(BLUE FORM)

RESUMES, INTERVIEWS, AND THE DECISION
SUGGESTIONS AND QUESTIONS

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THE RESUME

What to look for when reviewing resumes:

- Overall structure and appearance
- Gaps in employment history
- Accomplishments/results
- Education
- Related volunteer/civic involvement
- Career progression
- Experience related to the open position
- Signs of achievement

THE INTERVIEW

For the interview to offer reliability, a structured process is necessary. Thus, preplanned interview questions tied to the specific job requirements are essential and must be asked of each candidate. Answers to the questions will provide meaningful information about the person's ability to do the job. The validity of the interview is strengthened when the questions are based on the job analysis and seek evidence of important job-related skills.

Interview Tips

- Put candidate at ease with icebreaker for general conversation (i.e., the weather, the trip to campus, offer a cup of coffee, etc.)
- Take notes during the interview for use during the selection process. (To put the candidate at ease, mention this.)
- Permit silence during the interview to give the candidate time to formulate thought.
- Avoid questions unrelated to the position. (They may trigger unforeseen legal actions.)

QUESTIONS

Use of Behavioral Examples

Behavioral examples are statements made by the candidate that describe actual events in which he or she was a participant. These examples are usually include a specific reference to names, dates, times, locations, and numbers. Based on the response, it will be possible to rate the relative presence or absence of specific skills that are important for the position. Behavioral examples go beyond the typically brief description that reflect how the candidate sees him or herself. However, follow-up probe questions may be needed to encourage elaboration of the initial response. If negative evidence surfaces, discuss the area further and attempt to gain contrary evidence. If the candidate has difficulty recalling specific life-history events in response to a specific question, be encouraging and sympathetic, tolerate silence and smile.

Sample questions, **answers**, and *follow-up probes*:

- *What are your strengths?* **I am a hard-working person.** *Tell me of a time when you exhibited your work ethic?*
- *Give me an example of when you had to show good leadership?* **I had to show leadership when my supervisor was absent for six weeks.** *Give me an example of a time when you had to provide leadership during your supervisor's absence.*
- *What things in your job give you a sense of accomplishment?* **I like advising students to help them solve their problems.** *Describe a time when you had a particularly difficult situation with a student that you were able to guide.*
- *Tell me about your most recent group effort.* **I served on a committee to help plan the new library.** *What were your responsibilities on the committee and how did you go about completing them?*
- *Give me an example of a time when you were able to communicate successfully with another person, even when that individual may not have personally liked you.* **I had to tell a student that he/she was going to fail my class.** *How did you handle communicating this bad news?*

Open-ended vs. Closed-ended Questions

Closed-ended questions yield a "yes", "no", or a one or two word response and provide little information about the candidate's abilities or skills. Questions that begin with words such as have, when, how many, which, or what kind are typically closed-ended. Open-ended questions encourage a descriptive response and typically begin with words like what did you, how, and why. Often it is possible to simply rephrase a closed-ended question to make it open-ended.

Examples:

- Have you ever used a computer? (Closed)
- How did you learn to operate a computer? (Open)
- What applications do you like to use a computer for? (Closed)
- Why is it important for students to have a computer foundation as part of their educational experience? (Open)

Sample Questions

Refer to separate list of " Common Interview Questions" and "Questions Which May or May Not Be Asked" for additional examples of questions.

THE DECISION

Give special consideration to candidates who possess the following qualities:

- Show loyalty to former employers
- Arrive at the interview on time
- Ask logical questions
- Appear to get along with co-workers
- Radiate enthusiasm
- Present themselves with good manners
- Offer verifiable references
- Show proven capability to do the job
- Show actual, proven achievements
- Communicate how they can help the department/area/university

Adapted from Green, Paul C. 1992. More Than a Gut Feeling II, Des Moines, IA: America Media Incorporated.

Upon request, the Human Resources Office will provide information sessions for the search committees on interviewing and the selection process.

Common Interview Questions

1. Describe a time when you were faced with problems or stresses at work that tested you coping skills. What did you do?
2. Give an example of a time when you could not participate in a discussion or could not finish a task because you did not have enough information.
3. Give an example of a time when you had to be relatively quick in coming to a decision.
4. Tell me about a time when you had to use your spoken communication skills in order to get a point across that was important to you.
5. Can you tell me about a job experience in which you had to speak up and tell others what you thought or felt?
6. Give me an example of when you felt you were able to build motivation in your colleagues/co-workers or subordinates.
7. Tell me about a specific occasion when you conformed to a policy even thought you did not agree with it.
8. Describe a situation in which you felt it necessary to be very attentive and vigilant to your environment.
9. Give me an example of a time when you used your fact-finding skills to gain information needed to solve a problem; then tell me how you analyzed the information and came to a decision.
10. Give me an example of an important goal you had to set and tell me about your progress in reaching that goal.
11. Describe the most significant written document, report, or presentation that you've completed.
12. Give me an example of a time when you had to go above and beyond the call of duty in order to get a job done.
13. Give me an example of a time when you were able to communicate successfully with another person, even when that individual may not have personally liked you.
14. Describe a situation in which you were able to read another person effectively and guide your actions by your understanding of his/her individual needs or values.
15. What did you do in your last job in order to be effective with your organization and planning? Be specific.
16. Describe the most creative work-related project you have completed.
17. Describe a time when you felt it was necessary to modify or change your actions in order to respond to the needs of another person.
18. Give me an example of a time when you had to analyze another person carefully or a situation in order to be effective in guiding your action or decision.
19. What did you do in your last job to contribute toward a teamwork environment? Be specific.
20. Give me an example of a problem you faced on the job, and tell me how you solved it.
21. Describe a situation in which you were able to positively influence the actions of others in a desired direction.
22. Tell me about a situation in the pas year in which you had to deal with a very upset student or colleague/co-worker.
23. Describe a situation in which others within your organization depended on you.
24. Describe your most recent group effort.
25. Describe the worst student or colleague/co-worker you have ever had, and tell me how you dealt with him or her.

