favorite soccer stars are Socrates, Pele, Maradona and Mattheus. And I loved Aslam Sher Khan and wanted to be like him and represent my country.

Amita : Which heroine do you like the most?

Shahrukh : Mumtaz was my absolute favorite. I loved the way she moved her hips. She was sensual, innocent, naughty and very energetic, all at the same time. She was the first personality I mimicked. I loved to walk like her and dance like her. She was a role model for me.

Amita : Thank you, Shahrukh, for sharing your life experiences. I thank you on behalf of all the viewers.

Shahrukh : Thanks to you and my fans for so much love and affection.

(Source: <http://www.imshahrukhkhan.com/shahrukh-khan-biography-1/>)

(d) Behavioral Interview

This type of interview is conducted to study a person's behaviour. It is believed that a person's past behaviour is best indicator of his/her future performance. The interview is based on the principle that the present or future behaviour of a person can be ascertained from his/her past behaviour. The aim of the interview is to know about the personality of a person. Usually, this type of interview is conducted to employ a person for a job. The interviewer asks specific questions from the interviewee, related to the personality of the interviewee and his/her past experience, such as:

- What are your weaknesses?
- Why did you leave the job?
- Tell about the worst phase of your life.
- Describe the best phase of your life.
- Tell about the time when you had to work with someone you didn't like.
- Can you speak about a project that demanded extra hours of work from you?
- What lessons have you learned from your past experiences?

This type of interview can also be held to find out what has been troubling a person and why. Usually, the psychiatrists and counselors conduct such type of interviews to counsel the patient/client. The interview is conducted in a cordial atmosphere. The interviewer asks questions in a friendly manner. S/he motivates the interviewee to reveal his/her problems and their reasons before the interviewer. On the basis of responses, s/he tries to find out the solution.

(e) Job Interview

A job interview is a conversation between a job aspirant and the prospective employer or his/her representatives. It is quite formal in nature. It helps in evaluating the skills, capabilities, confidence level, knowledge, and communication skills of the candidates. It is basically a question-answer session which involves specific questions and appropriate

answers. It involves study of the organisation, job, and candidate. The candidate wants a suitable job, befitting his eligibility, and employer wants a suitable employee for the position to be filled in. The crux of the matter is that the employer will be interested if a candidate possesses desired skills, qualification and knowledge. Other than the skills, the employer looks for confidence level, credibility and competence of the candidate. It also provides the employer an opportunity to convey company's policies, work-culture, and the expectations from the prospective employee.

Job interviews vary in nature and demand different types of skills, depending on the specific position, level of experience, or organisation. It helps the employer to recruit an employee who will be an asset to the organization. It provides the employer an opportunity to see whether the candidate is suitable for the position vacant, and the candidate tries to prove that s/he possesses the desired skills and knowledge. It is of vital importance to both the interviewer and the interviewee. Through the interview, the interviewer can find out whether the candidate, being interviewed, possesses hard-skills, ability, experience, and personality-traits for the specific job. On the other hand, the interviewee gets an opportunity to ascertain whether the particular job will be suitable to him. The ultimate aim of the interviewer and the interviewee is to elicit the right and useful information to arrive at a decision.

(f) Panel Interview

Panel means 'committee appointed to judge a contest or competition'. In the panel interview, a team of interviewers is formed to evaluate the candidates. There can be two to twenty members in the team but most selection committees normally consist of three to six members. Each member focuses on a particular aspect of evaluation to ensure effective decision making. One of them studies the behavioral aspects of the interviewees. Usually, s/he sits at the corner and observes the expressions, movements and behaviour of the interviewees. The team members put questions one by one to the candidate and candidate answers each question. It gives the members enough scope to study the candidate. This is the most popular form of Interview in our country.

Example:

Situation: Here, Shikha is the candidate and there is a panel of five members - A, B, C, D, and E.

Shikha (enters the room) : Good morning, sirs.

Interviewers : Good morning.

A : Please sit down.

Shikha (sitting on the chair) : Thank you, sir.

C : You are Shikha. Please tell us about yourself.

