

8. The Application and Interview

The Second and Third Screens

You may have conducted many successful interviews in the past and have your "own way" of doing things. By putting a common structure in place for each interview you can begin to quantify these and become more consistent and "scientific" in your approach. You've begun this more structured style in the way you conducted and scored the first interview.

Now in Steps 2 and 3 you'll use the APPLICATION, your Interviewer's GUIDE and the evaluation scale on each step to evaluate the candidate.

Interview Preparation

- You should have set the interview time well in advance so you can devote your total time and attention to the candidate. Plan the interview at 8 AM when teams are assembled and you're trying to get out of the door is not a good setting for an interview.
- Make sure you have made arrangements to devote exclusively to the candidate. Keep interruptions to a minimum.
- This is not the time to rant and rave about the employee who didn't work out. You should have a good rapport for ranting and raving in the past. It's important that the candidate get a good impression of you and your company to get off to a good start.

It's a good way to help the candidate get a job in a client's home. It's not the candidate's job, but you, the client in whose home you're interviewing, and the candidate should be one another's undivided attention for the interview to be successful.

Interview Preparation Checklist

- Good preparation for the interview, the setting, and materials you will need, is the first step in conducting a good interview. The following Interview Preparation Checklist will help you organize your pre-

Setting

Prepare the following items in the setting for the interview. Do the following items prepared:

- ✓ Two comfortable and similar chairs
- ✓ Lighting that is comfortable (neither too bright or too dark)
- ✓ No desk or other items placed between you and the interviewee

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- ✓ Place to write and make notes for you and the interviewee
- ✓ Paper and pencil available
- ✓ Quiet/isolated room/area
- ✓ Place where needed materials are easily reached

Materials

- ✓ The Candidate's Phone Interview and Evaluation Form HR 01-95 (which you completed during your telephone interview with the candidate).
- ✓ Application Form HR 03-95
- ✓ Sample of your Marketing Materials
- ✓ Job Description Form HR 24-95
- ✓ Background Check Consent Release Form HR 33-95 (7 *COPIES*)
- ✓ Personal Interview Feedback Form HR 34-95

Explain the Position

- Before having the candidate complete an application, you may want to take a few more minutes to explain the position. It makes sense wasting your time (or the applicant's time) if they don't understand what the position involves.

- Give her a copy of the Job Description Form Marketing Description (Form HR 24-95) and a copy of your Marketing Materials or other marketing materials you may have.

- Explain how some of the company's policies work (assuming you work with policies such as cleanliness, safety, work schedule, attendance policies, compensation system, vacation policy, and requirements with respect to use of company vehicle on the job, along with other applicable policies).

You should lay out what the candidate can expect from the company and, conversely, what she can expect from her if she's subsequently hired.

Once the necessary interview exercise has been completed, and the candidate has completed an application, you can have her go

Legal “Do’s and Don’ts”

CATEGORY	YOU MAY NOT ASK	YOU MAY ASK
Name	Do you prefer Ms. or Mrs.? Have you ever changed your name? What was your previous name?	Have you ever worked under a nickname or different name for another company that we should know about to do a reference check?
Age	How old are you? When did you graduate from high school?	If you are currently employed, how long have you been employed? Are you of legal age to work?
Birth Place	Where were you born? In what country were your parents born?	Do you have a valid Social Security number? Are you eligible for unemployment benefits?
Residence	How long have you lived in your present address? What is your telephone number? What is your marital status?	What is your present address?
Race	What is your race? What is your skin color?	None.
Religion	What is your religion?	If needed for overtime, you may ask if the applicant is available to work Saturdays or Sundays.
Sex	Are you male or female? What is your sexual orientation?	None.

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Photographs May we have a photograph with your application form or after the interview? After you are hired we may need a photograph for identification purposes.

Education List the dates you attended or graduated from grammar school, high school or college. List your academic, vocational or professional education and the name and address of schools you attended.

Citizenship Of which country are you a citizen? Are you or other members of your family naturalized citizens? Are you a citizen of the U.S.? If not, how can you be legally employed in the U.S. when you are hired, and how long will it take to give up your citizenship? If you are not a citizen of the U.S., how long will it take to give up your citizenship?

