Hire for performance interview guide

You have created your hiring profile and developed your recruiting plan. Now it's time to think about how you are going to make the actual hiring decision. The whole purpose of an interview is to get as much relevant information as you can to improve the odds that you'll make the right decision about the candidate.

Pre-interview considerations

You will need to determine who will participate in each interview and review with that person how you plan to position the role to the candidate. You will also need to create your behavioral interview questions using our Interview Questions guide. In addition, you'll need to outline the data evaluation process you will use. Think about how many people will be participating on the interview team and what role each person will play. Who will handle the general screening process? Who will ask the more technical questions? Who will ask more general questions? Each of these people will then be assigned a particular portion of the interview guide.

Other things to consider are whether or not you will use some type of employment assessment for this position, and what type of background check and reference process you will use. You will want to decide on the details of an offer package and how you will "onboard" your new hire.

How you deliver an offer to a candidate could set the stage for his or her decision to join your firm and can impact how long he or she stays. The onboarding experience is a key retention factor. Make sure you think through the things you'll need to have in place for the employee's first day—workspace, computer, phones, a welcome breakfast and/or lunch, activities to get to know the team, and perhaps even a press release, if appropriate, upon his or her arrival.

Inside

In our business, we often find that turnover is directly related to hiring people who aren't a great fit for the job or organization. There are a number of common selection problems that prevent organizations from hiring the best people:

- **Interviewers miss important information** by focusing on only a few of the areas that are critical to job success, overlooking many others; thus they fail to obtain a complete picture of the candidate.
- **Interviewers overlook job fit** and organization fit by focusing on the skill aspects of the job and overlooking the candidate's likes and dislikes.
- **Interviewer coverage overlaps** and candidates hear the same questions repeatedly while other critical areas are overlooked.
- **Candidates are turned off** by the selection process when interviewers talk too much, are redundant, late, and/or disorganized.
- **Biases and stereotypes affect judgment.** Studies claim that most interviewers make up their mind about a candidate within the first few minutes of an interview. Research indicates that organizations make better decisions when they delay final applicant decisions while continuing to collect information.
- **Pressure to fill a position** affects judgment.
- **Interviewers allow one characteristic to influence their decision**—the "halo" effect.
- **Interviewers ask illegal, non-job-related questions** that may expose the organization to legal action.

The interview questions we have developed are designed to overcome these common selection problems by:

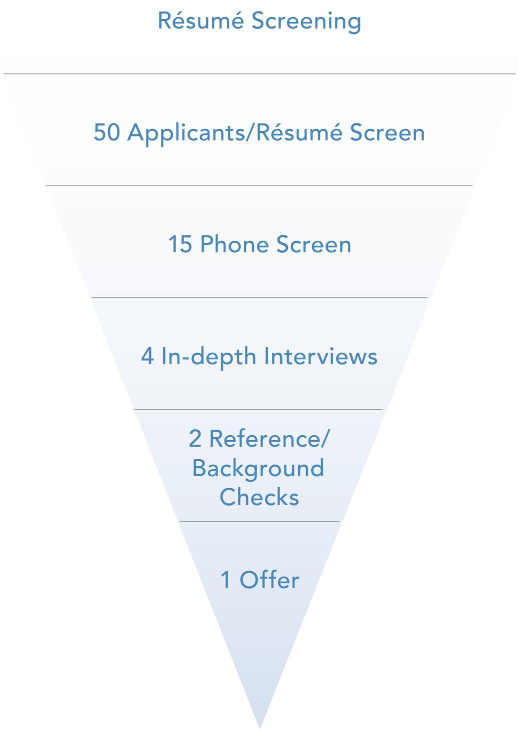
- **Identifying core competencies/behaviors** that will focus the selection process, including the interview and decision-making processes, on all the job requirements and keep extraneous information out of the decision process.
- **Using past behavior** to predict future performance. The examples of behavior that are determined in the interview process or from direct observation provide valuable information on how that person might perform in the future. Gut feelings and hunches are poor predictors of performance.
- **Gathering data** about job fit and organizational fit. This helps ensure that the person will be satisfied with his or her job responsibilities and the organization.
- **Involving interviewers in data-exchange** and evaluation discussions. This ensures that you look at the total candidate, eliminating biases and stereotypes. It also reduces the chance that one behavior will influence the evaluation of other dimensions—thus avoiding that "halo" effect.
- **Having an organized selection system.** This ensures that each candidate undergoes the same process and is legally credible and defensible.
- **Using a behavioral assessment** combined with interview information. This provides further accuracy in evaluating a person's skills and abilities.

