The Office Visit

The office visit is a way for a company to assess how you fit in with their company culture and a way for you to get a better feel for the company. Also known as a Super Day, second interview, site visit, or company visit, these visits vary in length, number of people involved, levels of people interviewed, types of tests conducted,* and degree of formality. The following information relates to standard procedures, but understand that no office visit will look exactly the same.

What to Expect Before and During an Office Visit
An office visit is often a full-day event, full of interviews, tours, and often social outings, like lunch. Prepare for this like you would any interview—dress professionally, research the company, prepare questions in advance, and get a good night’s sleep. As you prepare for the office visit, make sure you have finalized all the details with your contact person at the company. Be sure to know what time you need to be there, the location of your hotel, how you will get from hotel to office, and who will be making the travel arrangements. Companies will often reserve a hotel room and pay for your transportation, hotel, and food the night before and day of the office visit. Make sure to check with your contact about how these issues will be handled ahead of time. Also, be sure to keep all receipts for reimbursement later and have your contact’s telephone number and email address readily available in case you’re delayed for any reason.

On the interview day, be sure to be well rested and eat a light breakfast to prepare for the long day ahead. It is common for companies to schedule 3 to 5 hour-long interviews throughout the day, so you must constantly be aware of how you are presenting yourself, making sure you show excitement, enthusiasm, and poise throughout the day. You also may encounter a group interview setting and will likely have a lunch meeting, during which they will be observing your social graces, manner of speech, ability to converse, and maturity.

Remember that throughout the day, 3 or 4 different people may ask you the same question. Answer thoughtfully and passionately each time.

As the day wraps up, ask your contact any final questions you may have and inquire about interview follow-up. While some people are offered a job on the spot, many times companies take 2 to 4 weeks to get back to you, so knowing their timing is important. Also know that you do not have to give an immediate answer. You should take some time to think about an offer and whether you want to potentially negotiate any terms. In this closing conversation, the question of salary may come up. Try to think of an acceptable salary range ahead of time and offer that as an answer, or say that you believe that if an offer were made, it would be commensurate with your experience and the salary structure of that company. Try to never give an exact number.

*Types of tests conducted vary by company, with some not giving any at all. These could be knowledge or personality assessments, and can come with or without advanced notice, so always go in prepared.

Reimbursements
Reimbursements are handled differently by each company, but nearly all of them will be responsive to your needs. You should never turn down an interview because funds are low—talk to the contact person and see if they can help. Ways companies help are by pre-paying airline tickets, pre-paying hotel room, providing cash upfront for travel, and arranging for ground transportation. Companies will generally reimburse for both travel and hotel room. Make sure to keep receipts!

Ways companies may reimburse students for incidentals
- Parking, mileage, and cab fare
- Business phone calls
- Meals and tips

After the Visit
Remember to send a thank-you note to your company contact and all the people who interviewed you that day. This letter should be like any other job thank-you letter you send: Reaffirm your interest, highlight your qualifications, and personalize it to the person you’re writing to, if possible.