



### Before the Interview

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- **Determine which applicants you will interview.**
  - Check your command instructions to determine whether there are specific requirements you must follow for interviewing.
- **Determine the type of interview you will conduct**
  - **Phone Screening** – Typically lasting an hour, this phone interview allows you to ask a specific set of questions to help determine if you would like to have the applicant continue in the recruitment process.
  - **One-on-One Interviews** – This interview style is when you set-up interviews lasting 30-60 minutes with key stakeholders of the open position, allowing a sample of colleagues to assess the applicant's skills and fit for the position.
  - **Panel Interview** – This interview includes a group of key stakeholders and other employees that will have direct contact with this person if hired.
- **Arrange for the logistics**
  - Set aside a private area where you can spend enough time without interruptions. Applicants will be more at ease and you will learn more about them in an environment that is not threatening to them.
  - Schedule the interviews with the candidates, informing them of:
    - Position being interviewed for, including the name of the interviewer(s).
    - Date, time, and location of the interview.
    - Any special Pass and ID requirements.
    - Contact information in case of rescheduling or any base access issues.
    - Follow your local procedure and arrange for base access in advance.
- **Develop your interview questions and evaluation criteria**
  - Review your Quality Candidate Profile
- **Review the information on the applicant just before the interview so that the details are fresh in your mind. Be sure to look for (and possibly ask about) the following:**
  - Gaps in employment.
  - Special skills (e.g., computer software).
  - Words such as "assisted" and "arranged" when describing a project, which often means the applicant was involved in a project, but was not actually responsible for it.
  - Many short-term jobs. Ask in detail why the applicant made each move from job-to-job to understand the motivation behind it.

### During the interview

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- **Begin the interview**
  - Let the applicant know who you are relative to the position. Are you the immediate supervisor? Will you be making the hiring decision?
- **Take Notes**
  - Notes are helpful when several top applicants emerge and a close comparison becomes necessary.
  - Mention to the applicant that you will be taking notes. Telling them this upfront makes them feel more comfortable.



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- Limit note taking to short entries since it is more important to listen. Allow time to go over the notes immediately after the interview.
- **Establish a friendly tone, but stay in charge**
  - Make certain that you control the interview; don't let forceful applicants talk incessantly or lead the interview.
- **Have the applicant do most of the talking**
  - Apply the 70/30 rule: applicant talks 70% of time; you talk 30% of the time.
- **Allow silence**
  - During the interview, the applicant needs time to think.
  - If an applicant seems reluctant to answer a difficult question, don't rush on to the next question to make the applicant feel more comfortable. An awkward silence can indicate that you have reached an area which you may want to probe further, or it could simply mean the applicant needs more time to think.
- **Handle awkward responses**

Applicants sometimes volunteer information that employers may not awfully consider in evaluating an applicant for a position. If this occurs:

  - Do not follow up on this information even though the applicant brought it to your attention. Do not write it down on your notes.
  - Acknowledge what was said simply by nodding and saying "Oh," "I see" or other similarly neutral comment then continue with your next prepared question related to the position.
- **Refrain from making hasty judgments**
  - Many interviewers find themselves making up their minds about applicants very early on in the interview - sometimes, the minute the person walks in the door. This rush to judgment can be very detrimental to a well thought-out hiring process.
  - Once you sense that you're forming an opinion about the applicant, either positive or negative, ask questions specifically to find out if your impression is correct.
  - You may confirm what you have already sensed or you may find yourself surprised to discover that the applicant has characteristics or traits that you completely missed in your initial assessment.
- **Tell applicants about the job and about working at your command**
  - Be sure to allow enough time to talk in more detail about the job opening, provide an overview of your organization's structure, how it fits into the command as a whole, etc.
  - Sell the job to a good applicant and show how attractive it would be to work at your command.
  - Allow some time for applicants to ask you more questions based on what you say, and pay attention to the kinds of questions they ask. This can tell you a lot about their interest level in the job.
  - Do NOT discuss specific salary rate or compensations at this time or promise any future promotion since you may not be able to meet them later.
- **Dealing with applicants that falsely represented their qualifications during initial screening**
  - End the interview early; though try to do so in a neutral rather than accusatory way.



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- If it becomes clear that you simply misunderstood the applicants' qualifications, show them the courtesy of completing the interview, although you will probably want to shorten it somewhat.



### After the Interview

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#### Close the interview

- Give all applicants a general idea of your decision timetable; i.e., when you expect to conclude the interviewing process and make the hiring decision.
- Inform the applicants that you may be contacting their references and current supervisor/manager in the near future for reference checks.
- **Show them out**
  - Escort all applicants to the entrance and thank them for their time.
- **Evaluate your interviewed candidates**
  - Review your notes and evaluate each candidate.