Ultimately, you want to ensure that your selection process:

- Focuses the interview and selection process on **job-related** information.
- Uses behavioral interview guides that obtain the specific behavioral information you need to accurately predict future behavior.
- Assesses the job fit and organizational fit of candidates.
- Allows for sharing of information about the candidates in organized data integration sessions.
- Ensures that you make legally credible hiring decisions.

Résumé screening

If you have a good sourcing plan in place to attract candidates, the number of candidates will exceed the number of job openings. A good selection system will use less expensive and faster methods early in the process and more expensive, in-depth methods later in the process so you can evaluate applicants more efficiently and economically. In essence, this acts as a funnel where the pool of candidates gets smaller and smaller as they move through each "hurdle" in the selection system. Here's an example:



The main reason for screening résumés is to allow you to rank-order candidates by their qualifications for the job. Doing so ensures that the remainder of the selection process will focus on those people who are, at least on paper, most qualified for the position.

You should look for information that indicates the candidate's competence in the job dimensions/behaviors you are targeting. Oftentimes accomplishments, education, job experience, and job changes can provide hints about certain targeted behaviors. Other things to look for:

- **Frequent job changes**—If frequent job changes are made for developmental reasons, the candidate should not be viewed negatively. However, switching jobs every year or so throughout a career can be a sign of problem behavior, especially if the applicant is not making job changes that advance his or her career.
- **Gaps in employment history**—Looking for this information is important, but don't assume they are there for negative reasons. They could be there because of staff reductions, spouse being transferred, sabbatical, etc. Just be sure to explore these thoroughly in the interview.
- **Years of experience**—An applicant's years of experience do not necessarily indicate his or her potential. After 10 years in a job, some people are performing at the same level as they were at the time of hire, while others will have grown in the job and expanded their responsibilities.
- **Salary**—As a rule of thumb, don't eliminate a strong candidate who is asking for a little more than you can realistically offer. Be sure to clarify salary potential in a telephone screen before inviting him or her in for an interview.
- **Résumé writing skills**—Sometimes it's difficult to determine if a well-prepared résumé was done by the applicant or a professional résumé service. If the résumé was done poorly, all the credit should go to the applicant!

Legal considerations

You or a representative of your organization should be aware of applicable rules regarding employment interviewing. National, state, and local laws prohibit the use of certain questions as part of the selection process unless bona fide occupational qualifications (BFOQ) can be proven.

Avoid areas of potential risk in interviewing by not asking questions about the following:

Age/Race	Marital Status
Religion	Child Care
Number of Dependents	Arrest Record
Housing	Health or Disability Status
Military Service and Type of Discharge	National Origin—Except to Determine Legal Residency in the U.S.

Here are the three areas you can be comfortable exploring in your interview:

Work/Educational History/Certifications/ Skills—This is where you obtain information about the candidate's background—verifying the facts on the résumé/application. This could include educational background, the number of years he or she has been with a company, number of job changes, reasons for leaving a job, licenses and certifications the candidate holds, etc. This information tells you whether the candidate seems to have the experience and qualifications for the position. Often, this information is used to determine whether a candidate warrants further consideration.

Specific Experiences—This gives you information about specific accomplishments in the candidate's career and provides a closer look into what he or she has done in the past. It answers the "who," "what," "when," "where," and "how" questions.

Interests/Desires—This section is more important than many interviewers think. The information gathered here tells you what the candidate is looking for from a job (e.g., travel opportunities, preferred type of organizational structure, location preferences) and gives you some insight into his or her likes and dislikes. Combined with the other information gathered during the interview, it can help you determine the candidate's overall job and organizational fit.

