

THE INTERVIEW PROCESS GUIDELINES

As an interviewer, your responsibilities are to:

- interview applicants and select employees on the basis of job-related **qualifications** *only*, and in accordance with legal requirements;

In order to reduce the risk of asking questions or making statements that could be construed as discriminatory:

- prepare and conduct interviews designed to learn about a candidate's job-related skills, experiences, and qualifications
- interview all applicants in a consistent manner

Types of Interviews:

- **Structured:**
 - plans and develops outline for interview, including order of the questions and structured rating or evaluation system
 - allows for consistency among interviews, and limited flexibility within an interview
- **Semi-structured:**
 - in-depth interview allowing interviewer to omit irrelevant questions, add appropriate questions, and pursue relevant tangents
 - most advantageous process

To conduct an interview:

1. Establish a Friendly Climate:

- choose opening questions that are non-threatening to the interviewee
- ask about some item on the resume that you have in common in order to help establish rapport and relax the applicant

2. State the overall purpose, and format, of the interview

Question, Listen, Observe, Evaluate to gather information:

- **DO:**
 - ask questions that assess the applicant's skills, knowledge, and abilities
 - follow the same order for all applicants
 - ask all the questions of each applicant
 - let interviewee answer the question completely before evaluating the response
 - maintain an objective, yet positive and friendly attitude
 - eliminate internal and external distractions and focus on the speaker
 - maintain eye contact with the candidate
 - listen for central themes, key points, content, and feelings
 - allow applicant to talk 80% of the time, while you talk 20% of the time
 - share information about the position, the company, and anything else that appears relevant

- **DON'T:**
 - make judgments on the basis of nonverbal cues (i.e., limp handshake)
 - talk too much
 - simply review information on the resume
 - overreact to words or ideas that are emotional to you
 - show disagreement or disapproval

Note: you may be better off explaining position requirements and expectations **after** the applicant has responded to your questions. Otherwise, the candidate may formulate responses to your questions that fit into the criteria that you have set forth for the position.

Tell applicant what the next steps will be in the selection process.

End the interview on a positive note:

- ask if there are any additional questions that you might answer
- thank the interviewee for participating

(Information was pulled from The University of Michigan School of Business Administration course "Interviewing: A Strategic Approach.")

There are several types of questions to ask; each is appropriate at different times during the interview. Among these are:

Open-ended: should be used most often; these force the applicant to elaborate about his or her feelings or experiences; use these to

focus on how the candidate's past behavior suggests success in the job in question

Hypothetical: are a variation on open-ended questions; these are "what if . . ." questions aimed at seeing how the applicant would handle certain situations; should always be related to the requirements of the job at hand

Closed-ended: can be answered with "yes," "no," or a short phrase; should only be asked when some very specific information is needed

These general subject areas are valid for questioning:

Knowledge and Skills: all interview questions should be job related; candidates should be evaluated on job related knowledge and skills

Education and Experience: it's important to probe for and evaluate the content of the education or work experience, not simply to look at the number of years

Physical Characteristics: employer must be able to demonstrate that a particular physical characteristic is necessary in order to perform part or all of the job; employers are required under law to make "reasonable accommodation" in order to employ persons with disabilities.

"Other" Characteristics: also referred to as "terms and conditions of employment," this area includes such things as a valid driver's license, the ability to be bonded, a job related certification or license, the willingness to work certain hours or under adverse conditions; these generally are some of the minimum specifications for the job.

Sample Interview Questions

- How would you describe yourself?
- What do you see yourself doing in five years?
- What are your long-term career objectives -- and how do you plan to achieve them?
- What are the most important rewards you expect to gain from your career?
- Please describe the ideal position for you following graduation.
- What do you think it takes to be successful in this career?
- What do you consider to be your greatest strengths and weaknesses?
- How do you think your favorite professor would describe you?
- What motivates you to go the extra mile on a project or job?
- What was your most memorable clinical experience?
- What were your most rewarding experiences in school?
- What do you think it takes to be successful in this career.
- Why should I hire you?
- How do you define success?
- What qualifications do you have that will make you successful?
- How do you determine or evaluate success? Give me an example of one of your successful accomplishments.
- What has been your most rewarding accomplishment?
- If you could do so, how would you plan your college career differently?
- How are you going to make a contribution to our organization?
- What are two or three accomplishments that have given you the most satisfaction -- and why?
- How would you describe yourself in terms of your ability to work as a member of a team?
- What motivates you to put forth your greatest effort?
- Do you have plans to continue your education?
- What skills have you acquired from your internships and part-time jobs?
- Describe what you learned most from your favorite professor or favorite supervisor.
- Do you feel you work well under pressure?

