

Diversity One Careers
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Job interviews are scary enough when there's just one person on the other side of the desk. These days, though, in an effort to save time, many companies are switching to panel interviews — group sessions that put you opposite multiple hiring managers and decision makers at the same time. If this approach strikes you as stressful, you're not alone, but luckily, Lisa Quast, author of "Your Career, Your Way," has some tips for soldiering through.

In a great piece for Forbes called "7 Tips For A Successful Panel Interview," Quast offers tips sounding smart and engaging while fielding questions from multiple people. "To be successful in panel interviews," she explains, "you'll want to slightly modify your preparation as well as your communication style during the actual interview." Read on find out how.

- 1. Find Out Who You're Meeting With** — Prior to going in, get the names of the folks who'll be on the panel. You'll also want their job titles, so that you can research their roles within the company.
- 2. Anticipate the Questions Each Will Ask** — Once you know who you'll be sitting with, start thinking about their duties and brainstorm things they'll likely ask you about. The interview will be far less scary if you have a sense of what you might be grilled on.
- 3. Introduce Yourself All Around** — Don't simply wave at the whole panel and then take a seat. Shake hands with each person and try to grab their business cards — that way, you can arrange them in front of you as a means of remembering everyone's names. If you can't get cards, Quast proposes writing down names, so that you can address people properly during your responses.
- 4. Spread Your Attention** — If person A asks you a question, start by looking at him or her during your response but then be sure to make eye contact with persons B and C. You don't want anyone to feel excluded from the conversation.
- 5. Show You're Making Connections** — When you're answering questions, Quast advises, try to tie responses back to previous questions. The idea is to demonstrate your "active listening skills," which employers find very important.
- 6. Come In With Good Questions** — After you learn about who you'll be interviewing with, craft a series of questions appropriate for each person. During the interview, jot down other questions that come to mind and try to connect them back to key points in the conversation.
- 7. Don't Skimp on Follow-Up** — After a panel interview, it's not enough to simply send one thank-you. Send a personalized note to each person.

