

Interviewing skills management guide

INTERVIEW PICTURE

Throughout all stages of the interview process, focus on the purpose of the interview and how your behaviour influences the outcome. Remember that every interview is an opportunity to promote the business.

The purpose of the interview is to collect as much relevant information and evidence about the candidate as possible in the time available. To achieve this, it is best to plan and structure the interview in advance with relevant questions.

STRUCTURE OVERVIEW

Introduction

Past Experience of the Job Candidate

Competency Assessment (Immediate)

Future Requirements

Next Step

Self Critique

PREPARATION

Upon receiving the application form or other documents, the following aspects should be checked:

- If application form used, have all boxes have been completed?
- Are there any special requirements for the interview e.g. for disabled candidates?
- Are any Work Permits in order?
- Are the job qualifications met?
- Is the required work experience met?
- Are there any gaps in the dates of employment?
- What pay rates are expected by the candidate?
- Does the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act apply?
- Has the form been signed?
- Have details of references been given?

Once a decision has been made to shortlist a candidate the following actions need to be done:

- Contact the candidate over the telephone to confirm an interview time and date
- Confirm the details in a letter explaining the time, date, venue and length of time that the interview is likely to take
- Confirm any special preparations that the candidate is required to make (i.e. presentation) or to bring with them (i.e. certificates)

Once the above has been completed, the environment in which you are preparing to interview the candidate should be reviewed:

- Ensure that the environment is clean and tidy
- Ensure that you are smart, calm, confident and smiling
- Ensure that you have arranged the appropriate facilities in order for no interruptions to be made

STRUCTURE

1. Introduction

- Introduce yourself and establish how the candidate prefers to be addressed
- Explain the interview procedure, timings, brief overview of company history, any competency assessment and what happens next

2. Test Past Experience of the Candidate

- Introduction to the purpose of this element
- Establish
 - Work experience/history
 - Specialist skills
 - Reasons for leaving previous employment
 - Salary history
 - Education and qualifications
 - Identify gaps in employment and reasons
- Summarise to clarify the interviewer's understanding

3. Competency Assessment in Relation to Job Requirements

- Introduction
- Questioning
 - Ask each part of the overall question as a separate question
 - Use each question as a tool to assess the core of the competency
 - Wait for an answer; try not to be tempted to answer the question for the candidate
 - If there appears to be a lengthy silence, ask if they would like you to repeat the question
 - If they need extra assistance, give an example
- Summarise each answer and clarify any misunderstandings

4. Future Requirements of the Candidate

- Introduction
 - "Now that I am clear about your experience and how this matches our competency requirements, I would like to find out what you are looking for."
- Establish
 - Availability
 - Pay rates and expectations
 - Career aspirations
 - Training and development requirements or expectations
- Summarise to clarify understanding

5. Next Step

- Introduction
 - "Now that I am clear about what you have done, what you are looking for, I would like to tell you a little about how we work and what happens next." Explain at this point the methods and working practices that will exist for the successful candidate

6. **Conclusion to Interview**

- Cover
 - References
 - Proof of identity if necessary
 - Agree next contact time

FOLLOW UP

- Self Critique
 - Were the questions used effectively?
- Interview comments should be recorded and should be
 - Objective
 - Evidenced

BODY LANGUAGE SIGNALS

The body language of the interviewer and the interviewee can both provide information to the other person. Some examples of this are as follows:

Nerves

All of the following can give the impression of nervousness or uncertainty:

- Crossed arms and/or legs
- Carrying books or papers across the chest
- Slumped posture
- Sitting perched on the edge of the chair
- Wringing hands
- Tapping foot
- Rocking in a chair
- Biting nails
- Fiddling with jewellery or hair
- Covering the mouth with hands when talking
- Clearing throat too much
- Hands in pockets

Distractions

All of the following could be viewed as distractions, which could affect what the candidate is saying:

- Excessive blinking
- Fiddling with jewellery
- Pushing glasses up the bridge of the nose
- Tapping or clicking pens
- Playing with paper clips etc
- Jangling pocket change
- Picking at fingernail
- Twiddling bits of hair
- Excessive hand movements
- Pacing up and down
- Chewing pens

Rudeness

Sometimes signals are given out without any intention. The following are examples of body language that could be considered as rude:

- Working whilst someone is talking to you
- Puffing

- Tutting
- Smirking
- Whispering
- Cracking knuckles
- Grooming yourself
- Standing too close
- Shaking hands aggressively
- Limp handshakes
- Yawning
- Constant glancing at a watch or clock

Superiority

All of the following can indicate a sense of superiority and therefore intimidate the candidate:

- Sitting on the desk
- Staying slumped when greeting someone
- Giving the 'top dog' handshake i.e. twisting your hand to be on top
- Standing too close when talking to someone
- Shouting or raising voices
- Swearing
- Drumming of the fingertips when listening to someone
- Staring
- Keeping a mobile phone/pager on