National Origin/Ancestry What is your national origin; that is, the ancestry of your father and mother? What percentage of each nationality do you have? What language do you speak at home? If you speak any other language, is it necessary for the job? If so, what language is it? If you can read or write any other language, what language is it?

Height and Weight How tall are you? How much do you weigh? None. You can prove that height and weight is a bona-fide occupational qualification for the job.

Arrests and Convictions Have you ever been arrested? If so, for what crime? Have you ever been convicted of any crime? Have you ever been convicted of any crime? Check your state laws as this question may not be permitted in some states.

Marital or Family Status Are you married, single, divorced, widowed, or separated? Are you pregnant? Do you have any children? What kind of day care do you have for your children? None. You may ask if the applicant foresees any attendance problems.

Organizations To which social organization do you belong? Of which professional, trade or service organization are you a member?

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Military Record

If you are a veteran, what type of discharge do you have? Were you ever disciplined in the service?

Are you a veteran of the Armed Forces? If yes, what type of education or military training did you receive in the military?

Organizations

To which social organization do you belong?

Of which professional, trade or service organization are you a member?

References

Who is your past minister or rabbi?

Who provided you the name of employer and/or character reference?

Physical Condition, Disability

Do you have any physical disabilities? Do you receive any workers' compensation?

Special questions regarding applicant's ability to perform the essential functions of the job. Can you lift 50 pounds? Would you have difficulty standing, bending or kneeling for long periods of time?

Using the Application

When the candidate arrived, you greeted her and gave her an overview of the position. She indicated that she is interested in the job. You then ask the candidate to fill out the Application (Form HR 001).

It will take her about 10 or 15 minutes to complete the application and you should be nearby to answer any questions she may have about filling out the form. If you do have business to take care of, don't let it distract you from your primary focus right now, which is screening your candidate.

- When the form is handed to you, tell the candidate you will be adding your own notes to the Application form and begin the interview.
- The Application form has been constructed with an OFFICE USE ONLY column. The first 30 areas or items that you will explore in the interview are accomplished by WALKING THROUGH the Application form with the interviewee. It is here that you will be using the same evaluation symbols that were used during the pre-interview. You should make sure you position yourself so that the candidate is not distracted as you "take notes" (use symbols) during

Application Form Evaluation

- You will see a series of numbers from 1 to 30 on the Application form (immediately to the left of the OFFICE USE ONLY column). These numbers are the 30 times you should evaluate the candidate using the system symbols, +, √, -, or X.
- As you go through the Application form with the candidate, you will ask follow-up questions. If you do this, you will be ASKING YOURSELF the following question: "What is the candidate's response for this item?" The following question: "What is the candidate's response for this item?" should be "running through your mind" as you go through the candidate's responses.

Item Question Response Evaluation Consideration

Item	Question	Response	Evaluation	Consideration
1	Driving record for the job. Is the record valid?	Does the candidate have a valid drivers' license? Are there any record problems?		
2	Do you have a car available full time?	Does the candidate have a car available every day?		
3	Is your car in good condition?	Is the vehicle in good working order?		
4	Do you have all the information requested?	Is the vehicle insured, and did the applicant complete all of the requested information?		
5	What is the model and year of your vehicle?	Does the car sound usable and appropriate for the job?		

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6 Are you able at the time of employment to submit verification of your legal right to work in the U.S.? Are there any legal (INS) barriers to employment?

7 Are you able to lift 50 pounds or more? Is the applicant strong enough for the work?

8 Would you have difficulty standing, bending, or kneeling in connection with performing necessary cleaning duties? Can physical tasks be performed without difficulty?

9 What hours are you available to work on each of the following week days? Will the applicant be able to meet the needs of the job?

10 If hired, can you start when you need to? Can the applicant start when you need it?

11 How does your present employment fit into your long-term career plan? How does your recent employment fit into your long-term career plan?

12 How does your present employment fit into your long-term career plan? Does the employment experience indicate a chance for success?

