Interviewing and Hiring for Success

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Disclaimer

This training is designed to provide general information about the subject matter covered. Neither TAC nor the trainers are engaged in rendering legal advice. If you need legal advice, TAC recommends that you seek the services of a competent attorney who is familiar with your specific situation.
Objectives

• Learn about hiring processes
• Discuss the importance of job descriptions
• Gain knowledge about discrimination and biases
• Discuss interview goals and steps
• Review interview questions to avoid
• Understand reference and background checks methods
Reasons Why New Hires Fail

✓ 11% lacked technical competence

✓ 89% failed because of poor interpersonal skills, alienating coworkers, being unable to accept feedback, lack of ability to manage emotions, and lack of drive.  
(Leadership IQ Study: Why New Hires Fail, Murphy M., PR Newswire, 2005.)
The Hiring Process: Major Exposure Areas

- Job descriptions
- Job postings and advertisements
- Application forms
- Interview questions and statements
- Job offer
Steps to Hiring

1. Identify the essential job functions.
2. Identify the qualifications desired.
3. Post your positions.
4. “Get the word out!”
5. Screen applications to weed out the unqualified applicants.
Steps to Hiring

Work with Human Resources to help eliminate “potential” problems

Use standardized applications vs. resumes

Applications must be retained at least 2 years unless hired, then must be retained for 5 years after separation.
Job Descriptions

• A written summary of the significant aspects of a job.

• Not required under the ADAAA, but they help to ensure compliance with ADAAA.

• Can justify the employee selection decision in determining the best qualified applicant for the position.
Job Description Components

- A summary of the position
- Essential job functions
  "Why the job exists."
- Marginal duties – additional duties
  "Other duties as assigned within the scope of the department."
Job Description Components

• Physical requirements of job

  “Physical actions required to perform essential job functions.”

• Working conditions

  Environment, travel, overtime...
What are Your “Hang-Ups”?

• Perceptions
• Communication Style
• Bias towards...
• Attitude towards...
• More attention toward unfavorable issues than favorable
• Lack of training
What Does Discrimination Mean?

Unfair treatment based on protected class

- Applicants
- Applying unfair standards
- Discipline
- Pay or Benefits
- Terminations
- Harassment
- Retaliation
Prepare to Interview

• Select from qualified candidates.
• Determine if phone screening is warranted.
• Select a time and place.
• Determine who will participate.
• Know the job specifics.
• Determine how to rank each applicant
• Provide a job description to the applicants.
Prepare to Interview

• Review the application and resume BEFORE the interview.

• Determine what questions to ask and a rating system to use BEFORE the interview.

• Ask all applicants the same questions and spend equal time with each applicant.
Interview Goals

What are you looking for?

• Does applicant meet job requirements?
• Any gaps in work history. Why?
• Is applicant interested in the job?
• Is applicant suitable for the job?
Interview Questions

• Must relate to the job requirements and the applicants' ability to perform the essential functions.

• Steer clear from “protected status” types of questions.

• Ask “Open-Ended”, not Yes-No.
Interview Questions

• Do not ask questions about applicants personal life.

• Document strengths to justify selection of final candidate.
Interview Tricks of the Trade

• Head-nodding
• Encouraging words – “yes”, “go on”, “that’s interesting”
• SILENCE...
• Repeating the answer with a questioning tone
• Verbal test questions if specific training, education or experience is required
Interview Tricks of the Trade

- Avoid distracting behavior
- Do not take phone calls
- LISTEN...don’t interrupt
- Keep interview on track
- Avoid making “implied contracts”
Most Common Mistakes

• Not being prepared
• Not letting them talk
• Not pausing
• Not digging deep enough
Types of Questions

• Common
• Functional
• Situational
• Behavioral
• Testing for Knowledge
Let’s Dig Deeper
Behavioral Interviewing

Identify knowledge, skills, and abilities, behaviors and key competencies critical to successful performance.

Determine the behavioral questions to ask.

Develop benchmark responses of good, average, and bad answers.
Behavior Based Interviewing

Do after rapport has been established and after skills-based questions.

Ask questions for past “value-based” judgments or decisions.

Get job candidate to explain thinking patterns, beliefs, and value set.
Behavioral Interviewing

Train Interviewers to

- Take notes & record actual responses.
- Omit prejudicial and biased comments.
- Maintain a consistent format for each job candidate.
Best Predictor of Future Behavior is Past Behavior

“We’ve all done things at work that we later regretted. Give me an example from your current or past job. How would you handle it differently if you could?”

