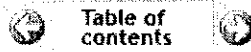




Recruiting, Interviewing, Selecting & Orienting New Employees, Fifth Edition



Search this book:



Chapter 10 - Types of Employment Interviews

Recruiting, Interviewing, Selecting & Orienting New Employees, Fifth Edition

by Diane Arthur

AMACOM © 2012

<< Previous

Chapter Contents

Next >>

Telephone Screening Interviews

Telephone screening is intended to accomplish one of two objectives: (1) to establish continued interest in a job applicant that results in an appointment for an in-depth interview, or (2) to determine that an applicant's qualifications do not sufficiently meet the job's specifications. Under no circumstances should telephone screening be viewed as a substitute for the face-to-face interview.

Successful telephone screening depends on establishing and following a certain format. Contact the applicant, confirm his interest in a specific job, and agree on a time to talk. Suggest that an applicant for a nonexempt job allot approximately twenty minutes for the call; an applicant for an exempt job should set aside about thirty minutes.

When the specified time arrives, describe the available position, being careful not to identify the qualities that would make the best fit. Encourage the applicant to ask questions related to the specific opening and the company. Have ready a series of questions to assist you in determining whether continued interest is warranted. Some questions to ask nonexempt-level applicants are:

- "Why are you leaving your present (or last) employer?"
- "What do (or did) you do in a typical day?"
- "What do you like (or did you like) most and least about your present (or last) job?"
- "Why are you applying for this particular position?"

In addition, ask questions relative to any significant aspects of the job. For example, if it requires standing for long periods of time, ask applicants to describe jobs where they've had to do this. Also, describe a typical situation that is likely to occur with this job and ask the applicants to describe how they've handled similar situations in the past.

Appropriate questions to ask exempt-level applicants include:

- "Why are you leaving your present (or last) employer?"
- "Why are you applying for this particular position?"
- "What do you know about this organization?"
- "What have you contributed in past positions?"
- "What contributions do you anticipate being able to make in this position?"
- "What do you expect to receive from this company?"
- "How does this position fit in with your long-term goals?"

Then, based on the particulars of the job, ask a series of questions regarding how they have handled certain situations in past positions.

As applicants respond, remind yourself of the purpose of the call: you're deciding whether a face-to-face interview is in order, not whether they should be hired. Take notes as they talk; if the conversation itself is not determinative, reviewing their responses after the call can help you decide whether to schedule an interview. If you do decide to bring them in, these notes can be used as a point of reference and comparison as you repeat some of the questions asked on the phone, seeking more in-depth information.

Be careful not to judge the quality of an applicant's telephone presentation if effective verbal communication skills are not a job-related criterion. On the other hand, some people, especially those in sales or marketing, do very well communicating on the phone; consequently, you must be able to separate style from substance.

Before concluding the conversation, go over a brief checklist:

- Does the applicant understand the job?

- Did you ask questions that will enable you to determine whether further interest is warranted?
- Did the applicant ask pertinent questions?
- Has the applicant expressed interest in the job?
- Does the applicant meet the basic qualifications for the job?
- Is there consistency between the information on the resume or application and what the applicant has told you?

If there's no doubt in your mind that the person should be invited in for an interview, make the invitation before the conversation is completed. If you are not certain and want to review your notes before making a decision, thank the applicant for his time, describe the next step, and estimate when he may expect to hear from you. If you are absolutely certain that the applicant is not suitable for the job, you have two choices: be honest and say that his qualifications are not suitable or that there is a lack of specific expertise or knowledge necessary for the job, or say that you will be reviewing the results of your conversations with all the applicants before taking any further action. If you do reject the applicant outright, be certain to explain your policy on keeping applications and resumes on file and encourage him to apply again in the future for other openings. If you have handled the situation tactfully, the person can hang up feeling good, even though no job interview is forthcoming.

Telephone screening offers numerous benefits. The process enables you to weed out applicants who are not qualified, allowing more time to devote to viable potential employees. It's also an impartial process; that is, neither party can be influenced or distracted by such visual factors as appearance, clothing, or grooming. While these can be important job-related intangibles, they are irrelevant at this screening stage.

<< Previous

Top of page

Next >>

Chapter 10

- Exploratory Interviews
- ▷ **Telephone Screening Interviews**
- Video Screening Interviews
- HR Interviews
- Departmental Interviews
- Panel Interviews
- Peer Interviews
- Interviews with Less-Than-Ideal Applicants
- Stress Interviews (How and Why to Avoid Them)
- Interviewing Pitfalls
- Summary



Search this book:

GO