

ARE YOU ASKING THE RIGHT QUESTIONS?



Many businesses are wasting a great deal of time and effort by recruiting the unsuitable employees. In many cases this is due to poor interviewing techniques rather than straightforward bad luck. Successful recruitment stems from a well-planned and effectively managed interview process. Preparation and attention to detail in the interview are vital ingredients to a successful decision.

Managers responsible for interviewing individuals must improve their interviewing techniques if they are to find the right employee for their company. A simple yet effective method of improving your interview techniques and processes is to devise a structured interview. Determining a list of interview questions allows comparisons of Candidates across interviews. It enables you to take control of the flow of conversation and ensures that you avoid asking illegal questions. Try this simple structure when devising your interview process;

1. Test

Prepare short tests for areas that are important for your company, for example skills relating to the job such as product knowledge, geographical knowledge, or costings. Alternatively basic tests for English, mathematics, spelling, and IQ provide a good guide. Many example tests can be found on recruitment websites.

2. Warm up

Put the Candidate at ease by asking some simple warm up questions, such as:
What made you apply for this position?
How did you hear about the vacancy?
Briefly summarise your work experience and education.

3. Job Description

Look at the experience required for the role and devise a simple job description. Highlight areas of importance and identify the type of ability required to fulfil these areas. Ask the Candidate about their experience with these areas and to give examples of actions related to these areas that he/she has used in the past. For example:

What aspects of your work experience have prepared you for this position?

Give an example of how you utilise your experience in your current job.

Why are you leaving your present job?

What are your strengths for this position?

How much supervision have you received in your previous job?

Describe for me your most important accomplishment at work?

What is important to you in a Company, what things do you look for?

What are some of the things you would like to avoid in a job and why?



4. Career Goals

Define what long-term requirements you are looking for in an employee. Consider what you want from them in terms of development and potential. Perhaps ask:

- What is your long-term career objective?
- What kind of job do you see yourself holding five years from now?
- How does this job fit in with your overall career goals?
- What would you most like to accomplish if you had this job?
- What might make you leave this job?



5. Identify Characteristics

Study your best employees and define what characteristics and abilities they possess. Define these qualities, talents and skills that you would like to have in a new member of staff. Then, devise a set of questions to allow the candidate to illustrate that she/he has the desires, qualities, talents and skills required. For example:

- What kind of things do you feel most confident with?
- What things frustrate you the most?
- What type of people do you find it most difficult to work with?
- What do you think are the key characteristics & abilities a person must possess to become successful in this role? How do you rate yourself in these areas?
- Do you prefer working alone or within a group?
- Do you consider yourself to be thoughtful, analytical or do you make up your mind quickly? Give an example (watch time taken to respond).
- What was your most difficult decision in the last six months? What made it difficult? How did you deal with it?



6. Communication Skills

During the interview assess the flow of conversation, do you feel comfortable talking to the Candidate? Is the Candidate a good communicator? Does he/she seem eager and interested in the role? Pose questions related to communication skills:

- Would you rather write a report or give a verbal report? Why?
- Do you prefer face to face individual meetings, or group discussions?
- Have you ever done any public or group speaking? Why?
- How did it go?
- Have you done any individual presentations?
- How did you prepare?
- What approach do you use to get people interested in your ideas?

By structuring your interview and asking a pre determined set of questions you will be able to identify employees to suit your vacancy and fit in to the culture of your Company. Your recruitment decisions will improve and you will gain a greater understanding of the characteristics and abilities that each new employee brings to your workplace.

More information can be found by visiting these websites or contacting the companies directly:

www.cipd.co.uk
www.rec.uk.com