

Recruitment: The Interview

Description:

This tool provides an outline of the process of conducting interviews, a bank of key questions that can be used during recruitment interviews and a sample rating guide.

How it can be used:

When hiring, health managers balance the need to hire quickly and the need for an effective and equitable process that will bring them the most qualified candidate. Use this tool to guide your interview process so it will go smoothly and fairly and bring you the best results.

THE PROCESS

Before the interview

- Develop an interview schedule (and stick to it).
- Involve more than one member of the hiring committee in interviews.
- Prepare all the questions in advance and suggest possible answers to the questions. As interviewers are recording the applicants' responses, they can tick off the possible answers.
- Send the job description to applicants before they come to the interview.
- Review the resume and know the job description (bring both to the interview).
- Make the meeting time and space comfortable and private to help applicants feel at ease.
- Arrange to have the same interviewers conduct all the interviews.
- Provide applicants with a comfortable, safe place to wait for the interview.

During the interview

- Welcome and thank the applicant for applying for the position and taking the time to attend the interview. Introduce each of the interviewers. Describe the process.
- Create a friendly, comfortable atmosphere that enables applicants to "perform" better. Provide them with water, paper and pen to organize their thoughts. You may inform them that they are welcome to make notes but all paper and supplies must remain in the room.
- Confirm the position for which they are applying.
- Provide a brief recap of the responsibilities of the position, the work schedule, and how the position fits into the strategic plan. Describe the position briefly, succinctly, and honestly.
- Let the applicant talk. Your main job is to listen – carefully and openly. Ask open-ended questions (interviewers should talk no more than 20–25% of the time).
- Ask each applicant the same questions. Do not prejudge or form an opinion too early, and make sure to avoid inappropriate questions.
- Get the information you need. As a minimum, you need to find out:
 - Why is the applicant interested in the job?
 - What competencies would the applicant bring to the project?
 - What kind of person is the applicant? Are his/her values and attitudes a good match for the job and the project?
 - What will it cost to hire the applicant? (Avoid talk of salary and benefits too early in the interview.)

- Take notes. Be open and explain to the applicant why you are taking notes. Ensure that at least two of the interviewers are recording the notes.
- Thank the applicant; explain the timeline for making a decision, commit to call the applicant with a decision, whether or not they are offered a job.
- Ask for references. Get signed consent from the applicant to contact them, if necessary.
- Find out when the applicant could start if offered the job.

After the interview

- Ensure that all interviewers have the name of each applicant on their rating guide and notes.
- If possible, review the applicants' results immediately after all the interviews.
- Clarify the expected and required elements for each question.
- Screen out anyone who has not met the minimum requirements.
- Discuss the grey areas, considering the intent of each requirement.
- Assign each applicant a score based on the interview results.
- Determine which applicants' referees will be contacted. Assign a person to conduct the reference checks, using the referee reporting form, with consistent questions.

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

The sample questions below are organized into categories. Depending on the requirements of the position for which you are hiring, choose questions from only those categories that are appropriate. Do not use all the questions.

Knowledge of Position

1. Tell us what you know about (our centre/programs) and what attracted you to this position.
2. What do you see as the purpose of this program?
3. Why would you want to work with this program?
4. What do you think it takes to be successful in an organization like ours?
5. Briefly explain how your work history and educational background relate to this position.

Job-Related Competencies

1. Questions relating to key requirements as per the job description.

Education

1. How do you feel your education has prepared you for your profession?
2. What could you do educationally to improve your overall effectiveness in your work?

Experience

1. Have you had experiences working with First Nations people?
2. Describe your position and role.
3. If not, how would your approach with First Nations be different?
4. Which community activities and programs have you been involved with in the past year? Why?
5. What types of experience do you have with community and program development?
6. Please name the resources in our community that you are aware of for our target groups.
7. What type of training and experience do you have in facilitating groups?
8. How often have you facilitated a group in the past year?
9. Tell us about your greatest challenges while being a facilitator.
10. Tell us about some of the barriers you have encountered in running effective groups.
11. How did you handle these situations?

Skills and Abilities

1. What are your three greatest strengths related to (your job, managing people, etc.)?
2. Identify areas in which you feel you may need additional training for this position.
3. What strengths or abilities, both personal and professional, do you have that make you a good candidate for this position?
4. How do you feel your boss would rate your current job performance?
 - a. Exceeds expectations? Why?
 - b. Meets expectations? Why?
 - c. Falls short of expectations? Why?

Successes

1. What are some of the accomplishments of which you are most proud in your career?
2. What key accomplishments suggest that you are an excellent candidate for this position?
3. Give an example of what you have done that goes beyond what is required by your job.
4. Describe a work situation where you faced incredible odds but prevailed. What were the odds you faced? Why was there so much resistance? How did you prevail?

Challenges

1. What are your biggest challenges related to (work, managing people, time management, etc.)?
2. What are some of the skills that you feel you would like to further develop?
3. How do you plan to develop these skills?
4. Is there an area of professional weakness that might affect your job performance? How could this be addressed?

