



HARVARD BUSINESS SCHOOL



INTERVIEW INTELLIGENCE SERIES • QUICK GUIDE • 2026

The interview, decoded from 40 MBA Protocol client debriefs



AT A GLANCE **Fast, tailored, point-blank**

WHO INTERVIEWS

Admissions committee
(92%)

FORMAT

On campus, hub city or
virtual

LENGTH

30 minutes, to the minute

YOUR FILE

Fully read, often quoted
back

What to expect

Thirty minutes that start almost immediately and end on the clock, with someone who has read your whole file. Nearly every interview centers on your current role, and more than half ask about competitors or where your industry is heading. Expect a follow-up on almost every answer. Classic questions like why HBS are rare, and there is usually no time for your own questions. Recent clients describe it as warm and conversational.

Questions to prepare

1. Tell me about your current role. How does it work, and what did you do?
2. What are your post-MBA goals? What if that path were closed?
3. Who are your competitors, and where is your industry heading?
4. Why did you choose that job, or why did you leave the last one?
5. Is there anything else you'd like us to know?
6. Tell me about a hobby or interest from your resume.
7. Explain your product, business or industry to a layperson.
8. Your recommender (or your essay) said this. What did they mean?
9. What have you done on diversity and inclusion at work?
10. How do you lead people? How would your team describe you?

CURVEBALL

Teach me something

"Teach me something about your industry." "Tell me something about your country I don't know." "Explain your field to me as if I knew nothing about it." Have a clear, short lesson ready on your field and your home.

PREP TIPS

The closing minute

Many interviews close with "Is there anything else we should know?" Have one short, new point ready.

Reread everything

Interviewers quote essays and recommendations aloud. Review everything you submitted and be ready to defend any claim.

FROM INTERVIEW HERO

Own the why behind every move

Nearly half of our HBS clients were asked why they chose or left a job. Interview Hero offers eight frameworks for telling the story behind every move on your resume.

Chapter 11: Walk Me Through Your Resume • [Get it on Amazon](#)



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