# Adapting job interview questions for autistic candidates

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# Autistic people have difficulties recalling episodic memories (memories of specific events) compared to typically developing people. However, being able to effectively recall such memories is important in many real-world situations, for example, in police interviews, during medical consultations, and in employment interviews. Autistic people’s episodic memory difficulties are most noticeable when they are responding to open, unsupportive questions. However, previous research indicates that autistic people are able to recall as much information as typically developing people, as long as they are asked more supportive questions. Autistic people also experience difficulties with executive functioning (cognitive abilities which allow us to plan, hold information in mind, inhibit interruptions, etc.), theory of mind (the ability to understand others’ perspectives and intentions), and spoken language. The current study aimed to investigate the impact of these cognitive abilities on memory recall in two previous studies which compared autistic and typically developing adults on how specific their recall was in police, healthcare, and employment interviews, and the quality of responses during an employment interview when both unsupportive and supportive questioning was used. The results show that while non-autistic people may rely on theory of mind abilities, autistic people may rely more on language abilities when performing in interviews, potentially to compensate for their episodic memory difficulties, and that this effect is most apparent during more unsupportive recall (e.g. when a brief, open question is asked) compared to when open questions are followed by prompts (e.g. ‘tell me about who as there’, ‘what happened?’, etc.).