Situations

1. If offered this job, how would you approach it?
2. What aspect of this job do you think would be the most challenging for you?
3. Give us an example of one of the toughest decisions you have had to make in a job?
4. Why did you make that decision regarding the example?
5. Give examples of successful strategies you have used to deal with a difficult client.
6. Someone in another organization, with whom you have infrequent contact, has been saying some uncomplimentary things about you. What would you do?
7. How would you deal with this scenario?

You have been asked to cover the centre for four days while the Program Coordinator is away. You come in at 9 am and have a parent group from 9:30 am – noon and a meeting scheduled for 1 pm. You check the messages on the answering machine before you start getting ready for the group. There are 3 messages:

- a. A Health Canada consultant needs to talk to the Program Coordinator as soon as possible about a funding issue.
- b. A mom has called and said she is at the Crisis Centre. Her boyfriend beat her up last night and she wants to talk to you.
- c. A committee member needs you to fax minutes from the last meeting.

Personal Qualities

1. Describe your management and/or work style?
2. What motivates you to work?
3. How do you cope with job pressure?
4. What have you learned from coping with job problems and frustrations?
5. Describe why you left your last two positions.

6. If we had two or three persons (with whom you work closely) in the room with us and asked them to describe you, what two or three things would they likely say about you?
7. What four or five adjectives do you feel best describe you as others see you?
8. If you could change one thing about yourself to add to your effectiveness, what would it be?
 - d. How would you change? Why?

Communication

1. Give an example of a complex communication problem that you have faced.
 - e. What made it complex?
 - f. How did you solve this problem? Why did you choose that approach?
 - g. How effective were the communications?
 - h. How might you have further improved the communications?

Management Skills

1. Give an example of how you develop your employees.
2. Give an example of how you have supported someone to reach his/her personal goal(s).

Decision-Making

1. Prove examples of your ability to apply prudent judgment in a delicate situation.
 - i. Why was the situation delicate?
 - j. What did you do?
 - k. What was the outcome?

Teamwork

1. What has been your experience in working as part of a team?
2. What do you see as being advantages and disadvantages of working as part of a team?
3. Give me an example of your involvement in a successful team effort.
 - l. What role did you play?
 - m. Why was the effort successful?
2. Give me an example of your involvement in a team effort that was unsuccessful.
 - a. What role did you play?
 - b. Why was it unsuccessful?
 - c. Looking back, what would you suggest that could have improved the situation?
3. With what kind of people do you most enjoy working? Why?
4. With what kind of people do you have difficulty working? Why?

Conflict Management

1. Describe a conflict you had with a co-worker or supervisor and how you dealt with it.
2. Describe a conflict situation you have experienced and tell us how you handled it.
3. Tell me about a time when you had a major conflict with another employee.
 - a. What was the cause of the conflict?
 - b. What things did you do to alleviate the problem?
 - c. What were the results?
4. When confronted by someone who is angry with you, what do you do?
5. If someone is continuously critical of you and appears not to like you, what do you do?
6. Cite examples that best demonstrate your ability to relate well to others in times of conflict.

Time Management

1. How do you balance your work requirements and your personal time?

2. How do you determine priorities in your work?

Creativity

1. Describe an example of creativity of which you are proud in your work.

Organizational Skills

2. Tell us about a previous work experience where you were required to do record-keeping and how you handled these duties.
3. What is your approach to organizing your work? Do you have a system?
4. Related to email management?
5. Responding to requests?
6. Managing deadlines?
7. How do you accomplish your priorities?
8. What impact has your system of organization had on your results?

Future Plans

1. What are your career goals? Where do you see yourself in five years?
2. How does this job fit into your career plans?
3. Why do you want to leave your current situation?
4. What other positions are you considering?
5. How long would you stay with us if this job were offered to you?
6. If you were the successful candidate when would you be able to start?

INTERVIEW RATING GUIDE

Consider how you will score the responses; will it be a Likert score (0-4) or will you include minimum passing scores in any sections? If applicants are screened out for not meeting the minimum score for any section identified as necessary, ensure the documentation is clear and fully explainable.

Position: _____

Candidate: _____

SELECTION CRITERIA

Criteria	Score 0-4 or X/X (if a minimum score is identified)	Notes
Background, Training and Education		
Questions related to previous work experience, training and education.		
Job-related Competencies		
Questions related to the position and relevant skills and abilities.		
Communication Skills		
Questions related to the ability to communicate, work as a team member and problem solve.		
Management Skills		
Questions related to decision-making, conflict management, time management, and organizational skills.		
Personal Suitability		
Questions related to attitudes and aptitude for position, creativity, and future plans.		

Scoring:

- 0 – does not meet criteria
- 1 – somewhat meets criteria
- 3 – meets criteria
- 4 – exceeds criteria

Interviewer _____

Date: _____