Don’t settle for a general answer—push for a specific example.
Best Predictor of Future Behavior is Past Behavior

- Maintain the candidate’s self-esteem with statements: “We have all dropped the ball in the past”.
- Don’t assess guilt—objectively assess if the candidate will fit in the department.
- Use “empathy” statements: “I would be frustrated too...”
Creating Questions to Determine Attitude

1. Determine the **characteristics** of high performers (Deals with stress well; good communicator; team player; positive).

2. Determine the **characteristics** of low performers (Not a team player; can not deal with stress; does not like to talk to people at counter; dramatic; negative).
Creating Questions to Determine Attitude

3. Find a situation to elicit the **characteristic** you want to discover.

4. Question opening: “Tell me about a time you ______” (Be very specific and don’t lead them on.)

**Example:** “Tell me about a time you dealt with a difficult customer.” or “Tell me about a time you made a mistake.”

5. Grade/evaluate interview immediately when it is over (the 50 minute hour...)
Let’s Work On Your Handout
Interview Closing

• Repeat job duties and expectations.

• Do not oversell the job.

• State the negative and positive of job.

• Ask if they have any questions.

• State when you plan to make a decision and thank them.
Checking References

• Ensures accuracy of information in all phases of the process (interview, resume and application)

• FACTUAL
  • Past Employment Information
  • Professional References
  • Educational/Certifications Information
Past Employment History

• Dates of employment
• Reasons for leaving a job
• Salary/position held
• Job duties/responsibilities
• Strengths/weaknesses
• Attitude/motivation
• Ability to work with others
Reference Verification Methods

• Telephone Calls
  • Drawbacks: Restrictive policies
  • Benefits: Quick – saves time and money

• Written Correspondence
  • Drawbacks: Time-consuming
  • Benefits: Used for factual information
  • Release forms are required
Reference Verification Methods

**Investigative Services – 3rd Party**

- Used for specific types of jobs
- Fee-based
- Verifies education, work experience, credit history, criminal records, and certifications

**Drawbacks:** Fair Credit Reporting Act compliance – release forms
Fair Credit Reporting Act

Three separate authorizations/notifications required:

Before obtaining a report – written release required

Before taking adverse action – provide a copy and list of applicants rights

Upon rejection, inform of right to obtain a free report
Free Electronic Services

• Social Security Number Electronic Verification Service (verify up to 10 names): 1-800-772-6270

• Department of Homeland Security E-Verify: provides an automated link to federal databases to help employers determine employment eligibility of new hires and the validity of their Social Security numbers
  http://www.uscis.gov/e-verify
Criminal History Checks

**DPS crime records division website:**

- Only eligible entities: Secure site for employment and licensing verifications is secure.txdps.state.tx.us/ 512-424-2474
- Public site: records.txdps.state.tx.us
- Cost: $3.00 + fee
- Purchase “credits” and sign-in --- easy!
Personnel Policy Items

• Release forms (employment history, certificates/licenses, references, transcripts)
• Verification methods
• Information sources pre-defined
• Uniform references and background checking format/forms
• Disclosure/confidentiality procedures
Ready to Hire

• Make the offer – use the smallest amount of salary – hourly or weekly
• Provide information if requiring pre-employment physicals – these must be made post offer
• Be ready for your new hire

Orientations  Goals and Objectives  On the Job Training
Interview Questions

Sex

Appropriate = NONE unless BFOQ

Inappropriate = “Do you plan to have children?” “Do you think a woman can do this job?”
Interview Questions
Religion

Appropriate = NONE

Inappropriate = “What is your religion?” “What church do you belong to?”
Interview Questions

Race

Appropriate = NONE

Inappropriate = “What is your race?” “What is your color?”
Interview Questions
National Origin

Appropriate = NONE

Inappropriate = “Were you born in the US?” “What is your nationality?”
Interview Questions

Age

Appropriate =
Are you at least 18 years old?

Inappropriate =
“How old are you?” “What is your birth date?”
Interview Questions
Disability

Appropriate = “Can you do the essential job functions with or without an accommodation?”

Inappropriate = “Are you disabled?”
Interview Questions

Arrest Record

Appropriate = Have you ever been convicted of a felony?

Inappropriate = “Have you ever been arrested?”
Interview Questions
Drivers’ License

Appropriate = Do you have a current drivers’ license?

Inappropriate = “Let me see your current drivers’ license.”
Interview Questions

Marital Status

Appropriate = NONE

Inappropriate = “Are you married?”
Interview Questions

Citizenship

Appropriate = “Are you legally authorized to work in the United States?”

