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Interviewing Best Practices

Do's & Don'ts for Hiring Managers



Interviewing Best Practices

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A well-conducted interview helps identify the best candidate while creating a positive experience that reflects the organisation's values. Interviewers should remain objective, consistent, and professional throughout the recruitment process.

This guide outlines best practices, common pitfalls, and sample interview questions to support fair and effective hiring decisions.



Interview Do's

1. Prepare Thoroughly

- Review the candidate's CV and application before the interview.
- Understand the job description and key competencies.
- Prepare structured questions in advance.
- Familiarise yourself with the interview scoring criteria.

2. Create a Welcoming Environment

- Introduce yourself and other interviewers.
- Explain the interview format and timings.
- Help candidates feel comfortable before beginning.

3. Ask Consistent Questions

- Ask all candidates the same core questions.
- Use follow-up questions only to clarify responses.
- Focus on skills, behaviours, and experience relevant to the role.

4. Listen Actively

- Allow candidates time to answer.
- Avoid interrupting.
- Take objective notes based on evidence.

5. Evaluate Objectively

- Score responses against predefined criteria.
- Base decisions on evidence rather than assumptions.
- Consider how candidates demonstrate required competencies.

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Interview Don’ts

1. Don't Ask Discriminatory Questions

Avoid questions relating to:

- Age
- Race or ethnicity
- Religion or beliefs
- Marital status
- Pregnancy or family plans
- Disability (unless discussing reasonable adjustments)
- Sexual orientation
- Political views

2. Don't Make Assumptions

Avoid judging candidates based on:

- Appearance
- Accent
- Educational background alone
- Previous employer prestige
- Personal similarities to yourself

3. Don't Dominate the Conversation

Aim for the candidate to speak approximately 70–80% of the time.

4. Don't Make Immediate Decisions

Avoid making hiring decisions before:

- All interviews are complete.
- Notes have been reviewed.
- Scores have been compared objectively.

5. Don’t ask Leading or Coaching questions

Asking leading or coaching questions in an interview can influence a candidate's answers, resulting in biased responses and an unfair assessment of their true abilities and experience.

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Sample Interview Questions

Behavioural Interview Questions

Behavioural questions explore how candidates handled situations in the past.

- Tell me about a time you had to explain something complex to someone.
- Describe a situation where there was a misunderstanding. How did you resolve it?

- Tell me about a successful team project you worked on.
- Describe a time when you had to work with someone who had a different working style.

- Tell me about a time you motivated others.
- Describe a situation where you had to make a difficult decision.

Competency-Based Interview Questions

- Tell me about a time you made a mistake.
- How did you resolve it?

- Tell me about a time you managed multiple priorities.

- Describe a time when things didn't go as planned.
- What did you learn?

Encourage candidates to structure answers using the STAR framework

Situation	What was happening?
Task	What needed to be achieved?
Action	What did you do?
Result	What was the outcome?

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HR Compliance Reminder

- ✓ Keep the interview fair and consistent.
- ✓ Ask every candidate the same core questions.
- ✓ Avoid discriminatory or non-job-related questions.
- ✓ Provide the same interview tools and opportunities to all candidates.
- ✓ Record factual, objective interview notes only.

MSS Compliance Tip

Use a structured interview with a clear beginning, middle, and end for every candidate. Follow the same process, ask the same core questions, and use objective scoring criteria to ensure candidates are assessed accurately, fairly, and consistently.



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