



On-Site Interviews

- A survey of employers shows that, although the job market for college graduates has changed dramatically over the past five years, employers have made few corresponding changes in the way they conduct company visits.
- 91% of employers indicated that they host company visits as part of the hiring process.
- More than four-fifths of employers said they invite selected students for company visits within four weeks of the campus interview.
- More than three-fourths of the employers indicated that they do not ask candidates to complete any steps between the campus interview and the company visit.
- A large majority of employers indicated that they pay for candidates' travel and lodging, meals, and incidentals, such as parking, related to company visits.
- Nearly three-fifths of employers make it a practice of prepaying candidates' travel and/or lodging expenses.
- Three-fourths of the respondents said that they provide an agenda to candidates prior to the company visit. E-mail, was the most frequently used means for delivering the agenda.
- 85% of the employers indicated that they provide candidates information about the job, the company, and/or the community before a site visit.
- More than half of the employers expect candidates to wear a business suit for the company visit.
- Nearly two-fifths of the employers said they rarely or never join candidates for dinner the evening before the company visit.
- Most company visits begin between 7:00 and 9:00 a.m.
- Nearly two-thirds of the employers said they conduct individual company visits.
- More than half of all candidates are likely to be scheduled for three to four one-on-one interviews during their company visits.
- Many candidates meet a lot of people during their company visits. Most often they meet a human resources representative, their potential first supervisor, and someone from middle management.
- Nearly two-thirds of the respondents indicated that they do not do testing during the company visit.
- 88% of the employers indicated that they discuss job benefits during the company visit.
- Less than half of employers discuss salary. Employers appear to use benefits as a selling point but put off salary discussion until an offer is made.
- Most company visits end between 3:00 and 5:00 p.m.
- More than two-thirds of the employers said that everyone who meets with the candidate is involved in the hiring decision.
- Nearly four-fifths of the employers said they extend job offers or notify candidates of their unsuccessful candidacy within a one-to-three week time frame after the company visit.
- 35% of the employers said they allow candidates two to three weeks for a decision to accept or reject the offer.
- Many employers are inviting a fairly high percentage of candidates to visit.
- More than one-third of employers make offers to 40% or fewer candidates who come in for company visits.
- It appears that most employers receive very high acceptance rates for the offers they make. More than half reported that 70% or more of their offers are accepted.
- Most of the employers rarely if ever negotiate salaries for new college hires.

The challenge for students is to shine consistently during a six-hour or longer company visit. One of the best ways for career services professionals to help students prepare is through mock interviews. Through such exercises, students can gain the confidence and poise to be 'up' for every interview and at ease with every interviewer. They also can dramatically increase their chances of getting an actual job.

Adapted from "The Company Visit Revisited", by Robert M. Greenberg (NACE Journal, Winter 2003)

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