

Interviewing Skills: Structure and Content

I. Definition: Form of oral communication that involves the sending and receiving of messages in a question/answer format

II. Format: Direct (highly structured), Indirect (loosely structured), and Combined (some structure, some leeway for tangential responses)

III. Types: Information seeking, job selection interview, performance appraisal

IV. Questions: Open/closed; Neutral/leading; Primary/secondary

V. Preparation: Set up the interview, letting the interviewee know purpose, approximate amount of time, etc. who what when where why and how. Prepare notepad, tape recorder, interview schedule. Consider details such as room configuration, number of participants in focus groups, extension cord, batteries.

VI. Structure:

- a. Introduction – introduce self, purpose of interview, preview format of interview, establish rapport
- b. Body – Open -> closed; Closed -> open
- c. Conclusion – Thank you, offer to allow to review transcripts, follow-up information; Thank you note, if appropriate.

VII. Cultural Aspects of Interviewing:

- a. Legal vs. illegal questions
- b. Sensitivity to language and cultural rules.
- c. Listen to words and nonverbals
- d. Avoid listening obstacles such as prejudging, literal listening.