



Food and Nutrition Services

Interviewing and Hiring Guide

Interview Guidelines

The manager is responsible for the creation of a calm and respectful atmosphere in which the applicant never feels threatened - an atmosphere conducive to information giving and information gathering.

The three main objectives of the employment interview are:

- 1) To assess the applicant
- 2) To describe the job and working conditions
- 3) To choose the best candidate

Important steps to having a successful interview:

- 1) Be prepared before going into an interview.
- 2) Pick the right time for the interview.
- 3) Arrange a comfortable setting for the applicant and yourself.
- 4) Ensure privacy for the interview.
- 5) **Make sure you allow equal time for each applicant and that you ask everyone the same questions.**
- 6) Establish yourself as the manager of the interview.
- 7) Make certain you identify yourself by name and title.
- 8) Relax the applicant as much as possible.
- 9) Tell the person that you will be taking notes during the interview.
- 10) Watch your body language. Your expressions and gestures may be taken a different way than you anticipated.
- 11) Describe the job, listing duties and guidelines, include the jobs pluses and minuses.
- 12) Ask open-ended questions, which require more talking from the applicant.
- 13) Make certain applicant does most of the talking.
- 14) Know when to stop talking. Don't let the interview drag on.

Ending the Interview:

- 1) If you are interested in the applicant, allow time for him/her to ask questions.
- 2) Thank the applicant for the time spent on the interview.
- 3) Never make an offer at the interview.
- 4) Leave a way out for yourself regarding possible rejection by explaining that other applicants are being considered and Personnel will be contacting them either way.
- 5) When an applicant is turned down make sure you make a note of the reason.

Applicant Screening Interview Questions - Do's and Don'ts

When interviewing applicants for positions, be sure that the questions you ask are related to the job. Here is a chart that indicates some categories of information that might be open to charges of discrimination. The chart also includes typical questions that should NOT be asked and (when available) more acceptable ways of finding out job related information.

<u>Category</u>	<u>DON'T ASK</u>	<u>Acceptable</u>
Age	How old are you? What is your date of birth?	Do you meet the minimum age requirement for the job?
Arrests/Convictions	Have you ever been arrested?	Have you ever been convicted of a crime? (Background checks permissible if stated on application form)
Availability for work/travel	Can you work Saturdays and Sundays? Do you have children? What are your child care arrangements?	The hours of work are _____. (or) Our work sometimes requires overtime. Can you work such a schedule?
Birthplace/citizenship	Where were you born?	Are you legally authorized to work in the U.S.?
Clubs/associations	To what organizations do you belong?	Do you want to provide any additional information that relates to your ability to perform the job (professional and other organizations that are directly job related)?
Disabilities	Do you have a disability? Do you have any health problems? Have you ever filed for workers' compensation?	Can you perform the essential functions of the job for which you are applying?
Economic Status	Have you ever had your wages garnished? Do you own your own home? Have you ever filed for bankruptcy?	NO QUESTIONS
Military Service	What type of discharge did you receive? Have you served in the armed forces of another country?	Are you a U.S. veteran? List experience and special education received in the military.
Name	Have you ever had your name changed? What is your maiden name?	Is there any additional information we need about your name to verify your employment/education record?
Nation Origin		NO QUESTIONS
Physical Characteristics	What color skin (hair, eyes) do you have? Requesting a photograph before meeting with the applicant.	Questions about height and weight are only permitted if job related. No photographs until after hiring.

Relatives	Who is the relative to be notified in case of emergency?	Is there someone we should notify in case of an emergency? Do you have any relatives that work for this company?
Religion		NO QUESTIONS
Union Membership		NO QUESTIONS

The employer should clearly and accurately define the skills, education, experience, and essential job functions for a position before beginning the advertising and interviewing process.

Career Service Candidate Interview Sheet

Name of Applicant: _____ Date: _____

Questions for applicant:

1. Why do you want to work for School Food Service?
2. How do you keep yourself organized at home, work or school?
3. Explain your duties and responsibilities at your current job or previous job.
4. Tell me about your last job.
What did you like best about it?

