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SOCIETY FOR HUMAN  
RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

# Basics for Effective Interviews

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With careful preparation, employers can maximize the interview process: craft effective questions, get the information you need, and make a good impression on candidates. Phrasing questions properly and honing your listening skills and body language can make a big difference in the responses that candidates give you. Providing information about the job and benefits can help you win favor with applicants who have the skills the employer needs.

This sample presentation is intended for individuals who are both new to conducting interviews and seasoned interviewers who want to brush up on basics. It is designed to be presented by an individual who is experienced with interviewing candidates. This is a sample presentation that must be customized to include and match the employer's own policies and practices.

**At the end of this presentation, you should know how to:**

- Prepare an effective interview
- Represent your company with professionalism in interviews
- Elicit information from candidates that will help your company make effective hiring decisions

- Screen candidates by phone to ensure that they have the minimum qualifications and that they are interested in the pay your employer is offering
- Set aside a quiet place to talk
- Set aside enough time so that you won't be rushed

- Prepare questions to ask each candidate
- Review the job description and the candidate's resume and application immediately before
- Prepare to provide information about the company and its benefits

## **Tell the candidate:**

- How to get there, where to park, who to ask for upon arrival
- If the candidate will be required to fill out an application on site
- How long the interview will probably take

**At the start of the interview:**

- Confirm that you have the completed and signed application
- Offer a beverage
- Monitor your nonverbal communication
- Set the candidate at ease with small talk
- Before delving into questioning, ask if the candidate has any questions.

## What kinds of questions elicit the most informative responses?

- Structured interview
- Open ended questions
- Behavioral interview questions



# Behavioral Based Interview Questions

- **Goal: Find out what the candidate has done in the past in order to best predict what the candidate would do in the future**
- **Ask about specific experiences that the candidate has had where that candidate exhibited the competencies that are needed for the job**

## Examples:

- Tell me about a time when you resolved a problem for an angry client.
- Can you give me an example of how you have persuaded executives to see your point of view in the past?
- Describe an innovation that you proposed for a previous employer
- In your position as \_\_\_\_\_, how did you determine which duties to delegate to subordinates?

- Listen to the full answer before preparing your next question
- Take notes
- Demonstrate unconditional positive regard
- Ask for more, more, more

- **Candidates often arrive with an arsenal of prepared responses that may not be accurate portrayals of their competence.**
- **Your response to rehearsed answers:**
  - > Look at the candidate expectantly and wait for more
  - > Ask a vague follow up question: “Can you tell me more about that?”
  - > Ask several specific follow up questions

- Show the job description to the candidate and discuss the contents
- Consider showing the candidate the work area

- Ask the candidate if there is anything else that the candidate would like to tell you about his or her qualifications.
- Ask if the candidate has any questions
- Provide documents describing your company and benefits
- Ask if the candidate is interested in the job based on the information you've provided during the interview

- Notify the candidate of when to expect further contact from you.
- Walk the candidate to the door and thank the candidate for the interview