

Preparing for a Provider Interview



Provider interviews might feel like you're doing a typical job interview, but they're actually quite different.

With this resource, you can explore:

1. Tips for preparation before your provider interview
2. Examples of ways to alter standard interview questions to be more applicable for provider interviews.
3. Additional questions to consider for your provider interview

INTERVIEW PREPARATION

Tips for Interviewing Providers

- Reflect on your desired level of involvement with the consultant and your/your team's capacity for involvement.
- Interviews are the first step to developing a working relationship, so approach it as a two-way discussion.
- Plan for a 25-minute call and allot at least 5 minutes for brief intros and provider questions.
- Prepare 3-5 questions for your provider interview. At least 2-3 questions should be ones you ask all providers for comparative purposes.
- If time allows, create an interview rubric or note "look- fors" for each question. This will help you ask follow-up questions during the interview and with the decision-making and feedback process at the end.
- Ask for specific examples of similar work they've completed in the past, and how they knew they met goals and outcomes.



PROVIDER INTERVIEW VS. JOB INTERVIEW

Reframing Your Approach

Unlike a job interview, you will be interviewing providers to work with you for a limited time to achieve a set goal. Here are a few ways you can adapt traditional job interview questions to fit this context.

STANDARD JOB INTERVIEW

Tell me about a time you went above and beyond at work.

Share something about yourself that isn't on your resume.

Describe a time when you had to work with someone whose personality or work style was very different from yours.

MODIFIED PROVIDER INTERVIEW

“Tell me about a time when a client rated you very highly for a project. Briefly share the goal of the project and 2-3 specific things the client called out / praised about your work.” You can also ask the opposite - about a time when a project did not go well or as planned.

“Please tell us about your experience with/in _____.”
Insert a specific skill, behavior or characteristic important to the project.

If working well with different backgrounds, communication styles and personalities is important for your project, we suggest sharing this with potential providers and asking them to give specific examples or tactics they have used in similar situations.

EXAMPLE SCENARIO: This project requires consensus-building and your team has a hard time coming to a consensus.

“Coming to a consensus is challenging for our team. Share your experience and track record with effective consensus building. (OR) What are 2-3 things you would do to help us successfully come to a consensus as a team for this project?”

INTERVIEWING A PROVIDER

Additional Questions

- Have you worked with an organization/entity/school like us before? If not, how do you anticipate you will translate your previous experience to this project?

If the prior example is from an organization operating in a different context than yours: How will you adapt your experience with “prior project” to our organization and project?

- Describe a time when you needed to adjust your approach to communicate more effectively with a client.
- What risks do you anticipate? How might you manage some of those risks?
- What aspects from the client side contribute to the success of projects you work on?
- What do you need from us to accomplish the deliverables outlined in the RFP?
- How do you address challenges when they arise during a project?

