

## Interviewing Job Applicants

Every business owner knows that in order to maintain a successful operation, hiring the right people is key. Interviewing jobs applicants may be one of your least favorite tasks, but don't take it lightly.

### Ask The Right Questions

Having good employees can be one of the most critical ingredients for the success of your business. Finding and hiring those good employees is usually not easy. Along with having the necessary skills, you want employees that will contribute to the total success of the business. This usually means they must be personable and fit into the culture of your business. Often, the only chance to assess how a person may fit into your business is during a job interview.

There are many federal and state laws regarding the hiring of employees. This article is not meant to be a guide to following those rules, but rather to provide some ideas you can use when you are interviewing perspective employees.

Remember that this interview process is important both to you and the perspective employee. Few people, either interviewers or interviewees, enjoy the process. Try to make the person comfortable, while maintaining a professional manner. You should also remember to let people speak. They are "selling" themselves and you are the "buyer."

### Three Key Issues

A good employee is someone that *can do* the job, *will do* the job and *will add* to the overall business environment. If you are knowledgeable about the job that is being filled, it should be relatively easy to answer the question of whether the person can do the job. The second two questions are usually a bit more difficult, and that is where the interaction in the interview is most telling.

### Questions You Should Not Ask

Federal and state laws are meant to prevent any forms of discrimination and to protect the privacy of the person being interviewed. Therefore, you should not ask any questions that are age, religion, ethnicity or sexual preference related. You must also be very careful about asking questions relating to the person's family situation.

## Questions to Consider Asking

Evaluating the applicant's education:

1. Describe your educational background.
2. Where did you attend high school and/or college?
3. Did you have a part-time job while going to college?
4. Did you receive any honors?
5. Are you interested in continuing your formal education?

Evaluating the applicant's willingness and capability to do the job:

1. Describe your duties in your last job.
2. What did you like or dislike about the job?
3. What accomplishment in your last job are you most proud of?
4. What was the part of your last job that you found least desirable?
5. Why are you considering this job?
6. Are there co-workers that would provide a professional recommendation for this job? What do you think they would say about you?
7. What are your objectives with this job?

Evaluating whether the applicant would fit in:

1. Describe the interactions you had with co-workers at your prior jobs.
2. What did you like most about your prior jobs?
3. How do you like to relate to your fellow workers and your supervisors?

### One Last Question

Is there anything in your experience that I have not asked about that I should be aware of while evaluating you for this position?