

Interviewing Techniques For Hiring Managers – Finding the Proper Candidates
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Typically, organizations spend less than 30 total man-hours screening key candidates. However, this time is often mis-spent and woefully inadequate.

The time you spend preparing for interviews is critical to how your finalist actually fits the job, their longevity in the position and their impact they have on your bottom line. Here are the steps that we recommend to ensure companies have a guaranteed success and multi-year longevity for each new hire:

Clearly identify your needs

- Understand and gain consensus on the key goals of the position.
- Identify the critical tasks or priorities.
- Reflect upon what personality will fit into your organization.
- What are the qualifications for the position?

Spend double the time preparing for the interview as you do interviewing – success comes from a well-defined plan

- Determine which of your staff will interview the candidate and why.
- Outline the format that will be used: group settings and fewer interviews are more effective and efficient.
- Pre-determine areas to explore during interview, write them down and divide them up amongst the interview team. You don't want to bore a candidate by having each interviewer ask the same exact questions throughout the day.
- All interviewers should agree on 5-10 "overlap" questions that they all ask. These overlap questions test the veracity of a candidate's answers and become the main discussion points in the post-interview group review of the candidate.
- Individual interviewers should develop 10-20 questions specific to their area of expertise (e.g. only the CFO asks finance questions). These expert questions are key to determining the candidate's technical competency.
- All interviewers need to take comprehensive notes. Preferably, develop an interview score card or note-taking template to aid the interviewers.
- A debriefing meeting should be planned to discuss each finalist. By using a score card or interview notes template, the leader can keep this meeting on track and productive.

Clarify the "Unique Selling Proposition" for the opportunity and make sure all interviewers know and reiterate the positive aspects of the position, organization and location

- "A" players are in demand and will need to be sold on why they should join your organization.
- During the interview, the best selling is done by asking intelligent questions and getting to know the candidate -- Listen.
- The selection process is a ritual. You initially spark the person's interest, then get information, return to intriguing them with the opportunity, and then get additional information.
- *Never* stop selling!

Behavioral-based interviewing: look for patterns of behavior

- Asking a candidate to walk you through each of their jobs will reveal both their skill development and their attitudes about their work.
- The magic of the interview is in the disclosure of patterns. Patterns reveal!
- In discussing college days, a person may reveal, “I was quite a procrastinator, cramming at the last minute.” So, make sure that you note this revealing item and then pepper the interview with questions about this behavior during all stages of their career...
- You want to identify: **Is this a problem now?**
- Your job is to assess talent and “spot red flags.”

Spotting red flags

- Rapport suddenly declines. Candidate gets less animated.
- Something in the interview suggests you have touched a raw nerve.
- Body and verbal cues shift. Look for:
 - Blushing.
 - Shifting from straightforward to complex responses.
 - Loss of eye contact.
 - Change of pace—speeding up or slowing down.
 - Sudden changes in voice volume.
 - Twitching, stammering, drumming fingers.
 - Long pauses where there had been none.
 - Closed body language--folding arms, legs, hunching over.
- Note: also watch *your* body language – don’t give away your emotions while watching for their non-verbal cues!

Address your concerns on the spot

- As a hiring manager, you want to hire a subordinate who is approachable and coachable.
- If you are seriously concerned about a topic and open-ended questions aren’t working, introduce some deliberate bias. Example: “I get the feeling, Joe, that you’re a little disorganized in your work, is that right?”
- This should trigger an open discussion and produce enough specifics to help you feel confident you can rate the candidate.
- By being direct, you give the candidate a fair chance to clarify your uncertainty into a positive conclusion.

Ending the interview on a high note

- Ask if they have any questions.
- Listen and mentally assess the questions. You will gain a better understanding of their interest, communication style and intelligence/knowledge.
- Ensure they have your contact info as you want them to be able to send a note.
- Thank them, and say you will be in touch, giving them a general time frame.
- If you like them, enthusiastically reiterate the “Unique Selling Proposition” for the opportunity.