

How to Conduct Effective Interviews Manager's Checklist

BEFORE THE INTERVIEW

- Confirm your panel members, and identify scheduling availability for panel members.
- Familiarize yourself with the job posting and key competencies required for the position; know what you are looking for
- Ensure you have well-designed interview questions, including the appropriate rating scales that relate to the job requirements (refer to handout "Sample Rating Scale" for a sample rating scale)
- Confirm that the interview questions comply with Human Rights guidelines for recruitment and selection
- Consult with HR to confirm your interview questions and the scoring threshold that will be used for assessing interview results
- Ensure you have a sufficient number of questions to assess your job requirements and sufficient time set aside to conduct the interview (typically, interviews should not exceed one hour in duration). Allow approximately 8 minutes per question
- Identify the flow of events during the interview, ex: identify who will ask each question
- Prepare an interview package for panel members that contain the candidate's resumes, interview questions (with room for writing down the candidate's answers), rating scales for each question, probing questions that may be asked, etc.
- Choose an appropriate interview setting
- Remember to maintain confidentiality throughout the process
- When setting up the interviews, ask if the candidate requires any type of accommodation in order to participate in the interview, such as accessible location, sign language interpreter, etc.
- Provide sufficient notice to candidates so they may make arrangements to attend the interview
- Be flexible—if a candidate is out-of-town and unable to participate in-person, consider the use of telephone interviews
- Advise candidates of who will be on the panel, the exact location of the interview, and how long the interview will take
- Allow sufficient time in between interviews so the panel may deliberate and so that candidates do not see each other
- Have a notepad, pen and glass of water available for the candidate during the interview
- Offer to provide the candidate with a copy of the interview questions between 15-30 minutes in advance of the interview so they can review the questions that will be asked. Ensure the candidate's copy does not contain the answer key, and collect their copy by the end of the interview
- Explain the recruitment and selection process, process you will use for the interview, guidelines and accountabilities to panel members to ensure they understand their role in the interview process

DURING THE INTERVIEW

- Welcome the candidate to the interview, introduce panel members, and provide an overview of the process (ex: "we will be together for about an hour, and each panel member will take turns asking questions. Throughout the interview please let us know at any time if you'd like clarification or for us to repeat a question.")
- Consider spending a couple of minutes highlighting the department, division and the position. Example: this position reports to me, and is one of 5 people on our team. We work as part of the XYZ division in the Department of XX. Government has over 18 departments in total, and we work to do XYZ. This position is vacant because of XYZ
- Actively listen and pay attention to the candidate's response to each question. Take notes while the candidate is speaking, to ensure you have an accurate record of his or her response. Avoid making comments about the candidate's appearance and avoid stereotyping. Focus on actual responses provided by the candidate
- Maintain a relaxed, positive and encouraging atmosphere throughout the interview. Use supportive body language (smile, nod, lean forward slightly) as opposed to negative body language (frowning, arms crossed, leaning backward)

- Ask the question and provide time for the candidate to prepare his or her response; do not be afraid of silence. If the candidate cannot think of an example or appears to be struggling, reword the question to help explain what you are asking
- If the candidate appears to be off-track or if you would like to gather more information in response to a question, use probing questions to generate specific responses. (Refer to handout: Effective Probing Questions)
 - It is acceptable to ask probing questions-- ensure that each candidate has a fair and equitable opportunity to explain their competencies as it relates to the position. Some candidates require very little probing, others need more in order to explain their backgrounds
- In the event a candidate is unable to answer a question, offer to revisit it at the end of the interview
- Manage your time effectively; keep track of the time and amount of time spent on each question
- Provide sufficient time at the end of the interview to discuss background checks and ensure the candidate signs the release form to allow the department to conduct background checks (includes reference checks)
- Ask the candidate for a copy of their reference list; ensure that the reference list includes supervisors that can attest to the candidate's performance
- Provide the candidate with an opportunity to ask questions; be prepared to answer questions about the position
- Notify the candidate of next steps, and provide an approximate timeline about when he/she will hear from you to receive feedback about the results
- Thank the candidate for participating, ensure you have collected their copy of the interview questions, and escort them out of the interview room

AFTER THE INTERVIEW

- Discuss each candidate with the selection panel at the end of the interview; allow time for each member to rate the responses provided by the candidate
- Prepare a total score for each candidate and/or an average score for each candidate
- Confirm the scores, ensuring there are no errors. Compare the scores against the threshold score that had been set; a candidate that did not pass the threshold does not proceed in the process
- Identify a ranked-order list of candidates following the completion of all interviews
- Review the top ranked candidate(s) to identify the scoring range, and if there are Employment Equity candidates among the top-ranked candidate(s)
- Prepare to conduct references for the top candidate(s)