

Interview Do's and Don'ts

Prior to the Interview	
DO	DON'T
Prepare for the interview. Carefully review the job description and the knowledge, skills and abilities required.	...start an interview without a clear and up-to-date understanding of what the position entails.
Develop relevant questions ahead of time that can be asked of all applicants for the position, so that you can objectively compare one candidate to another.	...think up all the questions as you go. Different questions will naturally evolve with different candidates, but the basic questions should be the same to provide you with an objective candidate comparison
Review the questions to make sure they will provide you with information on how well the applicant will perform the tasks of the job, and what the applicant's knowledge, skills and abilities are.	...ask questions that are not job-related
Have the applicant complete an employment application prior to the interview	...wait until an offer has been made to have the candidate complete an application. You want as many specifics of the candidate's past history put down in writing, and a disclaimer and release signed, <u>before</u> proceeding with a lengthy interview process.
Carefully review the applicant's resume or employment application, to familiarize yourself with the candidate's background and identify areas of his/her background that you'd like to know more about.	...review the resume during the interview
During the Interview	
DO	DON'T
Forward your phone and turn off your cell phone	... answer your phone, or be interrupted by it ringing
Make the candidate feel comfortable – offer water, coffee, etc. and greet with enthusiasm	... conduct a "stress interview" where the applicant is put on the defensive throughout the meeting
Outline the interview process with the applicant – let him know if he will be seeing other people, approximately how much time the interview should take, etc.	... ignore the clock. Candidates have busy schedules, too, and may have only allotted a short period of time for the interview if this was not previously discussed.
Ask the same basic questions consistently of all applicants applying for the same position, expanding your questioning by following up with additional questions as they arise during the interview.	... be afraid to ask difficult questions. If you aren't satisfied with the answer to a particular question, pursue it further.

DO	DON'T
Keep the questions relevant to the job, and don't ask about anything that the law prohibits you from considering in making an employment decision (Race, gender, religion, disability, private information such as family/marital status and health status)	... panic if an applicant volunteers prohibited information without any prompting from you. This will happen from time to time, but remember that you can't take that information into consideration when making your employment decision
Ask open-ended questions	... ask questions that can be answered with a YES or NO
Take notes, and let the applicant know up front that you will be doing so (do NOT, however, write your notes on either the application or the resume – write on the evaluation form, or a separate sheet of paper).	... assume you'll always remember what was said in the interview
Give the applicant an opportunity to ask questions, and inform the applicant of the next step in the recruitment process	... conduct a one-sided interview. Remember, this is the applicant's opportunity to evaluate you as a prospective employer, as well.
After the Interview	
DO	DON'T
Write down your impressions, or complete an Interviewer Evaluation Form, right away – it's very easy to forget what was said after a day or two passes!	... depend on memory alone.
Objectively compare candidates	... let your emotions cloud your good decision making skills. It's ok to have a "gut feeling" about a candidate, but you should also be taking objective information into consideration.
Follow up with the candidate if you need additional information	... make an employment decision without all the facts
Check references verbally, and document your findings	... accept a letter of recommendation at face value
Follow up with all candidates not selected to let them know they are no longer being considered for the position	... leave candidates hanging without an answer as to their candidacy. This does not create a favorable impression of you as an employer