

INTERVIEW SUCCESS GUIDE



**CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY
FULLERTON**

**HUMAN RESOURCES
DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION**

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*Interviewers are potential stakeholders for the outcome and **should understand the job** and its requirements, as well as know the **organization's hiring objectives**.*



INTRODUCTION

INTERVIEW SUCCESS GUIDE

Human Resources, Diversity and Inclusion developed this *Interview Success Guide* to assist campus personnel in successfully performing interviews to aide in the selection of highly-qualified, diverse faculty and staff in **support** of the the **University's Strategic Plan**.



INTERVIEW OBJECTIVES

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THE **OBJECTIVES** OF A STRUCTURED INTERVIEW ARE TO:

- **Expand and clarify** the information provided on the candidate's application and resume.
- **Collect additional job-related information** which will supplement the candidate's application and resume.
- **Make a good impression** so that we are an appealing employer to the candidate.
- **Determine the candidate's "fit"**.

"Fit" is **defined** by the skills and knowledge required to perform the duties of the position and the ability to **work successfully** within the organizational culture.



SEARCH COMMITTEE

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DIVERSITY

- It is highly recommended that the committee be diverse and make efforts in allowing everyone an **equal opportunity** to attain the position.
- If a department lacks diversity they may seek assistance from another department or HRDI to serve on the committee.



TRAINING

- Each member of the interview committee should be made aware of and trained in **employment laws** and other policies governing the selection process before beginning in their participation, particularly as it relates to **equity and affirmative action**.
- It is highly recommended that each member of the committee go through **interview behavioral training and certification** provided by **HRDI** prior to serving on the committee. **INTERVIEW TRAINING**
- If a committee member acts inappropriately or fails to follow procedures, a warning will be provided and if recurring, the individual will be removed from the committee and enrolled in interview training before being allowed to serve on another committee.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

- Members of the committee should be made aware of any potential conflicts of interest (employee referral, family member, etc.) and recuse themselves if necessary for a **fair interview and selection process**.

HIRING MANAGER/COMMITTEE CHAIR

- Selects members of the interview committee.
- Along with the rest of the committee, oversees candidate screening and decisions to narrow the search down to finalists for the interview process as well as discussion over who will be selected for the position.

BEFORE THE INTERVIEW DAY

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WHAT ARE THE PRIMARY **BENEFITS** OF CONDUCTING A STRUCTURED INTERVIEW?

- **Increased reliability** in the prediction of job success.
- **Indication of ability** to balance technical and non-technical requirements.
- **Consistent measurement**
- **Reduced legal risk**

Controlled INTERVIEW

PREPARATION FOR CONDUCTING A STRUCTURED INTERVIEW:

- **Select a diverse interview committee** for their ability to add value to the interviews and selection decisions.
 - **The hiring manager may screen resumes to narrow down the applicant pool prior to sharing with the committee.**
 - Interview Committee should **set aside** several blocks of **time** to screen resumes and conduct interviews.
- **Confidentiality Agreement**
 - The recruiter will provide the Confidentiality Agreement form which **must be signed** by all search committee members.
- **Develop an interview format.**
 - Prepare **questions** to ask the candidate.
 - Provide direction for the interview to make the most effective use of time.
- **Reserve room** to conduct interview.
 - Ensure that room is **quiet** and free of distractions.
- **Provide candidate with:**
 - Parking information---encourage candidate to arrive early
 - Interview location
 - Length of appointment (include assessment time, if applicable)
 - Interviewer's titles



DAY OF THE INTERVIEW

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PRIOR TO INTERVIEW:

- Meet with interview committee to review candidates and schedule.
- Provide interview committee with **packets** that include **questions** and candidates' **resumes**.
- Make sure assessments are ready for candidates to take if necessary.

INTERVIEW PACKET

DURING THE INTERVIEW

- Thank the candidate for coming.
- Conduct introductions.
- Explain the interview format and that interviewers may be writing things down but they are still listening - **take good notes but remain attentive**.
- Provide the candidate with an overview of the agenda but do not provide the interview questions.
- **Explain that you're looking for responses to include specific examples.**

USE THE STAR METHOD



- Encourage the candidate to share achievements and successes they find relevant.
- Maintain pleasant but **neutral demeanor** for the entire duration of the interview - appropriate small talk is encouraged.
- Do not show the candidate the interview guide scoring sheet.
- Ask the candidate if they have any questions.

Thank the candidate for their time!



AFTER THE INTERVIEW

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EVALUATING CANDIDATES:

- Interviewers should meet to discuss candidate's interview performance **immediately following** the interview.
- Allow each member of the interview committee to individually evaluate the candidate using **benchmarks** and notes they may have taken during the interview.
- Assess the candidate on an **individual basis** - do not compare them to other candidates.
- **Assess** the candidate one competency at a time.
 - **Use rubrics and score sheets**
- **Final assessments** should be based on the discussion between interviewers.

CONFIDENTIALITY

- All search committee members **must sign** the **Confidentiality Agreement** prior to serving on the search committee.
- Do not discuss the candidate's interview performance in any common area to maintain confidentiality.