INQUIRIES YOU ARE PERMITTED TO MAKE

You May:

- Ask whether the individual needs any reasonable accommodations or assistance during the hiring or interviewing process.
- Ask about the individual's ability to perform essential job functions.
- Give a copy of the job description to the individual that identifies all essential functions and ask whether the individual is able to perform
  all of those essential functions with or without a reasonable accommodation.
- Describe the job and ask whether the individual can perform those functions.
- Ask about current use of illegal drugs.
- State the University's standards and expectations and ask if the individual can meet those standards. For example:
  - YOU MAY State the University's drug policy;
  - YOU MAY State the University's standards for on-the-job alcohol consumption;
  - YOU MAY State the University's smoking policies;
  - YOU MAY State the University's standards for attendance, including the availability or lack of availability of leave for newly-hired employees;
- State the performance standards and expectations for a particular position.
- Ask and individual <u>how</u> he or she could perform tasks, and with what accommodations, if the applicant indicates that he or she can perform tasks with an accommodation.
- Ask and individual to voluntarily disclose whether the individual has a disability if, <u>and only if</u> the University is a federal contractor with obligations under the Rehabilitation Act, has affirmative action obligations under state law, has a voluntary affirmative action program for persons with disabilities, or you are otherwise instructed that you may do so for reasons relating to federal funding of programs.

Examples

- YOU CANNOT Ask whether an individual requires time off for medical treatment or a disability.
  - YOU CAN State the employer's neutral attendance policy and ask whether the individual can comply with the attendance requirements for the position.
- YOU CANNOT Ask about past on-the-job <u>injuries</u>.
  - YOU CAN Ask persons with obvious disabilities to explain how they can perform the functions of the job safely without injuring themselves or others.
  - YOU CAN Ask about past on-the-job accidents, if you indicate that you do not want details on whether and to what extent they were injured.
- YOU CANNOT Ask whether an applicant has a visual impairment.
  - YOU CAN State that the essential functions of the fob of cashier, fro example, include the ability to observe customers for signs of shoplifting, check identification and other tasks, and ask whether the applicant can perform those tasks with a reasonable accommodation.

DO'S AND DON'TS

PRE-EMPLOYMENT QUESTIONS GUIDE

The following chart helps interviewers distinguish legal from illegal inquiries when seeking information during the interview process. Any question not job related may be unlawful if the information obtained is used in a discriminating manner.

SUBJECT	DO NOT ASK	YOU MAY ASK
Sex	Are you male or female? What are the names and relationships of persons living with you?	None.
Residence	Do you own or rent? Give the names and relationships of persons residing with you.	What is your present address?
Race/Color	What is your race? What color is your hair, eyes, or skin?	None.
Age	What is your date of birth? How old are you?	If hired, can you provide proof that you are at least 18 years of age?
National Origin	What is your ancestry, national origin, descent ancestry, parentage, or nationality? What is your native language? What is the nationality of your parents or spouse?	What languages do you speak or write fluently? (Do not ask unless strictly job related.)
Marital or Family Status	What is your marital status? What is your spouse's name? What was your maiden name? How many children do you have? Are you pregnant? Do you plan to have children? What day-care provisions have you made for your children?	None. (An employer may ask if candidates have any commitments or responsibilities preventing them from meeting attendance requirements, or if they anticipate lengthy work absences. Make sure you ask this question of all applicants.)

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Arrests and Convictions	Have you ever been arrested? Have you ever been charged with any crime?	Have you been convicted of any crime? (If the application form asks for information on convictions, the employer should indicate that a conviction itself does not constitute an automatic bar to employment, and will be considered as it relates to fitness to perform the job in question.
Religion	What is your religious affiliation or denomination? What church do you belong to? What is the name of your pastor, minister, or rabbi? What religious holidays do you observe?	None. (If you wish to know if an applicant is available to work Saturday or Sunday shifts, ask: "Are you available to work on Saturdays or Sundays if needed?" Make sure you ask this question of all applicants.)
Disabilities	Are you disabled?	Are you capable of performing the essential functions of this position, with or without reasonable accommodation?
Citizenship	Are you or other members of your family naturalized citizens? If so, when did you or they become a U.S. citizen? What country are you a citizen of? Attach a copy of your naturalization papers to your application form.	Are you a citizen of the United States? If hired, are you able to prove eligibility to work in the United States?