

ASK THE RIGHT QUESTIONS, HIRE THE RIGHT EMPLOYEE

With the declining average tenure for employees across all generations, it is even more important HR and hiring managers bring the right candidates through the door.

But how can an employer know if great candidates will translate to ideal hires?

It's all about asking the right questions...

As recruiters, we work hard to [prepare our candidates for an interview](#), helping them develop strong answers to the questions they can expect. (We may even throw in a prayer to the traffic gods for them.) Then we anxiously wait for the post-interview call, only to find out that the [interview was a complete disaster](#).

The candidate does not drive the success or failure of an interview. A positive interview experience lies equally on the shoulders of the interviewer and the interviewee. Ideally, during the process of developing the job description, [employers will have done their homework](#) and created a picture of the ideal candidate. Before a search is even launched, employers should have already defined what the best possible candidate will possess in regard skills, experience, seniority, strengths, weaknesses, and education, to name a few. Ultimately, these requirements should determine the direction of the interview.

3 Questions an Interviewer Should Never Ask, and the “One” He Should Never Forget

1. Never ask a candidate questions about their race, religion, family life, or sexual orientation.

Any question that asks a candidate to reveal information about such topics without the question having a job related basis will violate various state and federal discrimination laws. There is nothing wrong with getting to know a potential hire. In fact, understanding what makes him or her tick will provide insight regarding work ethic, commitment, leadership skills, etc.

2. Never ask a candidate to describe his or her greatest strength or weakness.

These questions have been overused and any candidate can produce a canned answer he or she has used in every interview before yours. Additionally, knowing that someone is “loyal” or that he or she “works too hard” is not an indicator that he or she will thrive in your company. A good interviewer will have specific questions that will allow the

candidate to highlight his or her successes and experiences and this will show his or her strengths and even some weaknesses.

3. Never ask a candidate where she sees herself in five years.

According to recent surveys, the average tenure is 2.5 years for Baby Boomers and 2.8 years for millennials. Given this information, it still surprises us that employers ask this question. Obviously you are looking to hire someone who wants to make a commitment to your company, making your hiring and [onboarding](#) dollars worthwhile. You know it. The candidate knows it. What the interviewer really wants to know and should ask is, "How does this position align with your broader professional goals?"

1. Always ask a candidate well-thought out questions which provide them the opportunity to demonstrate who he is as a professional.

Questions that address issues such as teamwork, problem solving, handling conflict, and career path.

Excellent examples are:

Why are you currently looking for a job? Why are you leaving your current position?

What motivates you? Where is your passion?

How will you contribute to the company?

How will your skills help us meet the needs of this role?

What type of oversight and interaction would your ideal boss provide?

How would you solve... (Give them a real life scenario that has occurred.)

To hire the best people, you have to ask the right questions. Using an interview to discuss information that is clearly available on the candidate's resume, only allows for yes or no answers, or elicits canned answers that can be found simply by Googling "Best interview answers" is a waste of everyone's time. Interview questions such as these result in the need for more follow up interviews, dragging out the hiring process and risking the loss of the ideal candidate. From the moment an employer sits down to create a job spec, she should be developing quality interview questions which will allow candidates to demonstrate why their skill set, experience, and passion will meet your needs.

Check out our website for [more interview discussions and tips](#).

