

Quick Guide: Conducting a Selection Interview

Selection interviews need to be structured to avoid irrelevant discussion and to maximise the time available to assess the candidate for the job. Fully prepare for the interview by following these **top ten tips** to ensure that you choose the best candidate for the job and your company.

- 1. Welcome** the candidate by name and offer yours. Shake hands, offer them a seat and refreshments and **put them at ease**. Be aware that they may be nervous so help to relax the situation with some 'chit chat' and **create a positive rapport**.
- 2. Outline the structure of the interview** with a rough idea of how long it will take. Explain that you will be taking notes and offer for them to take some too.
- 3. Acquire information** about the candidate related to the job description, skills and knowledge required to do the job and their CV/application. Ask questions about any points on the application that need further investigation.
- 4. Prepare a checklist of questions** to ask all candidates so they receive a fair interview. Include individual questions for each candidate related to their application. Ask open questions moving from easy ones to more probing ones.
- 5. Listen attentively** making relevant notes. **Use silence tactically** during the interview. Do not prolong silences so the candidate feels uncomfortable but allow enough time for them to think about and form their answers. Apply the 80:20 rule – **you speak for 20% of the time and they for 80%**. This way you find out more!
- 6. Maintain open and attentive body language** looking at the candidate (but not staring) most of the time. Show interest in what they are saying. **Be aware of their body language**, any changes in it, or mis-matches with what they are saying and doing, particularly when answering difficult questions.
- 7. Evaluate the candidate** throughout the interview. Ensure you cover all the facts on the CV asking detailed questions about education, work experience and other job-related skills. **Look at their career progression** to assess if a candidate is applying for this job to further their career. Find out **reasons for any gaps** in employment history.
- 8. Control the interview** by pacing it carefully, covering all the points in the time allocated. Re-direct chatty candidates by having plenty of questions to ask.
- 9. Supply information** about the company and the job. Select what to say verbally and what to put in writing. You can shorten or lengthen this stage of the interview depending on how suitable the candidate is.
- 10. Part positively**. Inform the candidate of what will happen next and when. Thank them for coming to the interview.

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