
Preparing for Interviews at the World Bank Group

(From Peakinsight LLC)

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Below are a few tips and suggestions for preparing for interviews at the World Bank Group (WBG).

Preparation Tips – BEFORE the interview

The best way to stay relaxed and calm during an interview is to be prepared:

- Prepare for the job/program for which you are interviewing. Review the program requirements or job description (including the role of WBG in that area, duties and responsibilities) and selection criteria.
- Research yourself. Know why you want the job. Review your CV and application. Consider your fit with the program requirements/job description. Identify transferable skills, key accomplishments, work style, and personal and professional strengths. Remind yourself of specific experiences that exemplify these skills and strengths.
- Practice responding to questions.
- Prepare a list of 4-5 good questions you have about the position.
- Get a good night's rest!
- Allow plenty of time to get to the interview and plan to arrive a bit early.

Questions to ask the panel:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

What is a Behavioral Event Interview?

Typically interviews at the WBG present the elements of a behavioral event interview (BEI), it means they are structured interviews used to collect information about past behavior. Because past performance is a predictor of future behavior, a BEI attempts to uncover your past performance by asking open-ended question. Questions are designed to help the interviewer(s) learn about your past experience in a key skill area that is critical to success in the position for which you are interviewing.

We recommend that you prepare to discuss several examples for each competency that is included on the program/job description. If you can identify 20-30 situations that you have handled in the past, those will come more easily when you are asked particular questions during the interview. Start by trying to respond to the Sample BEI Questions which appear later.

The panel may spend time probing these competencies. They will be trying to find out how YOU handled particular situations. While you may be tempted to answer some questions saying "First WE did this, then WE did that," you should make it clear what actions YOU took as well as what the team did.

The STAR Technique

A useful way to prepare for this style of interview is to use the STAR technique. The STAR technique helps you to frame the answers to each question in an organized manner that gives the interviewer the most information about your past experience (and gives you the maximum credit for your answer, too.) As you prepare to answer each question, consider organizing your response by answering each of the following components of the STAR technique:

- **What was the SITUATION in which you were involved? What did you face?**
- **What was the TASK you needed to accomplish?**
- **What ACTIONS did you take?**
- **What RESULTS did you achieve?**

Probes

After you respond to a question, the panel may probe further into your actions or results. If some of their follow-up questions come across as confrontational, simply focus on the core element they are asking about and respond as best you can. They may ask additional questions about the situations you describe, such as:

- What challenges did you face? How did you overcome those?
- What lessons did you learn from that experience?
- What would you do differently, if you could turn back the clock and start over?
- How would you apply those learnings to dealing with anticipated challenges in the considered role?

As you think through various examples, you might be able to build these points into the stories that you prepare to tell.

Notes:

Tips – DURING the interview

- Notice how the panel is treating the interview (e.g., how formal vs. interactive) and respond accordingly. Help the panel manage the flow of conversation.
- Listen carefully; feel free to ask for clarification before answering a question. Don't be apologetic if you don't hear a statement, just ask the person to repeat.
- Take a moment to formulate your answers before you speak.
- Project energy and enthusiasm in a way that is authentic to you.
- Connect with each person (e.g., by making eye contact).
- Be honest, while focusing on communicating your professional achievements.
- Don't use the same example for every question.
- Be polite to EVERYONE you meet at the interview.
- Be aware of the panel's body language and non-verbal cues.
- THANK the panel for their time.

STAR Technique:

- *Situation you faced*
- *Task to accomplish*
- *Actions you took*
- *Results you achieved*

Anticipating Likely Questions in YOUR Interview:

Because practice and rehearsal make this type of interviewing more familiar and enjoyable, spend a few moments anticipating questions you think the interviewers might ask you during your interview. Review the job description; think about WBG's mission and the applicable competency model. Identify 3-5 questions you think might come up in your interview.

1.-----

SITUATION

TASK(S)

ACTIONS

RESULTS

2.-----

S

T

A

R

3.-----

4.-----

5.-----

Now, for each question, use the STAR technique to answer your own questions. Feel free to make a few notes if it is helpful, but try to be conversational and practice some of the Interviewing Tips.