Shikha : I'm Shikha Shandilya. I belong to Delhi. I was born and brought up in Delhi. I

completed my graduation and post graduation from Delhi University. Both, my father and mother are doctors. I'm interested in social work. Teaching is my passion. That's why I applied for this position.

C : Do you have some teaching experience?

Shikha : Yes sir. I have taught at DPS for two years.

C : OK, why did you leave the job?

Shikha : In fact, I got married. I had to move to Rohini. My school was about forty five kilometers away from my house. I couldn't manage the travelling.

B : What subjects have you studied at graduation?

Shikha : Sir, I have done English (Hons.) at graduation. Then I did post graduation in English. Other than English, I have good knowledge of Hindi. I have also done post graduate diploma in translation.

D : Have you done B. Ed.?

Shikha : No, sir. But I'm planning to do from IGNOU.

A : Which classes were you taking at DPS?

Shikha : Sir, I was teaching the students of ninth and tenth standard.

B : Madam, what're your strengths?

Shikha : Sir, I'm very much talkative and mix with others within no time. That's the reason, I establish a very good relation with students. I understand their problems and teach at their level.

E : How can we make our students a fluent speaker of English?

Shikha : We can push them to speak more and more English.

C : But some of them belong to rural area and don't have even basic knowledge of English.

Shikha : Sir, we can form groups of the students. They can learn in a better way in the peer group.

C : OK, thank you. Do you have any questions?

Shikha : Sir, when'll the result of this interview be declared?

C : Just after the interview.

Shikha : Thank you, sir.

(g) Stress Interview

This type of interview is conducted when the candidate is to be selected for a job which involves stressful situation(s) or heavy pressure of work. The panelists ask a series of questions in rapid succession from the interviewee in order to test his/her ability to handle stress filled situation. The panelists behave in this manner to test the interviewee's behaviour

in a busy environment. The questions are asked about handling work overload, conflicts, and dealing with multiple projects. Interviewee needs to be mentally alert and answer the questions with ease.

Sometimes there can be a single interviewer who behaves in a hostile manner. S/he doesn't make eye contact with the interviewee, shows disinterest, interrupts, takes phone calls during the interview, or tries to irritate the interviewee by asking questions in a demeaning way. The ultimate goal of the interviewer is to assess how the interviewee handles the pressure.

(h) Telephonic Interview

Telephonic interviews are conducted over telephone or mobile phone. These are conducted when interviewee cannot appear for face-to-face interview. In case of a large number of candidates, this method is used as a tool for the first round of screening and eliminating the candidates who do not meet the expectations. It is followed by other rounds which aim at finding out a candidate's suitability for the job from various perspectives. The interviewing company informs the candidates well in advance, seeks their convenience, and confirms the date and time of the interview. Generally, it is shorter than face-to-face interview and may not be final interview for the selection of a candidate.

Candidate's voice plays a key role in this type of interview. The companies use it as a first-stage interview in the selection process, and it is particularly useful during overseas interviews. It has the advantage of saving time and expenditure for both the company as well as the candidate. On the other hand, it has a disadvantage as the interviewer cannot study body movements of the interviewee.

(i) Video Conferencing Interview

Like telephonic interview, this too is a long-distance interview. But it has advantage over the telephonic interview as the interviewer(s) can talk face to face with the interviewee and see his/her facial expressions as well. It facilitates the interviewer to apply all the principles of a panel interview. Companies, having video conferencing facility, prefer to select candidates from a distant location by using this mode of interviewing. Many companies, especially multinational companies, conduct video conferencing interviews to select candidates for jobs. The company arranges video conferencing facility to the candidates at its regional offices and candidates appear there for interview. Otherwise, the candidates need to visit the nearby agency that provides video conferencing facility. Even Skype has made it easier to interview a candidate from his/her home. The candidate needs the internet connection and account with the service-provider. S/he can use computer or mobile phone to use this facility. It saves time and expenditure on travelling.