Experience – last three years

Does previous employment experience provide a good background for this job?

Does past job tenure indicate a good or bad potential retention with you?

How do current or past wages compare with what the applicant can realistically earn with you?

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Is the job/income a "step-up", a "step-down" or a lateral move for the candidate?

16- 18 Educational Background.

16: Does the applicant have a minimum high school education?

17 : Not necessary for the job. If no college background, rate "0" in this box. If applicant has a college degree, rate as a "1-3" depending on the quality of the degree. This is unlike a lateral move on the job.

19. Have you ever been convicted of a criminal offense?

a person convicted of a crime is not eligible for employment. If convicted of a criminal offense, rate "0".

20. Have you ever been bonded?

Indicate the individual employed in the position. If bonded, rate "1". If not bonded, rate "0".

21. Has your driver's license ever been suspended?

Indicate the applicant's driving license. If suspended, rate "0". If not suspended, rate "1".

22-24. How important would it be to you in working for a company that...

- 22. Are long hours appealing?
- 23. Is working on a team important?
- 24. Is the chance of promotion important?
- 25. Is physical work appealing?
- 26. Are part-time hours important?
- 27. Is helping clients attractive?
- 28. Are good working relationships important?
- 29. Is receiving recognition important?
- 30. How does the applicant feel about the money that the job may pay?

Application Evaluation

Total number of "+" on form X 5 = _____

Total number of "√" on form X 2 = _____

Positive Total _____

Total number of "-" on form X - 5 _____

Total number of "X" on form X -10 _____

Negative Total _____

POSITIVE _____

SUBTRACT NEGATIVE _____

TOTAL _____

CANDIDATE NAME _____

Perfect Candidate _____ (50 Points (10 questions = 5 points each))

Good Candidate _____ (40 Points)

Minimum Candidate _____ (30 Points (no "X"))

- If you have completed the second screen of the candidate. You should only go to the interview step if the Application Score is at least 60 (with no "X"). If there is anything to indicate a blow out, you should not interview at this point. No sense wasting your time.

If you decide to end the interview at this point, you should tell the candidate you don't think the job is a good fit for her and thank her for coming in.

On the other hand, if the responses on the Application and the Application score indicate that you should go to the next phase of the selection process, you can comfortably move on to the third step, which is to conduct the Personal Interview.

The Personal Interview

- As you walked through the Application and looked at the 30 items that could affect your hiring decision, it is likely you used follow-up **closed-end questions** to find out more about the candidate. The conversation at this time was probably rather formal and structured with you asking short questions and receiving short replies.
- During the second part of the interview, you'll assume a more relaxed style. More conversational. You want the candidate to be relaxed, to open up, and tell you a little more about herself.
- The starter questions you will use to help the applicant open up about herself are called "behavioral based".
- You will pose questions or situations and ask the applicant to describe how they would act or react in a particular situation.
- During the response, you will be listening to how the applicant has "behaved" in the past and how some of those behaviors may have influenced past behavioral patterns, which will help you predict how she will behave in a future situation.
- An evaluation form will be used at the end of the interview and the (Personal Interview Evaluation Form #34-95).
- This form asks you to rate the 2 "things" in the response and to once a candidate has read the list, you will write in a few words what you heard and then your rating.
- The behavioral based questions are as follows:

Check Valid

- When you ask these questions, lean back in your chair, relax, and pick up the Application form and pen you have been using on your hand. You may want to change your voice to be softer with a more friendly, intimate tone. In order to get the best out of your work, you usually have to reveal a little bit about yourself. Encourage the applicant to be revealing about her work. The value of this to open this subject is as follows:

For example, for awhile I worked as (insert some personal position you've held). What I found is that no matter what job I have had, there were certain things that were important to me that I get out of the job. There were things that really mattered to me in a job. How about you?

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- *“As you think about jobs you have had, what was really important to you in those jobs?”*

- There may be a pause as the applicant considers this thought. This silence is OK and you can show by your relaxed body language that you will be patient in waiting for an answer. As the applicant talks, encourage them to talk further by repeating and paraphrasing what you hear and asking follow-up questions based on the direction their response takes.

