

Interviewing Do's and Don'ts

CCAO/CEAO Winter Conference 2024



CONSULTANTS TO MANAGEMENT

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Preparing for the Interview

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Before the Interview

- ▶ Know your interviewee
 - ▶ Review resumé & application before interview
 - ▶ Be prepared to ask about accomplishments & potentially areas of concern - gaps in employment, jobs that ended within a short period of time, potential exaggerations
- ▶ Create a written list of questions that will be asked of ALL interviewees
 - ▶ Leave an area for notes
- ▶ Also create a written list of clarification questions specific to each interviewee based on their resumé and job application if needed
- ▶ Decide on a system to record the results of the interviews
- ▶ All questions asked need to relate to the essential functions of the job
 - ▶ Be sure job description is up to date & familiarize yourself with job description

Conducting the Interview

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Beginning of the Interview

Establish rapport with the candidate

- ▶ First impressions
- ▶ Shake hands if possible
- ▶ Greet the candidate pleasantly, attempt to put the candidate at ease
- ▶ Small talk - Did they find the place okay? How was your drive in?
- ▶ Do not intimidate the candidate

Accurately describe the position

- ▶ Consider reviewing the job description with the candidate
- ▶ Thoroughly explain important aspects of the job (work hours, requirements, expectations, etc.)
- ▶ Many people leave jobs because the jobs are different than what they expected

During the Interview

- ▶ **Ask open ended questions**
 - ▶ Try to avoid yes/no questions
- ▶ **Recognize biases & do not allow them to affect the interview or decision-making process**
 - ▶ Example: A bias interviewers may have is to consider candidates with similar interests, experiences, or backgrounds as interviewer to be better applicants
- ▶ **Notetaking**
 - ▶ Try to stick to prewritten questions, but all questions asked should be written down if deviating from prewritten questions
 - ▶ Write down all questions asked by interviewee & the answers provided to each questions
- ▶ **Avoid the Halo Effect**
 - ▶ Judging someone favorably or unfavorably based on one strong strength or weakness and allowing that to overshadow other strong or weak points

Can I ask that in an interview?

Inquiries before hiring...

Birthplace or National Origin

- ▶ Do not ask where a candidate was born
- ▶ Do not ask where a candidate's parents, grandparents, or spouse was born.

Religion

- ▶ Do not ask any question that would indicate or identify the applicant's religious denomination or custom
- ▶ Do not say to an applicant any religious identity or preference of the Employer
- ▶ Do not request a recommendation or reference from a pastor, rabbi, or any religious leader

Disability

- ▶ Before conditional selection, applicant can be asked whether they can perform the essential functions of the position
- ▶ After conditional selection, applicant can be asked whether they require an accommodation to perform essential functions.
- ▶ Do not ask any questions regarding the need for accommodation before conditional selection.
- ▶ Do not ask any questions regarding disability, medical conditions, workers compensation filings, etc.

Citizenship

- ▶ It is okay to ask:
 - ▶ Whether a U.S. Citizen (if not, whether applicant intends to become a U.S. Citizen)
 - ▶ If U.S. residence is legal
 - ▶ If spouse is a citizen
 - ▶ After hiring, is when proof of citizenship can be required (I-9 Form)
- ▶ Do not ask:
 - ▶ If native-born or naturalized
 - ▶ Proof of Citizenship before hiring
 - ▶ Whether parents or spouse are native-born or naturalized

Photos

- ▶ Photos may be required after hiring for identification purposes.
- ▶ Do NOT require a photograph before hiring.

Arrests and Convictions

- ▶ It is okay to make inquiries into conviction of specific crimes related to qualifications for the job.
- ▶ Do NOT make any inquiry that would reveal arrests without convictions.

Education

- ▶ It is okay to ask
 - ▶ Inquiry into nature and extent of academic, professional, or vocational training.
 - ▶ Inquiry into language skills such as reading and writing foreign languages.
- ▶ Do NOT ask
 - ▶ Any inquiry that would reveal the nationality or religious affiliation of a school
 - ▶ Inquiry into how foreign language ability was acquired.

Relatives

- ▶ It is okay to ask
 - ▶ Inquiry into name, relationship, and address of person to be notified in case of emergency
- ▶ Do NOT ask:
 - ▶ Any inquiry about a relative that would be unlawful or improper if made about the applicant

Organizations

- ▶ It is okay to ask
 - ▶ Inquiry into organization memberships and offices held, excluding any organization, the name or character of that indicates race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, age, or ancestry of its members
- ▶ Do NOT ask
 - ▶ Inquiry into all clubs and organizations where membership is held.

Military status

- ▶ Do NOT ask in an interview
 - ▶ Any inquiry into military service past or present is prohibited.
 - ▶ Military status is now a protected class.

Work schedule

- ▶ It is okay to ask
 - ▶ Inquiry into willingness to work required work schedule
- ▶ Do NOT ask
 - ▶ Any inquiry into willingness to work any particular religious holiday

The end of the interview

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- ▶ End on a friendly note
- ▶ Explain anticipated next steps and timeline if known
- ▶ Make NO promises
 - ▶ Even if you really liked the candidate
 - ▶ The next person interviewed could be even better
- ▶ Post Interview Survey
 - ▶ Include on survey that information provided will in no way affect candidate's prospects of employment.
 - ▶ Ask:
 - ▶ Were the essential functions made known to you?
 - ▶ Were the questions asked limited to topics related to the job?
 - ▶ Were you asked any improper questions?
 - ▶ Do you feel that the questions asked were overall fair?
 - ▶ Do you feel that the interview process was fair?

Scheduling of Interviews

- ▶ On days with back-to-back interviews, schedule yourself a short break between interviews to allow time to jot down notes about the last interview and review the next interviewee's resume/application.
- ▶ Allot enough time for each interview - some will be longer than others, some will be short.

After the Interview - Reference Checks

- ▶ Require applicants to sign a written release when seeking references from individuals
- ▶ Use caution when provide references to requesting parties
 - ▶ Potential defamation of character claims, interference with future business activities, etc.

Questions?



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