

INTERVIEWER TIPS

There are numerous tools available to help you find the right person for a role, but the interview stage can be the most revealing. A face-to-face meeting is vital for both the candidate and the interviewer, and it's important to make sure you use the interview time wisely. Poorly executed interviews not only waste time and money but could damage your company's external profile.

POTENTIAL PROBLEMS WITH INTERVIEWS

Interviews are not fool-proof and could be criticised for the following reasons:

Confirming your reservations

Some interviewers 'go through the motions' and ask questions designed to confirm their pre-interview reservations about a candidate.

Stereotypes

Employers may have a preconception as to who their ideal candidate is going to be. Decisions made on the basis of sex, race, criminal record, age, disability or marital status are illegal.

Instant dismissal

Whether someone is suitable or not for a role cannot be determined by one question alone. Some candidates can be dismissed on the basis of one response.

Continuity

Sometimes a candidate interview experience may change the way future interviews for the role are conducted. This gives unfair advantages.

Affinity

Interviewers may give preferential treatment to applicants with similar experience and qualities to themselves.

I like you

Beyond qualifications and suitability for a role, there can be an 'X factor'.

The impact of recruiting the wrong candidate is substantial:

- Increased staff turnover
- Risk of employment tribunal
- Additional costs of recruiting, inducting and training new starters

ADVANTAGES OF COMPETENCY FRAMEWORKS

A competency is a clearly defined area of expertise and level of expected performance. This provides candidates with an indication as to what will be valued, recognised and rewarded.

WHAT IS A COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK?

A framework will usually include no more than six competencies and should contain both behavioural and technical elements. Each competency should be reasonably detailed and logically grouped to aid the candidates in understanding what is expected of them.

Typical competency headings for office support staff might be:

- Effective Communication
- Relationship Building
- Planning and Organising
- Initiative

INTERVIEWER TIPS CONTINUED

CREATING A COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK

You can do this in a number of ways. Here at Office Angels an internal project team put our competency framework together using Job Analysis and Competency Design (JACD). This involves speaking directly with the job holders to examine the behaviours they exhibit when performing their job and how their peers behave towards them. This information was then grouped into common themes i.e. competencies. Your consultant will be able to assist you when determining the competencies needed for your individual role, when they visit you to take details of the vacancy.

COMPETENCY BASED SYSTEM

Strengths

- Introduces set objectives for employees
- Fair and open
- Joins organisational and personal objectives
- Measures and standardises processes across organisational and geographical boundaries

Weaknesses

- Captures the past so can be out of date
- Not user friendly
- Produces clones

WHAT IS A COMPETENCY BASED INTERVIEW?

Competency Based Interviewing, also known as CBI, is an evidence based interviewing technique. It reveals how an applicant has demonstrated certain behaviours and skills in the workplace.

The benefits

- Targets behaviours, knowledge and motivations that lead to success within the job
- Consistent standard for decision making
- Builds rapport with the applicant
- Enables interviewer to probe effectively
- Positively impacts on the bottom line increasing retention, quality of staff, return on investment, improved results
- Prevents personal impression and eliminates misunderstandings
- Provides a systematic method for making decisions on each candidate
- Reduces the applicants ability to lie
- Allows the interviewer to effectively gather information
- Allows the applicant to accurately demonstrate their capabilities, irrespective of the length of experience they may have
- An excellent way of offering equal opportunities to all applicants