(j) Mock Interview

A mock interview is a simulation of a real interview. Its objective is to give a candidate the feeling of the actual interview. It is conducted similar to that of a real interview. The situation of a real interview is created for the candidate. One or more persons act as interviewer(s)

and the candidate appears before him/them. The interviewer(s) is provided with a list of questions and the candidate(s) answers the questions. Once the session starts, the candidate begins to behave as if he is facing a real interview. Candidate's performance is recorded and replayed with the comments of the interviewer or some expert. The purpose of a mock interview is to train the candidate for the real interview. After the practice, s/he gains confidence and becomes fit to face the interviews. It is a good way to prepare for the real interview.

Activity : 5

Form a group of five students. Four of them will play the roles of interviewers and the fifth will appear before them as a candidate. Interchange the roles and share the feedback in a group.

12.4 Role of Body Language

Nonverbal communication is as important as verbal communication. Body sends messages sometimes consciously and sometimes unconsciously. Body movements play a vital role during the interview. They exhibit that interviewee is confident or nervous. The interviewee's physical posture exhibits his confidence and enthusiasm; facial expressions and gestures explain the spoken words.

The interviewee should sit upright but not stiff. S/he should not sit either in a reclining position, or at the edge of the chair. Slouching in the chair suggests that the interviewee is not alert, and sitting on the edge of the chair conveys his/her nervousness.

Eye-contact is necessary with the interviewer(s). It reflects confidence level of the interviewee. The interviewee should look at the interviewer when s/he speaks to him/her. S/he should answer the question by making eye contact with the interviewer. The interviewee should not fiddle with pen or shake legs. It suggests nervousness. The interviewee should put his/her hands on his/her lap or place them on the table; and use appropriate hand movements when necessary.

12.5 Frequently Asked Interview Questions

Interview questions can be divided into two categories: the close-ended questions and open-ended questions. Close-ended questions restrict the responses to only 'yes' and 'no', whereas open-ended questions seek more information. For example:

- Do you have relevant work experience? (close-ended)
- Why did you leave the previous job? (open-ended)

12.5.1 Questions that are Frequently Asked during the Interviews

Below mentioned are some questions that are frequently asked during the interviews:

1. Tell us about yourself?
2. What can you do for us?
3. Why have you applied for this position?
4. How do your education and experience relate to this job?
5. Do your skills match this job?
6. Tell us something about your interests and activities?
7. Do you read newspaper regularly? (If the interviewee gives positive response) what's today's major news item?
8. What do you know about our organisation?
9. What are your major strengths?
10. What is your greatest weakness?
11. What're your long-term and short-term career goals?
12. Where do you see yourself five years down the line?
13. How do you handle stressful situations?
14. Describe the time when you had to work with someone whom you did not like?
15. Tell us about the time when you had to deal with a co-worker who was not doing his/her fair share of work? What did you do and what was the outcome?
16. What problem you had to face during your career, and how did you overcome it?
17. When can you join us?
18. Do you have plans to go for higher studies? (If candidate gives positive response) When do you want to do so?
19. How long do you plan to stay with us?
20. In case you get a job in a company which offers you a higher package, what'd you do?
21. Are you ready to work in night shifts?
22. What salary do you expect?
23. What're the accomplishments in your career?
24. Why should we select you for this job?
25. How'd you feel if not selected for this job?

12.5.2 Answering Strategies

Answering a question is a matter of skill. It is learnt through practice and experience. The way in which the interviewee answers a question makes the difference. It reflects his/her communicative ability and nature. A candidate can improve the quality of answers by adopting the following suggestions:

(a) Listen Properly

The interviewee should listen to the question properly and then start answering the question. Some candidates interrupt the interviewer in between while s/he is speaking and start answering the question before listening the complete question. This is wrong. The candidate should listen to the interviewer attentively in order to understand the question and then respond to it.

(b) Brief Answers

The interviewee should give brief and to-the-point answers, especially to the open-ended questions. S/he should listen to the question carefully and answer only what is asked. A long answer doesn't mean a better answer.