Inappropriate = “Are you a U.S. Citizen?”
Interview Questions

Languages

Appropriate = “Do you speak English? “ or “Do you speak Spanish?” - only if necessary for the position

Inappropriate = “What is your native language?”
Interview Questions

Military Experience

Appropriate = “Have you served in the United States Armed Forces?”

Inappropriate = “Were you dishonorably discharged?”
Interview Questions

Education

Appropriate = Anything pertaining to the educational requirements of the job

“What degree, certification or training do you have?”
Interview Questions
Photograph

Appropriate = NONE
Inappropriate = Requiring a picture
Interview Questions

Personal Characteristics

Appropriate = NONE

Inappropriate = “What color are your eyes or hair?” “What do you weigh?” “What is your height?”
Any Questions?
Let’s Practice What We’ve Learned

Think about the position you might hire for and write down some of the essential job functions it requires.

1.

2.

3.

4.

What common questions would you ask?

1.

2.

3.

4.

What situation questions would best fit your specific position?

1.

2.

3.
What functional questions would best fit your specific position?
1.

2.

3.

What behavioral questions can would best fit your specific position?
1.

2.

3.

What job related testing might you conduct?
1.

2.

3.

4.
AUTHORIZATION FOR BACKGROUND CHECK

(Please read and sign this form in the space provided below. Your written authorization is necessary for completion of the application process.)

I, __________________, hereby authorize ________ County to investigate my background and qualifications for purposes of evaluating whether I am qualified for the position for which I am applying. I understand that ________ County will utilize an outside firm or firms to assist it in checking such information, and I specifically authorize such an investigation by information services and outside entities of the county's choice. I also understand that I may withhold my permission and that in such a case, no investigation will be done, and my application for employment will not be processed further.

_________________________________________
Applicant’s Name - Printed
SAMPLE INTERVIEW EVALUATION FORM

APPLICANT NAME: ___________________________________ DATE OF INTERVIEW:_________

POSITION: __________________________________________

Personality, Manner, Attitude, and Impression  _____ x 3 = _______

*Overall impression created communication skills, polite, respectful, neat, clean, proper dress for position etc.*

1 Poor: Poor attitude and communication skills. Not polite or respectful. Improper dress.
2 Acceptable: Good attitude and communication skills. Polite and respectful. Proper dress
3 Very Good: Warm attitude and open communication skills. Polite and respectful. Proper Dress
4 Outstanding: Charismatic attitude and excellent communicator. Polite and respectful. Proper Dress.

Human Relations  _____ x 4 = _______

*How effective will the applicant be in working well with others, consider both co-workers and public?*

1 Poor: Seems unable or unwilling to relate to and work with others.
2 Acceptable: Indicates some ability and willingness to relate to and work with others.
3 Very Good: Indicates significant ability and willingness to relate to and work with others.
4 Outstanding: Indicates outstanding ability to create interpersonal relationships and work with others.

Decision Making Skills and Judgement  _____ x 6 = _______

*How effective will the applicant be in making individual decisions and showing appropriate judgement?*

1 Poor: Gives slow, hesitant responses, unorganized responses or unacceptable responses.
2 Acceptable: Responses are somewhat organized and acceptable, lack maturity or good judgement.
3 Very Good: Gives well organized thoughts which lead from judgement and common sense approach
4 Outstanding: Exceptional ability to organize thoughts and make sound decisions, showing evidence of sound judgement and common sense.

Motivation  _____ x 5 = _______

*Is the applicant a self-starter? Can the applicant motivate others? Can applicant work without supervision?*

2 Acceptable: Some ability to work without supervision and some ability to work with others.
3 Very Good: Significant ability to work without supervision and motivate others.
4 Outstanding: Exceptional ability to work without supervision and motivate others.
Texas Association of Counties Sample Form

Experience

_______  x  3 = _______

How many years of relatable work experience does candidate have?