CONFIDENTIAL CONFIDENTIAL CONFIDENTIAL

ASSESSING COMPETENCY

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WHAT IS A COMPETENCY?

- **Observable** and **measurable** pattern of **skills, knowledge, abilities,** and other characteristics that an individual needs to perform the position's work successfully.
- Competencies are determined through a thorough job analysis.

TYPES OF COMPETENCIES

GENERAL

- Verbal and written communication skills
- Customer service
- Interpersonal skills
- Leadership
- Problem solving
- Others

TECHNICAL

- Drives productivity
- Financial acumen
- Rules of the road
- Innovation
- Network management
- Student/external relations
- Talent development
- Others



APPROPRIATE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

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Well thought out questions are the key to:
eliciting the most useful information during an interview with a candidate.

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS SHOULD:

- **Open** up a topic for conversation.
- **Confirm** what was learned about the applicant on paper.
- **Address** each of the selection **criteria** used as minimum or essential qualifications.

This section will provide appropriate categories or types of questions to be used in an interview and include examples.

OPENING QUESTIONS:

- The use of **ice breaker** and **"housekeeping"** questions can help make everyone involved feel more at ease.
- Opening questions provide transition from introductions to the formal interview questions.



Examples of ice breakers:

- Did you happen to catch the...*(insert major event)?
- Are you enjoying the weather?
- Why did you choose to apply for Cal State Fullerton?

Examples of "housekeeping" questions:

- Were you able to find parking easily?
- Have you been on this campus before?
- Would you like some coffee or water?



APPROPRIATE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

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OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS

- These questions are designed to encourage the candidate to demonstrate their communication skills and gather information.



- **EXAMPLES:**

- **Why** do you want to work for this institution?
- **Describe** your current duties, roles, and responsibilities.
- **What** strengths do you feel you bring to this position?
- **Describe** your perfect job.

CLOSED-ENDED QUESTIONS

- Questions like this are used to elicit a very **specific response** or to **confirm** a piece of information gathered in the application process.
- **Often begin with:**

ARE • HAVE • WILL • DID • CAN • IS • COULD

- **EXAMPLES:**

- **Have** you ever had experience with...?
- **Is** a company's work environment important to you?
- **Can** you work weekends?

APPROPRIATE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

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NEUTRAL QUESTIONS

- Allow the candidate to **express their own ideas** and provide information.
- **Encourage honesty.**
- **Examples:**
 - In your opinion, which is more important - speed or accuracy? Why do you feel this way?
 - What skills do you think are the most necessary to perform well in this position?

SKILL-BASED QUESTIONS

- Related to the **necessary skills** needed to perform successfully in a particular position.
- Should be directly linked to the **selection criteria** of the position.
- These types of questions look differently, depending on the type of position.
- **ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT**
 - Touch all of the major areas of responsibilities in the position's job description in a way that the interview committee can **assess the candidate's experience** in each area.
- **COMMUNICATION**
 - **Written** and **verbal** communication skills.
 - Questions for this skill need to be designed in a way that distinguishes between how well the candidate communicates during the interview, and how clearly they are able to explain their experience in communicating with others in their previous position.



WHAT SKILLS DO I
NEED TO SUCCEED?

APPROPRIATE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

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- **COMPUTER AND TECHNICAL SKILLS**

- Many questions regarding these skills are **specific to the position** so the hiring department may want to redesign their own questions.

- **CUSTOMER SERVICE**

- Positions that require **heavy contact** with internal and external **people** call for information regarding how the candidate has reacted and responded to similar situations in the past.
- Make sure these questions encourage the candidate to recall events that actually happened rather than hypothetical.

- **EVENT PLANNING AND MEETING PREPARATION**

- This is a function that is frequently found at all levels in the organization.
- These questions should encourage the candidate to provide information regarding types of events the hiring department has experienced or expect in the future.



- **SUPERVISION AND MANAGEMENT**

- It is imperative to get a sense of how a candidate for a management position will **fit** in with the existing employees in the specific work unit.
- Assess whether or not the candidate's **management style** will be met with resistance from their staff.
- Make sure questions allow the candidate to recall past **supervisory and management experience** with detailed information.
- Present **hypothetical situations** to see how the candidate would respond.

APPROPRIATE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

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BEHAVIORAL QUESTIONS

- Provide **insight** on how the candidate has acted in a real situation.
 - Using behavioral questions gives you a better look at how the candidate will behave in the position and fit in with the work culture of the department.
- The way a behavioral question is designed could easily translate into being a skill based question.
 - Candidate provides information about their creativity, adaptability, general skills, position based skills, etc.
- Behavioral questions are not usually phrased as a question because that tends to give away the kind of answer the interview committee might be looking for instead of letting the candidate form their own answer.
- Begin with...

Give me an example of...

Tell me... Describe for me...