(c) Accurate Answers

Nobody knows everything in this world. If interviewee does not know the answer, s/he should simply admit that s/he doesn't know the answer. S/he should not try to bluff the interviewer. S/he should give accurate answer with complete force. Giving an incorrect or incomplete answer reduces the chance of success.

(d) Specific Answers

The interviewee should be specific and focused. S/he should answer specifically and should not deviate from the question. S/he should avoid giving the information that is not asked. Specific answers convince the interviewers and increase the chance of success. S/he should use concrete and specific words and phrases, and avoid abstract, obscure, and vague words as they can confuse the interviewers.

(e) Clarity

The interviewee should answer clearly and directly. S/he should be clear in expression as well as thoughts. S/he should speak clearly so that the interviewers can understand what s/he is answering.

(f) Correct Pronunciation

While answering the question(s), the interviewee should pronounce the words correctly. Incorrect pronunciation can lead to wrong meaning of the word and decreases the chance of success.

(g) Positivity

The answers should reflect positivity. Sometimes interviewers ask negative questions in order to explore the negatives in the interviewee's personality. The interviewee should answer even negative questions in a positive manner. S/he should exhibit positive attitude during the interview.

(h) Use of Appropriate Body Movements

The interviewee should use appropriate body movements wherever required. S/he should make eye-contact with the interviewer while answering the question as it reflects confidence level of the interviewee. S/he should move hands if required.

(i) Logical Answers

The answers should be rational and logical. If the interviewee does not agree with something, s/he should politely present logic behind her/his answer.

12.6 Pre-interview Preparation

Job interview is an important event in one's life. The candidate needs to impress the interviewer(s) and convince him that s/he is the best candidate for the job. S/he should prepare him/herself before the interview whether it is a face- to-face personal interview, a telephonic interview, or an interview through videoconferencing. Preparing well is the key to success. Planned preparation helps the candidate to develop the needed confidence. Before entering the interview, the candidate should:

- make sure that s/he meets the eligibility conditions;
- obtain all the necessary details of the position applied for;
- receive maximum information of the organization s/he wants to join;
- know his/her strengths and weaknesses;
- evaluate his/her skills needed for the position.

Thus, preparation involves:

(a) Self-analysis

Self-analysis is the first step towards the effective planning for a job interview. It includes identification and analysis of his/her background, major accomplishments, achievements, special interests, and career objectives. Generally, the interviewer begins with the question:

- Tell us about yourself?
- How'd you describe to yourself?

The purpose of this type of questions is to identify the match between the candidate's background and the requirements of the job to be filled in. The candidate should be ready

with 'two-minute bio', presenting his/her background and accomplishments in a positive manner.

An accomplishment can be defined as 'Something that is achieved successfully with the help of one's skills'. It can be the completion of a project, college trip, cultural programme, or solving a difficult problem or situation on which the candidate can be proud of. The candidate should make a list of his/her accomplishments. The list needs not be long enough. Four to five accomplishments are more than sufficient. The interviewer can ask the following types of questions:

- What are your accomplishments?
- Describe a difficult situation you faced in your professional career and how did you handle it?
- What does make you stand out from the rest of candidates?

The candidate should remain ready to face such kind of questions. S/he should memorize his/her achievements and present before the interviewers with illustration.

Achievement is different from accomplishment. Accomplishment is obtained through special skills whereas achievement includes academic and professional success. Achievements brighten the prospects of a candidate. The candidate should prepare a list of prizes, awards, scholarships, fellowships, distinctions, commendations, and things that show his/her achievement or recognition. The interviewer can ask direct questions, like:

- What're your major achievements?
- Have you done something that has given you a sense of achievement?

Everybody has some hobbies and special interests. Most organisations prefer dynamic and active employees. Special interests and activities show the candidate's dynamic and energetic personality. The candidate should prepare a list of his/her extra-curricular, co-curricular and professional activities as well as hobbies and interests. However the candidate may have put them in his/her curriculum vitae, but interviewer can ask the candidate to justify them at the time of interview.

Everybody has short-term as well as long-term goals. Goal is a plan that is intended to achieve. Career goal is the plan what a candidate wants to achieve in his/her professional life. The candidate should be clear about his/her objectives. The interviewer can ask the questions, like:

- What's your long term goal?
- Where do you find yourself in five years?
- What'd you do to achieve your goal?

