

People Biz, Inc.

INTERVIEW TIPS

- Review the candidate's application materials. You have already seen it once, but review it again. Having to repeatedly refer to these papers during the interview is distracting and demonstrates a lack of preparation.
- Prepare the location. Be sure your office is in order. There should be no interruptions during the interview. If an office or plant tour will take place, make sure it has been properly arranged.
- Put the candidate at ease. Seemingly, insignificant gestures can go a long way toward setting the right tone for an interview. Meet the applicant on time. Don't make the person wait. When opening the interview, make the candidate feel comfortable. Offer cup of coffee. A little small talk never hurts.
- Outline the interview process; explain the sequence of events and what will happen. Resist the urge, however, to identify a period. For example, a defined 45-minute interview may be difficult to end after 15 minutes if things are not going well.
- Keep an open mind. First impressions of a candidate are usually lasting. Try not to prejudge the candidate based on the first 30 second of contact. Nervousness and other factors may be obscuring the better qualities.
- Let the candidate do the talking. Ask questions and wait for answers. Interviewer silence can be a powerful tool for eliciting additional information.
- Be attentive. When conducting a series of interviews, boredom can overtake you, along with distractions about more pressing problems. However, concentrate on what is being said. This may be the only opportunity you have to evaluate this candidate.
- Observe body language. Watch and listen to how things are being said. Is there a level of enthusiasm? Does the person sound confident? Does the person make eye contact?
- Take notes. Record responses and impressions during the interview for later reference. When interviewing more than one candidate, information will blur together. These notes will help sort it out.
- Maintain control. Be careful not to let the interviewee take over. An aggressive candidate may attempt to get the better of you by making comments or asking questions, rather than answering them.
- Probe incomplete answers. There may be a reason why answers are incomplete. Ask for clarification, even if it is difficult or embarrassing. You need to know.

- Test for character. After a person has given the answer to a question, ask about their approach and reasoning. Ask how much the person would be willing to bet if they think they are correct. Testing their confidence can be very revealing.
- Keep reactions to yourself. The so-called “poker face” is useful in an interview. Be careful not to display your emotions, regardless of how pleased, shocked, disappointed, or frustrated you may be. Signals such as these give candidates an impression, perhaps wrong, of how they are performing.
- Close the interview on a positive note. Refrain from announcing a decision. Assure the candidate that you will be in touch within a short period of time and thank the person for their time.
- Write an interview summary. Immediately after the interview, write down your general impressions and review your notes. Waiting even one hour will greatly reduce your memory of what took place.