



JOB CANDIDATE INTERVIEW GUIDE

The Job Candidate Interview should be an exchange of information and feelings and the development of an understanding between two involved people.

Objectives of “The Interview “

1. To obtain information from the candidate which will help to appraise personality, character and motivation; to judge appearance and personal characteristics face-to-face.
2. To clarify data on the application form, apparent inconsistencies, time gaps or other missing information.
3. To obtain additional information not contained in the application.
4. To inform the candidate about the job and the Company, and if the candidate appears to be desirable, to sell the Company with persuasion.

Your final decision of whether to hire or not will be largely based on your interview. Take the time to do it thoroughly.

Casual or informal interviewing is inadequate and leads to:

- ◆ sizing people up by appearance
- ◆ picking people because of personality
- ◆ failing to get the facts

1. Choose an appropriate place. An area of privacy is a must.
2. Allow ample time.
3. Pre-plan the interview with specific objectives and the techniques you want to use.
4. Put the prospective employee at ease.
5. Ask effective questions.
6. Listen to what is being said.
7. Listen to what is not being said.
8. Thank the Candidate. Recognize every employment interview, whether you hire the person or not, as a public relations opportunity.
9. Use separate sheet of paper to make notes or post-it notes. Do not write on application.



The Interview Profile

Although a selection interview should be allotted as much time as necessary, the typical interview lasts approximately 30 - 45 minutes

Examples of Questions - Who, What, When, and Where

To help you toward a more constructive interview, a series of questions is listed below. They are not listed in order of importance, and you might have other questions that better suit your purpose.

Asking questions like these, however, will help you to "size up" your applicant, and to determine just how well he measures up to being the kind of person you want to employ. A person's work experience is important and a natural and easy place to start the interview. A key question here might be:

- ◆ One of the things we want to talk about today is your experience.
 - Would you tell me about your last four jobs?
- ◆ In addition to knowing what the candidate does on the job, it is vital to know how he feels about what he does. The response of the candidate to the type of questions that follow may well reveal such feelings and attitudes.
- ◆ How do you feel about your present job?
- ◆ What are some of the problems you encounter in doing your job?
 - Which frustrates you the most?
 - What do you do about them?
- ◆ How do you feel about the progress you have made with your present company?
- ◆ In what ways do you feel your present job has helped you to take on even greater responsibilities?
- ◆ What would you say was the most and least enjoyable job you ever had, and what are your reasons for feeling this way?
- ◆ What do you feel has been your greatest frustration on your present job, and why do you feel this way?
- ◆ What are some of the reasons you had for leaving your last job?
 - (Always look for more than one reason for a voluntary resignation).
- ◆ What is your general impression of the last company for which you worked?



- ◆ Most jobs have pluses and minuses; what were some of these minuses of your last job?
- ◆ Do you consider your progress on the job representative of your ability, and why?
- ◆ Where would you rank this job with other jobs you have held? What are some of your reasons for ranking it?
- ◆ How many hours do you feel a person should devote to his job?
- ◆ What do you feel is a satisfactory attendance record?
- ◆ The way the candidate feels about people, his co-workers, and supervisors, has an important part to play in determining his job success. Here are some questions that will help the interviewer explore this important area:
 - ◆ What kind of person was your supervisor?
 - ◆ What are some of the things about which you and your supervisor disagreed?
 - ◆ What do you feel were your supervisor's greatest strengths?
 - ◆ In what areas do you feel your supervisor could have done an even better job?
 - ◆ How do you feel about the way you or others in the department were treated by your supervisor?
 - ◆ In what ways has, your supervisor helped you to further your capabilities?
 - ◆ What are some of the things your supervisor did that you particularly liked or disliked?
 - ◆ How do you feel your supervisor rated your job performance? What evidence do you have to support this conclusion?
 - ◆ What did he feel you did particularly well?
 - ◆ What were his major criticisms of your work? How do you feel about these criticisms?
 - ◆ What kinds of people do you like working with? What kind of people do you find it most difficult to work with? How have you successfully worked with this type of person?
 - ◆ It is valuable to know how a person regards himself. To learn more about this, the interviewer might ask such questions as:



- ◆ How would you describe yourself?
- ◆ As a person, what do you feel you could most improve upon?
- ◆ As a person, what would you consider your greatest strength?
- ◆ Are there certain things you feel more confident in doing that others don't? What are they and why do you feel this way?
- ◆ Do you like selling? Why or why not?
- ◆ How do you ordinarily react to someone trying to sell you a product?
- ◆ It is necessary for the interviewer to know what the candidate's job objectives are and what he is looking for, or wishing to avoid, in a job or career. Here
- ◆ Again, proper questions can be of great help in obtaining such information.
- ◆ What are some of the things in a job that are important to you and why?
- ◆ What are some of the things you would like to avoid in a job, and why?
- ◆ What do you want from your next job that you are not getting from your present job?
- ◆ What is your overall career objective? What are some of the things, outside of your job, that you have done or that you plan to do that will assist you in reaching this objective?
- ◆ To what kind of a position would you expect to progress in five years?
- ◆ Ten-years?
- ◆ What are your current wage expectations? How have you arrived at this figure? What would you consider satisfactory salary progression from this point?
- ◆ Why do you think you might want to work in our company?
- ◆ Why are you interested in seeking new employment?