- Why are you interviewing for this position?
- Describe one of the biggest mistakes you made during your clinical experiences.
- What did you learn from your mistakes?
- If you were hiring for this position, what qualities would you look for in a new college grad?
- How well do you work with people? Do you prefer working alone or in teams?
- Have you ever been in a group project where there were difficulties? How were these issues resolved?
- What are some job disappointments you have had?
- Given the investment our company will make in hiring and training you, can you give us a reason to hire you?
- How would you describe your leadership skills?
- How well do you adapt to new situations?
- Which is more important: creativity or efficiency? Why?
- Describe what you've accomplished toward reaching a recent goal for yourself.
- Do you think your education changed you as a person? If so, how?
- What have you accomplished that shows your initiative and willingness to work?
- If you were to start your professional (PT) or technical education (PTA) over again knowing what you know now, what would you do differently?
- What short-term goals and objectives have you established for yourself?
- Can you describe your long-range goals and objectives?
- What do you expect to be doing in five years?
- How would you evaluate your ability to deal with conflict?
- Have you ever had difficulty with a supervisor or instructor? How did you resolve the conflict?
- Would you say that you can easily deal with high-pressure situations?
- What quality or attribute do you feel will most contribute to your career success?
- What personal weakness has caused you the greatest difficulty in school or on the job?
- Describe the type of professor that has created the most beneficial learning experience for you.
- What plans do you have for continued study? An advanced degree?
- Before you can make a productive contribution to the company, what degree of training do you feel you will require?

- Why did you decide to seek a position in this organization?
- Describe an instance when you had to think on your feet to extricate yourself from a difficult situation.
- Give me a specific example of a time when you used good judgment and logic in solving a problem.
- By providing examples, convince me that you can adapt to a wide variety of people, situations and environments.
- Describe a time when you were faced with problems or stresses that tested your coping skills.
- Give an example of a time in which you had to be relatively quick in coming to a decision.
- Describe a time when you had to use your written communication skills to get an important point across
- Give me an example of an important goal which you had set in the past and tell me about your success in reaching it.
- Tell me about a time when you had to go above and beyond the call of duty in order to get a job done.
- Sometimes it's easy to get in "over your head." Describe a situation where you had to request help or assistance on a project or assignment.
- Describe a situation where others you were working with on a project disagreed with your ideas. What did you do?
- Describe a situation in which you had to arrive at a compromise or guide others to a compromise.
- What steps do you follow to study a problem before making a decision.
- Recall a time when you were assigned what you considered to be a complex project. Specifically, what steps did you take to prepare for and finish the project? Were you happy with the outcome? What one step would you have done differently if given the chance?
- What was the most complex assignment you have had? What was your role?
- Tell of some situations in which you have had to adjust quickly to changes over which you had no control. What was the impact of the change on you?
- Describe some times when you were not very satisfied or pleased with your performance. What did you do about it?
- How have you differed from your professors in evaluating your performance? How did you handle the situation?
- What kind of clinical supervisor do you work best for? Provide examples.
- Describe a situation that required a number of things to be done at the same time. How did you handle it? What was the result?
- How do you determine priorities in scheduling your time? Give examples.

- Tell me about a difficult situation when it was desirable for you to keep a positive attitude. What did you do?
- Give me an example of a time you had to make an important decision. How did you make the decision? How does it affect you today?
- Tell me about a time when you had to deal with a difficult person. How did you handle the situation?
- Tell me about a time you had to handle multiple responsibilities. How did you organize the work you needed to do?
- Describe a situation in which you had to use reference materials to write a research paper. What was the topic? What journals did you read?
- Give me a specific example of a time when a co-worker or classmate criticized your work in front of others. How did you respond? How has that event shaped the way you communicate with others?
- Tell me about a time when you came up with an innovative solution to a challenge your company/class/organization was facing. What was the challenge? What role did others play?
- Tell me about a time when you failed to meet a deadline. What things did you fail to do? What were the repercussions? What did you learn?
- Describe a time when you put your needs aside to help a co-worker or classmate understand a task. How did you assist him or her? What was the result?
- Of the employee qualifications identified, which are most important?
- Why are these factors important?
- How have you altered your practice in light of managed care and other cost containment restrictions?
- What does the profession of physical therapy need to do to survive in today's health care environment?
- Where do you see the profession in five years?
- Outside of work, what experiences have influenced you the most?
- What would you like to know about us?
- Who can we contact as references?

Excerpts from: http://www.quintcareers.com/college_grad_interview_questions.html and http://www.apta.org/Career_center/career_management/ToolsfortheJobChange/interviewingTech