The behavioral interview

When gathering examples of behavior in an interview, you want to make sure you get the whole story—you want to leave a particular question only when you fully understand the situation the candidate is describing, the action he or she took in that situation (not what "we" did or what the "team" did but the candidate's specific role in that situation), and the results of that action. The situation or task is the background/context under which the candidate took action. The actions are what the candidate said or did in response to this situation or task and how he or she said or did that action. Remember, in behavioral interviews, past performance/behavior is used to predict future performance/behavior. Conducting an effective interview sounds easy, but oftentimes you only get part of the information from a candidate response. Candidates can tell you what they would or could do, but often find it difficult to provide specific examples of actually having done something.

While conducting the interview and evaluating the candidate, be sure you keep in mind the role the candidate will play in your organization. Good interviewing and presentation skills are critical for candidates whose role will require good interpersonal and presentation skills on the job. If you are interviewing for a technical position that does not require these same skills, then you will not want to hold these candidates to the same standards. The same is true for candidates who are just entering the workforce—you don't want to hold them to the same standards because they do not yet have enough business experience.

Keep in mind which skills can be learned on the job and which ones cannot. You want to ensure that your candidate already possesses those skills that you believe are prerequisites for consideration for the job. You also want to keep in mind the length of time needed before a candidate is fully competent on the job. Pay attention to how long it will take the candidate to get up to speed and become a positive contributor to the firm.

Preparing for the interview

Our Interview Questions guide contains everything you need to conduct the interview, including well-thought-out questions designed for the specific job function you are interviewing for. A successful interview contains several key ingredients:

- Arrive at the interview on time and with a "relaxed mind" (i.e., give the interviewee the respect and attention he or she deserves without distractions from a previous meeting or interruptions during the interview).
- Allow sufficient time to conduct the interview in a thorough manner and don't be rushed to go somewhere else.
- Take notes. Skilled note taking is essential to help you record information accurately and completely, and will be useful for the data integration session with other interview partners at the completion of the candidate interview.
- Build rapport with the candidate to help him or her feel at ease and encourage more open dialogue during the interview process.
- Manage the flow of the interview process so you keep the interview on track and provide adequate time for you to thoroughly cover the candidate's background.
- Manage your time so you are focusing on the information you are responsible for as part of the interview team. Remember to focus on the skills that are not trainable, etc.
- Be sure that you spend most of your time listening and have the candidate do most of the talking. Provide information and background on the position and company AFTER the interview is complete.

Explaining the interview process

Remember that while you are gathering information and impressions about the candidate, the candidate is doing the same about you and your organization. Be sure you do not leave the candidate waiting and when you greet them, provide your name and title. Set an upbeat, friendly tone and help put the candidate at ease. Thank them for their interest in your organization and for taking the time to meet with you today.

Take the time to explain the interview process to the candidate:

- You will be reviewing the candidate's education and work history and then will move on to questions that pertain more specifically to the position you are hiring for.
- Let the candidate know that you will be asking for specific examples of things they have done in their previous positions, the actions they took in these situations, and the results of the actions they took.
- Let them know you will be taking notes on their responses so it doesn't distract them.
- If the candidate will be seeing multiple interviewers, provide an agenda listing times for each interview and the name/title of each interviewer.

Conducting the interview

- Transition to the "work background" questions in our Interview Questions guide. This section should be moved through fairly quickly, asking the candidate to provide overview information only. Focus on elements of the candidate's work history and educational history that are most significant to this particular position. Ask the candidate what he or she liked/disliked about previous positions and listen carefully to the responses. This information will be useful in determining the candidate's job fit and organizational fit. Don't assume gaps or job changes are negative; find out the reasons for them.
- Once you have finished the work background review, it's time to move to the behavioral interview questions in our Interview Questions guide. As a general rule of thumb, you should ensure you cover the last 10 years of a candidate's work history.
- At the conclusion of your behavioral questions, provide the candidate with information about the company and the position, and open it up to any questions he or she may have.
- End the interview by explaining the next step in the process and thank the candidate for the interview.
- Review your interview notes and complete the data integration form.

For more information, please contact your relationship manager, call **866.273.2130,** or visit **www.familyoffice.fidelity.com**.

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