The career objective should be in terms of the job position applied for. The candidate should also evaluate whether s/he possesses the required knowledge and skills that r required to

carry out the functions associated with the job. The interviewers try to find out whether the candidate possesses the required skills and can ask the following type of questions:

- Why should we hire you?
- What does make you suitable for this position?
- What are your strengths?

(b) Organization's Analysis

The candidate must collect maximum possible information about the organization s/he wants to join, before the interview, which may include:

- Hierarchical structure of the organization
- Major achievements of the organization
- Recent developments in the organization
- Work culture in the organisation
- growth rate and turnover of the organization
- Major areas of operation

Interviewers can ask a few questions to test candidate's knowledge about the organisation and his/her interest. Some of the questions can be:

- What do you know about our company?
- Why do you want to join us?
- How do you rate our company?
- Our company was recently in news. Can you tell why?

The candidate cannot answer such type of questions until s/he doesn't research the organization. For this purpose, s/he can visit organization's website, collect information from magazines, newspapers, annual reports, or so. S/he can note down important points that can help at the time of interview.

(c) Job Analysis

It is essential for a candidate to know what the job is all about. S/he must study the job profile, required skills, and other details beforehand. Only then s/he'll be able to answer the questions, like:

- What do you know about this position?
- Why are you interested in this job?
- What does make you fit for this job?
- How will you rate yourself for this position?

The candidate should have following points in mind:

- What skills are needed for the job.
- What responsibilities are associated with the job.
- What chances are there of career advancement.
- How this position is different from similar positions with other organisations.

The candidate can collect information from internet, library, and people working in the organization.

(d) Revision of Subject Knowledge

A job interview is conducted to test the knowledge and technical expertise of the candidates. Although the candidate would have attached the proof of his/her academic qualifications, yet some organisations focus on the evaluation of the subject competence of the candidates. They conduct technical interviews where subject experts ask questions to judge the depth and scope of the candidates' subject knowledge. Hence, the candidate should revise his/her subject matter before the interview. Other than subject, the candidate should also brush up his/her general awareness. The interviewers can ask questions on social, political, economic, scientific, environmental and other issues. The candidate should read newspapers, magazines, watch news on television in order to brush up his/her knowledge.

(e) Arrange the Documents

The candidate should arrange the following documents/papers to carry with him/her for the interview:

- Call letter for the interview
- Original degrees and certificates
- Experience certificate(s)
- Copies of resume
- Photographs
- Other relevant papers that might be needed at the time of interview

12.7 Tips for Success

Everybody wants to be successful in interview. But practice and skill are required to get through the interview. The Interviewee should keep the following points in mind while appearing for the interview: (The points are presented in the form of Do's and Don'ts)

12.7.1 Do's

- Collect the information about the organization you wish to join.
- Make sure you meet the eligibility criteria and possess required skills
- Make a practice before the interview.
- Keep the photo copies of the certificates and resume with you.
- Reach before the time of interview.
- Greet the interviewer (s) enthusiastically; and sit comfortably, only when asked.
- Make eye-contact with the interviewer (s)
- Answer each question positively.
- Appear confident.
- Ask the interviewer (s) the question (s) you have in your mind to clear your doubt.
- Thank the interviewer (s) before leaving.

12.7.2 Don'ts

- Don't try to bluff about the issues you are not aware of. Simply admit if you don't know the answer.
- Don't find faults with your previous employer (s)
- Don't blame the circumstances.
- Don't exhibit your nervousness.

☞ Exercise

1. You're to interview Salman Khan. What questions would you ask him? Write ten questions that you'd ask him.
2. You're Abdul/Neelima. You are to interview a politician. Playing the roles of both the interviewer and interviewee, write the questions that you'd ask and answers given by the politician.
3. How would you prepare yourself before an interview for the position of a Management Trainee?
4. How would you behave during the interview for a job?
5. What is the role of body movements during an interview?