**Questions an Interviewer has to be careful asking or is
Prohibited from asking**

- ◆ **Do not ask the candidate his or her date of birth.**
- ◆ **Do not ask the candidate what church he or she attends or the name of his or her priest, rabbi or minister.**



- ◆ **Do not ask candidates whether they are married, divorced, separated, widowed or single.**
- ◆ **Do not ask candidates how many children they have unless you ask both male and female.**
- ◆ **Do not ask who will care for the children while the candidate is working unless you ask both males and females.**
- ◆ **Do not ask the candidate if they own a car.**
- ◆ **Do not ask the candidate where a spouse or parent works or resides.**
- ◆ **Do not write anything on the application form.**
 - This is a good place for the use of post-it-notes.
- ◆ **Do not ask the candidate if he or she is for or against unions or whether the candidate was ever a union member.**

Interview Listening

Real listening goes far beyond hearing, particularly in an interview. When we hear, we are merely taking in information; however, when we listen we are actively involved in the process of comprehending.

How does active listening come about? What are the tools which can help us become an active listener?

Ask for Clarification. Often a candidate will generalize or only give you part of a story. Encourage him/her to explain and give complete information. How can we help the candidate clarify the information?

- ◆ Ask for examples of the situation.
- ◆ Request evidence for the information.
- ◆ Query the candidate's reasons for his/her statements.
- ◆ Encourage a complete set of information.
- ◆ Probe for 'more substantial information'. Examples are:
 - "What do you mean by...?"
 - "How do you mean..."
 - "What led you to that conclusion?"
 - "What else might support this?"



Reflect the Candidate's Information

To help you gain insight into the candidate's information, you can mirror the information given. How can we effectively mirror what the candidate has told us?

Tell the candidate what you think he/she is trying to say.

Ask the person if what you've said is correct.

Listen for the person's support or further explanation.

Examples are:

- ◆ "If I understand you correctly, you feel you were unable to do both jobs?"
- ◆ Improving Your Own Technique

Don't Interrupt

Listen carefully throughout the interview, and don't interrupt, except with encouraging noises like "uh-huh", and "I see" and "Yes, I understand." Don't break the flow of the candidate's words and thoughts as long as they're relevant.

Pay Attention:

This may sound obvious, but you'll appreciate it when you realize that the candidate speaks at 150-200 words per minute, but you can comprehend 600-800 words per minute. You tend to let your mind wander and explore while the candidate is talking. You may miss something important while your mind is occupied that way.

Silence:

Once in a while candidates seem to run out of things to say...yet you want them to continue. Try letting the silence build up for a few moments. They'll find it uncomfortable and start talking again. Many interviewers find it uncomfortable, too, and hurry to fill in the void. Be patient and relaxed, you may learn something from the direction taken on the new tack.

Level of Language:

Use language candidates will understand, but don't talk above or below their level of comprehension. Don't imitate their manner of speaking either, if it is of a type unnatural to you.

Note Taking:

Do take notes; some minor item of importance may be important in connection with data you get later. Abbreviated notes will do. You should review your notes after the interview and organize them to reflect the strengths and weaknesses of this particular candidate and make them a permanent part of the candidate's file.



Frequent Interview Errors

Halo Effect - The interviewer permits one or two favorable traits of a candidate such as a good appearance or an ability for self expression to bias the interviewer's judgment favorably on entirely unrelated traits.

Talking too much - Our egos sometimes get in our way when we are interviewing and we can't resist the urge to tell the candidate about ideas, our experiences and ourselves. An interviewer who does this will probably not obtain sufficient information to make a good selection decision. We learn more about candidates when they're doing the talking.

Failure to listen - Many times our attention is diverted from what the candidate is saying. Sometimes we are thinking ahead to what we are going to say next.

Impatience - Sometimes we will interrupt before a candidate has completed a thought. This can deprive us of much valuable information. An interviewer sometimes terminates the interview before obtaining sufficient information for a sound selection decision.

Summary

Don't let the tremendous amount of information presented above overwhelm you. It is only presented to help you develop your skills as an interviewer. Interviewing, just like sporting events, takes much experience and practice. With experience and practice, you will become a much better interviewer. The information presented here is to help you achieve this end.