

# YOUR GUIDE TO GLOBAL DEVELOPMENT JOB INTERVIEWS



# INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEWS

**Before landing a job interview**, informational interviews are an effective tool for learning about career paths and employers, but knowing how to ask for them and what to expect isn't always as clear.

## 01

### **DO leverage your connections**

People are a lot more likely to agree to an informational interview if they have at least some loose connection to you. It could be a common alma mater, a mutual friend or having a shared overseas volunteer experience.

## 02

### **DON'T ask for a job**

You should treat an informational interview with the same preparation and seriousness you would an actual job interview, but expecting a job, as a result, could turn off the person you are meeting.

## 03

### **DO be prepared to take the lead**

Don't expect the person you asked to do an informational interview to be the one to lead the discussion. Come prepared with specific (and well-researched) questions.

## 04

### **DON'T make it all about you**

This is a chance to learn from the inside how a particular organization or career path operates. It's not a place for you to share your life story and seek career guidance accordingly. Come ready with good questions.

## [MORE ADVICE: THE DO'S AND DON'TS OF INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEWS](#)

# INTERVIEW PREP: 3 THINGS TO KNOW

A top recruiter from Abt Associates, Stephanie Mansueto, talks about strategies and practices for all stages of the job interview process, including the preparation phase. Here are a few key tips for how to feel truly prepared.



## 01

### **Know the format**

Make sure you know how the questions will be asked, and who will ask them. Take time to learn about these individuals, as “how you answer questions could depend on the panelists’ background,” Mansueto says.

## 02

### **Know the employer**

Many organizations are “releasing a lot of their latest news or big company progress or updates on their LinkedIn company page,” rather than keeping their websites up to date, Mansueto says.

## 03

### **Know the job description**

It will not only help you prepare your responses based on what the requirements are, but also help you come up with your own questions should the job description omit key details.

## **MORE ADVICE: HOW TO PREPARE FOR YOUR NEXT INTERVIEW**

Mansueto speaks to our Career Account members on how to prepare for and execute a successful development job interview.

**WATCH: MASTER YOUR NEXT DEVELOPMENT JOB INTERVIEW**

# GLOBALDEV INTERVIEW FORMATS



“

In a panel or one-on-one interview, this is where they're gonna ask much more in-depth questions about your experience. —  
Stephanie Mansueto, principal recruiter, Abt Associates

”

Depending on which stage of the interview process, you're likely to encounter one of the following key interview formats. Make sure that you clarify with the hiring team which interview you should expect at each stage.



## Screening

Screening interviews are meant to determine if you meet the minimal qualifications for the job being applied for. These are typically conducted via a phone or video interview but can take place in-person.



## Panel

Panel interviews are where multiple people are interviewing one candidate at a time. These tend to be more efficient for candidates and preferred by employers as panelists can see and hear the candidates' responses to multiple questions.



## One-on-one

One-on-one interviews are becoming more common in an effort to reduce bias that may arise during panel interviews. But they are less efficient, so candidates should prepare to be interviewed for several hours should they encounter this format.



## Presentations

Presentations tend to come further down in the interview process for senior professionals, executives, or those that are in sales or business development-type roles. Their purpose is to reveal what your communication and presentation style is.

## MORE ADVICE: HOW TO PREPARE FOR A COMPETENCY-BASED INTERVIEW

# 3 COMMON INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Career coach and consultant Mike O'Connor offers advice on how to tackle some of the more common questions that you're likely to field during your next job interview.



## 01

### **'Tell me about yourself'**

The main purpose of a recruiter who asks this kind of question is to "gauge interest [and] enthusiasm" of a job candidate for a specific role. Offer "a few reasons that are genuine" as to why you want a particular role or to work for a specific organization.

## 02

### **'What is your weakness'**

This is "one [that] trips people up a lot," but approaching it from an angle of identifying areas of growth and conveying ways you have addressed potential weaknesses by learning new skills or gaining experience is the best approach.

## 03

### **'What are your greatest strengths?'**

While this question can seem like an easy one to prepare for, it does require some thought. One way to prepare for this question is to rely on the feedback of others who can confirm or even uncover the attributes that you ultimately will want a recruiter to know about.

## **MORE ADVICE: HOW TO ANSWER COMMON QUESTIONS**

What kind of questions should you expect, and how to respond? We asked development recruiters what they ask what they want to hear.

[READ: HOW TO ANSWER 10 COMMON QUESTIONS DURING JOB INTERVIEWS](#)

# VIRTUAL INTERVIEWS



“

In international development, where candidates and interviewers can be dispersed around the globe, video interviewing is a cost-effective and practical tool. — Kate Warren, executive vice president, Devex

”

The use of virtual communications platforms like Zoom or Google Meet for online video interviews saw a boost during the COVID-19 pandemic, but what was already a growing trend. To help you prepare for the increasing likelihood that your next interview will be virtual sort, here are some things to keep in mind.



## Dress smart

You might feel a bit funny getting dressed up in a suit to interview from the comfort of your home, but when in doubt, default to what you would do if it were an in-person interview. You want to demonstrate that you are taking the interview seriously.



## Background noise

Choose a quiet location to minimize background noise that could make it hard for an interviewer to hear you. If you have children, make arrangements for someone to keep an eye on them so they don't barge in while you're in the middle of a thought.



## Practice

Many video interviewing platforms allow you to perform a test before getting started, but if this is your first time interviewing online, it's wise to do a practice run with a friend. Make sure the equipment works and see what the background looks like.



## Concise answers

A challenging aspect of video interviews is knowing when to stop. Without the social cues you often have in an in-person interview, it's easy to ramble. Try to keep your answers brief and concise.

## MORE ADVICE: HOW TO ACE A VIDEO INTERVIEW

# WHAT TO ASK THEM

You want to make sure the questions you're asking are detailed enough so you have an understanding of what is expected of you within the first 90 days and the first year. The goal is to be fully informed before you go into this role to make sure it's a good fit.



- **How will success be measured?**
- **What experience and skills are essential?**
- **How will this role contribute to team/project growth?**
- **What are the biggest challenges for this role to address?**
- **What is the growth trajectory for this role?**
- **How do you support learning and development for this role?**
- **How often will I be expected to travel?**
- **Will I be working independently or as a part of a team?**
- **How much autonomy would I have in this role?**
- **What is the organization's plan for the next five/ten years?**

## MORE ADVICE: WHAT TO WEAR TO YOUR NEXT JOB INTERVIEW

What outfit should a development job applicant wear to an interview?  
We spoke with recruiting and career experts to find out the rules.

[READ: HOW TO DRESS FOR A GLOBAL DEVELOPMENT JOB INTERVIEW](#)



## Are you a GlobalDev job candidate looking to stand out to recruiters?

Our in-house recruitment specialists are currently compiling talent pools based on specific global development skill sets, including communications and food systems experts, and many more.

Candidates can [update their Devex profiles](#) to be considered, and employers can [learn more here](#).

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We hope you found this guide to working for the United Nations helpful. For more career advice aimed toward global development professionals, [visit our Career Center](#).

This report was curated and designed by:

Justin Sablich, Devex Careers Editor

Original writing, reporting, and analysis by:

Ingrid Ahlgren, Justin Sablich, Emma Smith, and Kate Warren

We thank you for being a Devex Career Account member! Please contact us with any questions or comments.

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