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Volunteer Mock Interviewer Guide

Thank you for volunteering with Braven as a Mock Interviewer! The purpose of these interviews is to give our college students (aka Fellows) an opportunity to refine their interviewing skills through practice as they prepare to secure career-accelerating internships, jobs, or graduate school admission.

Our Fellows, who are largely first-generation and/or low-income, are entering workplaces and will benefit immensely from your support and insight. Our goal is to prepare Fellows for today's workforce by supporting their career launch and engaging employers and professionals like you to enable their success.

Fellows are at different levels of mastery of the interview process. Please provide meaningful feedback and frame it with a growth mindset of what the Fellow can work to improve.

Fellows have also been introduced to the importance of storytelling in interviews, specifically using the Problem Action Result (PAR) framework. Mock Interviews provide an opportunity for them to practice using a story to illustrate examples of fit or failure for example.

For a quick overview of how the event will run, please see the agenda below:



Finally, please refrain from taking screenshots during the mock interviews to respect Fellows' confidentiality.

Thank you!

The Braven Team

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Interview Format – 3 Rounds

You will be paired with a Fellow for up to three rounds of 1:1 or panel mock interviews on Zoom. Each round of interviews takes place in individual breakout rooms and lasts for 25 minutes. After each round, there will be a 5 minute break.

What	Time	Description	Volunteer To-Do
Mutual Introductions	3 mins	Exchange pleasantries with the Fellow. The Fellow may share a short elevator pitch of what opportunity they are applying for.	❏ Share your name, title, and employer with the Fellow
Interview	15 mins	You will ask the Fellow approximately 6-8 questions, pending the length of their responses. If paired with another volunteer, plan to alternate asking questions.	❏ Select a few sample questions provided in the section called “Top Practice Questions.” ❏ If helpful, take notes on what Fellow shares
Feedback	7 mins	Exchange verbal feedback with the Fellow. Share gratitude, emails, and connect on LinkedIn.	❏ Provide verbal feedback to the Fellow on what they did well and what they can improve in future interviews. ❏ Invite the Fellow to share reflections on the interview. Ask them: ❏ What do you think went well? ❏ Where do you see room for improvement?' ❏ Be prepared to share your email and LinkedIn, as Fellows would like to send a thank you note and stay in touch.

Please be aware that the following technical issues may occur:

1. Connectivity Issues: Participants may experience disruptions due to unstable or slow internet connections. This can lead to audio or video lag, disconnections, or difficulty accessing the event.

2. Platform Glitches: Zoom may encounter unexpected issues, such as software bugs, crashes, or integration problems with third-party tools.

3. Audio/Video Quality: Variations in participants' hardware or network conditions may result in poor audio or video quality, impacting the overall experience. If you or your matched Fellow drop due to technical issues during a round, we will be unable to rematch you.

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Top Practice Questions

Please use the below practice questions to guide the interview. The chart includes examples of what to listen for as Fellows are responding to these questions so you can give them feedback.

Category	Interview Questions	Listen-Fors
General Introduction	• Tell me about yourself. • Why are you interested in this industry/company/job?	• Clear and concise self-description • Enthusiasm and motivation
Fit for Role	• What is your biggest challenge/failure, and how did you overcome it? • Where do you see yourself in 5 years? 10? • What 3 words would your supervisor, colleagues or friends use to describe you? • What is your greatest strength/weakness?	• Ability to reflect on and learn from experiences • Realistic career aspirations • Self-awareness and honesty • Motivation alignment with the role
Teamwork	• Among the people you've worked with, who do you admire and why? • Describe a time when a team member disagreed with your ideas. What did you do? • Describe a time when you handled a conflict. How did you approach the situation and what was the result?	• Ability to work well with others • Conflict resolution skills • Learning from teamwork experiences
Leadership	• Give an example of a time you were given no direction but took the initiative to get something done. • Tell me about a time when you had to go above and beyond to get a job done. • Tell me about a time you had competing priorities or deadlines. How did you prioritize?	• Proactivity and resourcefulness • Willingness to take ownership • Effective prioritization under pressure
Problem Solving	• Tell me about a time where you had to think outside the box to solve a problem. • Tell me about a time when you had to make a split-second decision. • Give me an example of when something you tried to accomplish failed.	• Analytical and critical thinking skills • Creativity in problem-solving • Learning from failures
Communication	• Tell me about a time your manager or mentor disagreed with you. What did you do and why? • Describe a time when you successfully convinced someone to see things your way.	• Persuasion and negotiation skills • Ability to articulate ideas clearly • Openness to feedback and compromise
Closing	• What questions do you have for me?	• Curiosity and engagement with the opportunity • Critical thinking in formulating questions

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How to Assess Performance

Fellows have been instructed that there are 3 performance areas that they may receive feedback on. The chart below describes these assessment areas, provides examples of interviewee behavior, and provides examples of positive (+) and growth (▵) feedback.

Performance Area	Interviewee Example Behaviors	Interviewer Example Feedback
Effectively Engages in the Conversation	• Tone of voice conveys enthusiasm and confidence to establish a positive and engaging interaction. • The Fellow uses clear, purposeful nonverbal cues that are appropriate and feasible in a virtual format. • The Fellow speaks at a volume and pace that is accessible and comprehensible.	+ "You kept your tone warm and engaging throughout the conversation, which made your responses easy to connect with." Δ "It's okay to brag about yourself in a job interview! Assertiveness or self-promotion is expected, even if this might not come as naturally to you."
Demonstrates Professionalism Through Communication and Body Language	• Maintains an open and attentive posture that reflects active listening and engagement. • Minimizes distracting behaviors, such as fidgeting or interrupting. • Adjusts their language, tone, and expressions to suit the interview setting.	+ "You kept a really calm and focused posture throughout the interview, which made you come across as confident and engaged. It showed that you were really tuned in to the conversation." Δ "Your tone was clear and consistent, which is great. Your interviewer might be looking for more vocal energy or excitement, especially when discussing your achievements or interest in the role. You can try varying your pitch or adding emphasis to key points to show your enthusiasm."
Communicates Clearly and Thoughtfully	• Answers questions thoughtfully, structuring responses in a coherent manner that is easy to follow. • The Fellow effectively uses the PAR (Problem, Action, Result) framework or similar techniques (such as STAR: Situation, Task, Action, Result) to convey the impact of their experiences.	+ "Your answers were clear and well-structured, making it easy to follow your thought process and understand your key points." Δ "You told a really compelling story when you shared [X]. In a job interview you will want to be more clear and direct with your answers. Using PAR or another framework for structuring your responses will help you tell your story while fully answering the interview question."

+ = Positive Feedback
Δ = Critical/Growth Feedback

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Thank you!

Had a great time at Braven's Mock Interviews?

You can continue making a difference by supporting more college students as they build the skills and confidence needed for strong first jobs.

Learn more about our other volunteer opportunities at braven.org/volunteer.

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