- **EXAMPLES:**
 - **Tell me** about a time you had to work under pressure.
 - **Tell me** about a time you were faced with a challenge.
 - **Give me an example of** a goal you set for yourself and the outcome.
 - **Tell me** about a difficult work-related position you have made in the last year.
 - **Describe for me** what maintaining confidentiality means to you.
 - **Describe for me** a time you worked on a team.
 - **Describe** your understanding of diversity and why it is important to this position.

INAPPROPRIATE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

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Equal opportunity and non-discrimination laws:
protect the rights of individuals and specific groups.

Equal Employment Opportunity is
THE LAW

General Question Topics to Avoid

- Age/Height/Weight
- Arrest Record
- Clubs/Organizations
- Citizenship
- Disability
- Driver's License
- Ethnicity/Race
- Finances
- Lifestyle
- Marital Status
- Religion
- Union Affiliation
- Veterans Status

For more detailed information on equal opportunity and non-discrimination laws please visit:

<http://www.dfeh.ca.gov/about-us/> <https://www.eeoc.gov/laws/statutes/>



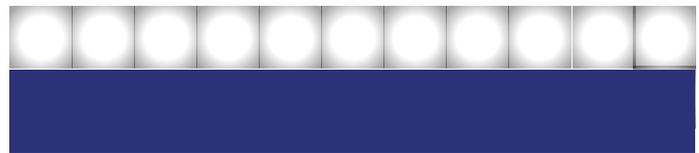
SPECIAL REGULATIONS

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Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA):

places some special requirements on employers during the interview stage in addition to providing reasonable accommodation to applicants in the application, interview, and employment process.

**DISABILITY RIGHTS
ARE CIVIL RIGHTS**



The law prohibits precluding an applicant from consideration if they can perform the essential functions of the job with or without **reasonable accommodation**. Although disabilities are broadly defined, temporary conditions that do not interfere with major life activities are usually not covered.

REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION

- Job functions must be identified as essential or marginal.
 - Only essential functions and the skills, knowledge, and abilities associated with them can be considered in the selection process.
- Interview questions should solicit responses based on the result or the outcome rather than the method used to arrive at the result.

For more detailed information on the **Americans with Disabilities Act**

Please visit:

<https://www.ada.gov/>



APPENDIX

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SAMPLE INTERVIEW SCORING SHEET

Candidate:	<i>Jonathon White</i>	Date:	<i>Wednesday, July 27, 2016</i>
Interviewer:	<i>Samuel Keaton</i>	Comp/ Position	<i>Senior Financial Aid Analyst</i>
Skill		Ranking	Comments
Experience <i>Current relevant experience to role</i>		3 - Average	
Adaptability/Interpersonal Skills <i>Fast-paced changing environment</i>		4 - Favorable	
Customer Service <i>Customer service is key to both our internal and external customers</i>		4 - Favorable	
Problem Solving/Communication <i>Communication is key for success within the team and customers</i>		4 - Favorable	
Integrity/Teamwork <i>Teamwork is key for success, integrity is required for teamwork</i>		4 - Favorable	
Leadership <i>Diversity is important, leading teams with varying backgrounds</i>		4 - Favorable	
Self-Development <i>Learning a new skill, personal development, professional development</i>			
Organization/Time Management <i>Personal productivity, organizational skills</i>		4 - Favorable	
Total Ranking & Rating		3.86	Favorable

RATING AND RANKING KEY

1	Highly Unfavorable
2	Unfavorable
3	Average
4	Favorable
5	Highly Favorable



APPENDIX

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SAMPLE SCORE SHEET --- ROUND TABLE REVIEW

Candidate:	<i>Johnathon White</i>	Position: Senior Financial Aid Analyst	
Interviewers:	<i>Samuel Keaton</i>	<i>Christine Arevalo</i>	<i>George Ringler</i>
Date of Interview:	7-27-6	7-27-16	7-27-16
Skill	Ranking	Ranking	Ranking
Experience <i>Current relevant experience to role</i>	4 - Favorable	3 - Average	3 - Average
Adaptability/Interpersonal Skills <i>Fast-paced changing environment</i>	4 - Favorable	4 - Favorable	4 - Favorable
Customer Service <i>Customer service is key to both our internal and external customers</i>	4 - Favorable	4 - Favorable	4 - Favorable
Problem Solving/Communication <i>Communication is key for success within the team and customers</i>	4 - Favorable	3 - Average	4 - Favorable
Integrity/Teamwork <i>Teamwork is key for success, integrity is required for teamwork</i>	4 - Favorable	3 - Average	4 - Favorable
Leadership <i>Diversity is important, leading teams with varying backgrounds</i>	3 - Average	4 - Favorable	4 - Favorable
Self-Development <i>Learning a new skill, personal development, professional development</i>	0	0	4 - Favorable
Organization/Time Management <i>Personal productivity, organizational skills</i>	0	4 - Favorable	3 - Average
Total Rating:	3.86	3.57	3.75
Ranking:	Favorable	Average	Favorable

RATING AND RANKING KEY

1	Highly Unfavorable
2	Unfavorable
3	Average
4	Favorable
5	Highly Favorable

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CONTACT INFORMATION

Front Desk:
657-278-2425