

GUIDE TO INTERVIEWING

I. INTRODUCTION

Hiring practices have a direct impact on the growth and success of our organization. It is important to establish a team of players that will work well together to accomplish the goals and objectives established of the department and organization as a whole.

Due to your working relations with the candidate to be hired, your job title and responsibilities, and/or your leadership abilities that you have portrayed, you have been asked to take part in a search committee. The process of ensuring that the candidate that is selected succeeds does not stop with the interview. In order to ensure the new employee succeeds in the position and organization, every member of the team is responsible for helping to orientate the new employee and make their transition into the new position a smooth and successful one.

II. INTERVIEWING BASICS

First Impressions

First impressions are initial reactions (positive or negative) about someone or something. They're not logically based and usually influence how you feel about someone. First impressions have a great impact on your hiring decision. According to "The First Four Minutes" by Leonard and Natalie Zunin, impressions are formed based on the following statistics:

57%	non-verbal	(what we see)
37%	what we hear	(interpretations and assumptions)
06%	what was said	(actual words spoken / exactly what was said)

It is important to identify common errors resulting in first assumptions. Commonly committed observation errors include:

- A. **ACTIVITY EFFECT**
The assumption that "extroverted" personalities make the best leaders, i.e. "Loud and active" exhibits leadership abilities vs. "Quite and conservative" is not a leader.
- B. **HALO EFFECT**
The action of taking one characteristic and drawing conclusions about all characteristics and traits of that person. The halo effect, when present, enables one to overlook most other positive and negative behaviors.
- C. **SIMILAR-TO-ME**
The tendency to like or want to hire persons who think or behave just as we do.
- D. **ONE EXPERIENCE EFFECT**
The tendency to build an impression of an individual based on one experience of that individual.

Biases

Biases are preconceived judgments or opinions formed consciously in response to some event. Biases filter information received as either positive or negative.

- | | |
|--------------------|-----------------------|
| A. Age | D. Ethnic background |
| B. Education Level | E. Physical abilities |
| C. Gender | F. Work experience |

Gut feelings

Gut feelings are a set of sensory cues that trigger reactions in a person based on past experience or predisposition. Gut feelings do not give us an accurate or complete assessment of the candidate being interviewed. Often times relying on “gut feelings” will result in a poor hire because they tend to stereotype people. We may look at someone from a different culture and say “he is untrustworthy”, or even “she has a good work ethic.”

Remember, we are not neutral, unbiased, or without prejudices, but we must be aware of these gut feelings and structure them so that they do not negatively effect our decisions.

III. LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

Since the 1960’s, several laws have been designed to provide equal employment opportunity for all individuals. When interviewing and evaluating candidates for employment, it is important to remember several legal aspects, of which the basic laws are:

Equal Employment Opportunity Act & Civil Rights Act (title VII)

Both laws prohibit any form of employment discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex or national origin.

There are many laws related to employment. Although it is not reasonable for you to be able to recite each law, it is important for you to be able to recognize illegal questions. To do this, ask yourself, “IS THIS QUESTION JOB-RELATED?” If your answer is “NO”, then don’t ask the questions.

The following are examples of what you can and cannot ask during an interview.

<u>SUBJECT</u>	<u>ACCEPTABLE</u>	<u>UNACCEPTABLE</u>
Name	Name	Maiden Name
Residence	What is your place residence?	Do you own or rent your place of residence?
Age	If hired, can you show proof of age?	What is your age? When were you born?
Birthplace	After employment, you will be required to submit verification of your legal right to work in the U.S.	Where is your birthplace? Are you a U.S. citizen? Where do your parents live?
<u>SUBJECT</u>	<u>ACCEPTABLE</u>	<u>UNACCEPTABLE</u>

Marital Status	(nothing is acceptable)	I see you are engaged? when is your wedding?
Family Responsibilities	(nothing is acceptable)	Do you have adequate care for your children?
Organizations/ Activities	List job related professional societies which you feel relate to this position.	Are you involved in extra-curricular activities?
Religion	This position requires you to work a few Saturdays and some Sundays. Will that be a problem for you?	Does your religion prevent you from working on weekends?
Criminal Activity	Have you ever been convicted of a felony or misdemeanor?	Have you ever been arrested:
Race, Color	(none acceptable)	(none acceptable)
Physical condition	Do you have any physical conditions which may limit your abilities to perform the job as just described? *don't forget to describe the position first.	Do you have a physical disability?
National origin	This position requires reading, speaking, and/or writing in xxxx. Do you read, write, speak this language? * only if the job requires this.	What languages do you Speak at home?
Other	Please explain your work experiences.	Tell me about yourself.

V. INTERVIEWING

Job Profile and Planning

- * Know what you are looking for.
- * Know what the job entails.
- * Know what goals the position will have.
- * Know what obstacles and challenges the position will have.

Questions

Developing questions is a critical step in planning because it allows you to be prepared for a successful interview. Not having a set of questions developed can lead to a sketchy, and possibly unfair, interviews. Types of questions asked during an interview determine the kind and quality of information you will obtain from the candidate.

A. TECHNICAL

Address specific skills and abilities... “what can you do” type of questions

- * Education level; * machine operable skills

* Computer skills – special consideration should be taken when discussing a candidate's knowledge and skills related to hardware and software. The interview should analyze the candidate's true strengths or weaknesses. For example, asking "do you know excel?" vs. "what spreadsheets have you developed?" offer vary different answers.

B. THEORETICAL

Hypothetical situations, future oriented, not past experienced based, "What If" type of questions.

* How would you handle an irate customer?

C. BEHAVIORAL

Focus on past experiences / performance. Provides information on how the candidate behaved in actual situations as opposed to hypothetical situations. There are three components of behavioral questions: SITUATION, ACTION, RESULTS.

* Tell me about a time you were confronted with an irate customer. What did you do? What was the final outcome?

D. OPEN vs. CLOSED ENDED

Open ended question allow the candidate to discuss more information about them. Closed ended questions are "yes / no" questions which provide the interviewee with limited inform.

* Have you had sales experience? closed-ended

* Tell me about your past sales experience. open-ended

Be aware of the types of questions and the different ways in asking questions. The best type of question, which lead to the most information about the candidate, are the BEHAVIORAL complimented with OPEN-ENDED.

Documentation

* Don't be afraid to take notes while the candidate is talking.

* At the end of the interview, summarize the following:

Strengths

Concerns

What would you like management to know before deciding to hire or not to hire?

Sample Interview Outline

In order to conduct a successful interview, you must be prepared with how the interview will be conducted. Below is one example of how to conduct an interview, but variations may be established.

- I. ESTABLISH RAPPORT
 - * Greet the candidate by their first name
 - * Introduce all interviewees by their full name and position
- II. OUTLINE THE INTERVIEW
- III. ASK QUESTIONS (BEHAVIORAL)
 - * DON'T lead the candidate, ask illegal questions, or seem uninterested
 - * DO listen attentively and take notes
 - * Represent the organization professionally and positively
- IV. EXPLAIN THE POSITION
 - * Don't sugar-coat the job
 - * Describe the position, challenges and opportunities, and the purpose of the position
- V. CANDIDATE QUESTIONS
- VI. CLOSURE

Note:

Before the interview is complete, make sure the following is discussed with each candidate who is interviewed:

- position description and responsibilities
- hiring range and candidate's salary expectations
- candidate notification process/time line and
- organizational overview