1  Poor:  Limited or no work relatable work experience. 0 years
2  Acceptable:  Has demonstrated some relatable work or volunteer experience 1-3 years
3  Very Good:  Has significant relatable work experience. 3-5 years
4  Outstanding:  Has exceptional relatable work experience. 6 + years

Total Score:  __________

NOTES:
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Determination Scale:

84 – 64 – Outstanding Candidate, Definitely Consider for Hire
63 – 43 - Very Good Candidate, Consider for Hire
42- 22 – Acceptable Candidate, Might Consider for Hire
21 – 0 Poor Candidate – Would not Consider for Hire

Interviewer Printed Name and Title:  __________________________________________________________

Interviewer Signature:  _____________________________________________________________________

Date Completed:  _________________________________


Sample Interview Questions for Treasurer’s Deputy

Common Questions

1. Describe for me a typical day and the duties you performed in your last job.
2. Why did you apply for this particular job?
3. What did you like best about your job?
4. What did you like least about your job?
5. What was your supervisor like? Was he/she liked/disliked?
6. Why are you considering making a change?
7. Why did you leave your last job(s)?
8. What about this job appeals to you? Is there anything about it you don’t like?
9. What do you consider your major strength?
10. What is your biggest weakness?
11. What questions may I answer for you?
12. Tell me about yourself.
13. Why did you choose the type of work you’re in/been doing?
14. Why do you think you are the best candidate for this job?
15. If you could have made any changes in your last job, what would they be?
16. If you were hiring someone for this job, what qualities would you look for?

Functional Questions

1. What software systems have you worked with, please name them and your capability in each system.
2. This office handles some Human Resource responsibilities. Please tell me what you about each of the following regulations: Fair Labor Standards Act, Family Medical Leave Act, American’s with Disabilities Act, Texas Workers Compensation, and Texas Unemployment.
3. Do you know what FICA is and how to calculate it?
4. Can you provide me with an example of a voluntary payroll deduction? An involuntary deduction?
5. Can you provide me with examples on how you organize, plan and prioritize your work?
6. Describe an effective method you have used to maintain payroll records and employee information.
7. Can you describe how to reconcile a bank account?
8. Can you describe effective components of an employee timesheet?
9. Tell about any special programs you coordinated?
10. What is key to ensuring that you remain compliant with all laws, regulations and standards that are applicable to your area of responsibility?
Situational Questions

1. An employee is angry because you made a payroll withholding error. What would you do to handle this situation?
2. You discover you have been overpaying an employee for the last 5 months. What would you do to handle this situation?
3. Your co-worker continually tries your patience, she is older than you and you find it hard to relate to her. What would you do to handle this situation?
4. An employee misses the open enrollment deadline by a week. They come to you and ask you to let them backdate their paperwork because they really need to make some changes to their health insurance. What would you do to handle this situation?
5. The JP’s Court Coordinator is continually bringing in late deposits. She tells you she is having difficulty within her department. What would you do to handle this situation?

Behavioral Questions

1. Share an experience you had in dealing with a difficult person and how you handled the situation.
2. Share an example of a time you had to gather information from multiple sources. How did you determine which information was relevant?
3. Provide an experience where you kept track of leave time for employees.
4. Provide an example of when you believe your ethics were tested at work?
5. Describe an experience in which you effectively prepared and balance period-end reports.
6. Share an experience in which you completed, verified and processed forms and documentation for the administration of employee benefits.
7. Tell me about a time when you developed your own way of doing things in your past position.
8. Share an effective method you have used to keep informed on changes in tax and employment laws.
9. Describe a time you worked in a rapidly evolving workplace. How did you deal with change?
10. Name a time when your patience was tested. How did you keep your emotions in check?
11. Share a time when you willingly took on additional responsibilities or challenges. How did you successfully meet all the demands of those responsibilities?
12. Share an experience when you effectively conducted verifications of employment.
13. Share an experience where you remained calm and dealt effectively with a high stress issue.
14. What have you found to be the best way to monitor your work performance? Share a time when you had to respond to corrective action.
15. Provide an experience that demonstrates your ability to manage your time effectively. What challenges did you face? What were the results?
16. Describe a time you collaborated with a co-worker on a project. What was the project and what was the outcome?
17. Tell about a time you were able to identify a problem, evaluate options to correct and then implement the solution. Who did your solution benefit?
18. Share an experience in which personal connections to other co-workers or others helped you be successful in your position. What helped you succeed?
19. Tell me about an experience that demonstrates your ability to manage your time effectively. What challenges did you face?
20. Share an example of balancing cooperation with others and your own independent thinking.
Checking for Understanding

1. Conduct a 10 key test. Example: Type a list of numbers and have all applicants add the numbers. You are looking for accuracy.
2. Determine their ability to calculate pay from a timesheet. Example: Make a timesheet that has multiple issues, including use of leave time and overtime. Then have the employee calculate how much the gross pay would be by providing them with hourly rate and any additional pay such as longevity, cell phone allowance, uniform allowance, etc.
3. Conduct a filing test: Example: Provide 10-20 documents and have them file them in a small test drawer you have setup.
4. Determine ability to count money: Provide them with money, have them count and receipt.