- With this question you are hearing what the candidate values in work. It may range from freedom, respect, control, challenge, learning, belonging, security, and every other imaginable. You should be listening carefully and using this information to help you decide if the applicant might be a good fit for the position. An applicant who indicates that they valued “freedom” or “control” or “salary increases” in the past will probably find it difficult to work with your company.

- Listen very carefully to two things:
 1. Listen carefully to get a good indication of whether you want to offer this position. If you offer a position you offer really provide a challenge. If you do not, you will predict the employment will not last long. If the applicant says they value “freedom”, “power”, or “regular pay”, you will not likely find that in this position.

For information on what you “sell” the applicant if you to make a good job offer. If the candidate expresses a need for being “independent” and “recognized” for work well you should highlight job attributes when you make the job offer. Remember to give information also as you manage and monitor the job.

On the Post-Interview Evaluation form, write in and rate the applicant's responses. You may hear, for example, that the applicant says they “work hard and likes to be “busy every minute on the job.” You can note in these themes and rate them a “+” for the job.

Question 2: Stress

- In this discussion you want to get a picture of how the applicant handles the job stress or frustration that occurs in any working situation. One example of opening this conversation is as follows:

- *“Every job has it's irritations and frustrations. I know I've been pretty upset at times in jobs I've had, and there are days around here that drive me nuts, too.*
- *“I'm sure you've had those days, also. Tell me about a past work situation that had really gotten you up and down, and what you did to handle it. What happened that got you upset and what did you do?”*
- Once again, listen carefully to the answer you hear. Your hiring decision and to learn more if you would have the candidate as an employee.
- On the evaluation form under “What Stressed You?” use the benefits themes you heard and give them a rating. You may have heard, for example the theme of “getting through tough times” or “quitting the same day that I quit my last job” and give these items a “X”.

Question 3: Teamwork

- This question ends the application and you about experiences working with others. The question is structured this way:
 - *“I know you've had some experience with your job. Have you found yourself working with a group of people to get something done? If so, what were the pluses and minuses of working with a group.*

Ask about your experience with a work group. What was new and new to the “news”, so to speak, that you heard about in working with a group? The things you liked and didn't like.

- Encourage the candidate by paraphrasing what the applicant says and by asking follow-up questions to get more details as experiences discussed.

As you make your decision again, becomes important for you in your hiring decision and the management of the individual.

Behavioral Interview Evaluation

- Review your notes and ratings on the Personal Interview Evaluation Form. If you have heard things in these responses that cause you to believe the candidate would not be a good hire (the “X's”), you should probably end the conversation at this point and tell the candidate you will consider the Application further.

Perfect Candidate = 30 Points

Good Candidate = 21 Points

Minimal Candidate = 12 Points

Close the Interview

- At this point you will have a fairly good idea whether you have a good candidate. If so, confirm her interest in the position with attention to body language which may be clues as to the candidate's interest level of the potential hire.
- Explain that you will be following up with her. If you have the candidate complete the Application Information Form (HR 33-95). If the candidate is currently employed, you may want to contact her current employer to verify the candidate's unemployment status before you contacting her about both the job and for another employment reference.
- Agree on a time to contact her to discuss your reference and background checks. If you have an excellent candidate, don't let her go without saying you love her. You're not the only employer to be interested in her.
- If you're wasting time on a candidate and background checks, try to determine what she thinks of the job. The candidate think she and the job are a good fit.
- Ask the candidate for a card during the interview. Provide her with a card if you are advertising. Give her a card to take home. Having professional-looking advertising brochures and flyers can help market to job candidates and refer them to prospective clients.
- Make sure the candidate leaves on a positive note. You want to avoid any negative comments you intend to reprimand or fire sitting outside the door. Make sure the prospective new hire is leaving.

Documents relating to
The Application and Interview

Industry-Specific Application Form

Personal Interview Evaluation Form

Cleaning Team Member Job Description

Authorization for Release of Information Form

SAMPLE