

STRUCTURED INTERVIEW

Different degrees of structuring of job interviews

Job interviews differ in the degree to which they are structured. An unstructured interview is when each interview takes a different course. Line managers often conduct this type when they are not trained. An unstructured job interview does not allow for a comparison of candidates because they did not answer the same questions. The interviewers are thus subject to errors of assessment such as sympathy/antipathy effects. This leads to a low validity. If you want to compare candidates, you have to ask all of them the same questions. In a fully structured interview this happens throughout the interview. There is no room for informal exchange. Candidates often feel uncomfortable and are not perceived as individuals. The most common form is the semi-structured interview. On one hand, it comprises free parts in which a relaxed atmosphere can arise. However, all applicants must also answer the same questions.

The challenge of the fully structured interview

Fully structured interviews appear unnatural to the applicants. This is especially true when the interviewers are untrained. In this case, they do not succeed in creating a pleasant atmosphere despite the strict approach. Fully structured interviews are rather rare. They are based on a complex system with questions linked to the job descriptions. In contrast to the behavioural interview, interviewers do not ask about the actual behaviour of applicants in the past. Instead, they elicit behavioural intentions. This approach is based on the idea that behavioural intentions are good predictors of actual behaviour. As in the Behavioural Interview, the interviewers collect critical events related to the position. Based thereupon, they develop concrete situation guidelines. For each situation they construct a behavioural grading scale. The interviewers classify the answers of the applicants according to this scale. These interviews achieve a high level of validity if they are conducted professionally.