What did you like least about it?
5. Do you have reliable transportation to and from work?
6. If I asked your previous employer what would he/she say are your primary strengths?
7. What do you feel is your biggest accomplishment at your last job or something you did that you are proud of?
8. How do you keep a clean kitchen?
9. A customer brings back something that you served and said it doesn't taste right.
What do you do and say?
10. Do you have computer skills? If yes, please explain.
11. Why should I hire you? What will you contribute to our department?

How to Select and Retain Good Employees

(ref. Consultant Magazine Summer 1997 Article by: Jim Laube)

How to select winners: Know what you are looking for!

Many managers make hiring mistakes because they haven't specifically identified what they are looking for in a new employee. It is critical to know what you want in terms of skills, experience and even personality, values and attitude.

To give you some ideas in this area, consider the findings of a study conducted by a commercial food service company a few years ago. The goal was to identify the common qualities and characteristics found in the company's highest performing employees to help in the interviewing and selection process. They found that the following four traits were consistent in their best employees:

1) **Extroversion:** Extroverts are people oriented and have good social skills. They exist well with co-workers regardless of the other person's personality type and are basically team oriented. Extroverted people have a strong desire to be liked by others and have the ability to favorably impress people they've never met.

2) **Pride:** Employees with pride view their work as important and are very particular about doing their job. They strive not just to do it correctly but in the best possible way. Their performance is not based on whether someone is looking or how much they like the manager. People with pride need to be part of a successful undertaking and make a personal investment in the success of your operation.

3) **Responsibility:** Responsible people follow through on commitments they make. They're dependable and aren't prone to always having an excuse for whatever goes wrong. They also feel accountable for producing a quality effort while "on the clock."

4) **Energy:** Food service is fast paced, stressful and requires people with high energy levels. Employees with high energy levels tend to be able to move quickly and appropriately under pressure. High-energy people are likely to accomplish more in less time and with a higher degree of accuracy than low-energy people.

The Interview:

Most managers don't enjoy conducting interviews. Try to change your way of looking at the interview process by recognizing that it's one of the best opportunities you have for improving the quality of your staff (even your life). It's a fact that companies and managers that take the time to do a good, thorough job in the interview process make better hiring decisions. It boils down to this: You can hire easy and manage tough or hire tough and manage easy. Take your pick.

Keep in mind that everything in the interview process is a test. Did the candidate show up on time? Is his dress appropriate and neat? Are her grooming standards up to yours? Always remember, what you see in the interview is the best you're going to get.

*If you would like a copy of this article in its entirety please call Maria Eunice at 955-7538 x226.

**ALACHUA COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
PERSONNEL SERVICES PHONE REFERENCE QUESTIONNAIRE**

Applicant's Name: _____ SSN# _____

Name of Reference _____ position & title _____

Agency _____ phone # _____ cell # _____

Applicant's Name _____ applied for a _____

_____ position with the Alachua County Public Schools
Food and Nutrition Services and listed your name as a reference. Please tell me if the applicant:

1. Plans, organizes and performs assigned job duties Yes _____ No _____
Comments: _____

2. Works well under stress and pressure? Yes _____ No _____
Comments: _____

3. Was punctual (arrival to work, reports, etc?) Yes _____ No _____
Comments: _____

4. Was there a problem with absenteeism? Were they significant? Yes _____ No _____
Comments: _____

5. Communicates fluently: thoughts are clear/organized Yes _____ No _____
Comments: _____

6. Is flexible/adapts to changes in routine? Yes _____ No _____
Comments: _____

7. Gets along with colleagues, administrators and others? Yes _____ No _____
Comments: _____

How long have you known the applicant? Years/months _____. In what capacity? _____

Has there been any disciplinary action or investigations concerning unprofessional conduct, incompetence, insubordination or immorality? Yes ___ No ___ Comments: _____

What do you consider the applicant's primary strength? _____
Primary area for further development: _____

Would you rehire the applicant if given a chance? Yes _____ No _____

Comments: _____

Reference Verified/Completed by (Signature)

Date