

Conducting An Effective Interview

There's an art to conducting an effective interview. We operate in a sophisticated, candidate savvy market where it is often the responsibility of the interviewer to "sell" the role and organisation as well as determine the abilities of a prospective new employee.

We've summarised the advice our recruitment consultants most regularly share with clients who are preparing to conduct interviews for the first time or hope to improve their interview process.

Know The Job Specification

It is important that the job specification truly reflects the role you are trying to fill. This may sound obvious but often job specs are recycled, never updated or don't reflect the full scope of the post. How can you fill a role effectively if even you, the hirer, don't understand what you expect of the applicants?



Know The Attributes

As well as knowing your job specification you also need to know the attributes you are looking for in a prospective new employee. There are various sources to help you identify attributes, for example, consider your company values, the behaviours of your top performers, the skills which are lacking in your team and the attitudes you'd like to promote.

De-stress

Interviewers can do a lot to reduce the stress associated with interview situations. Just be as transparent as you can by providing the applicant with as much information as you can, details to consider are:

- ✦ Give as much notice as possible on the date, time and venue of the interview.
- ✦ Advise whether it will be a 1:1 interview, panel interview or video interview and who will be present.
- ✦ Guidance on what will be covered during the interview and the anticipated duration of the process.
- ✦ Be friendly and certainly non-combative during the interview. Trick questions or negative questions are pointless so avoid asking things like "What areas do you think your team would say you could improve upon?" It's much more constructive to turn the question around, for example "Explain how you have positively contributed to the team dynamic in which you currently work."



Behaviours And Situations

Each role is distinct, so although you may have core attributes you'd wish every employee displayed there are secondary attributes which are equally important, depending on the role you are trying to fill.

For example, a good sales person needs to be able to demonstrate they can close a deal. If you hope to inject new energy into a team perhaps someone who is not afraid to challenge is needed. Alternatively, you may have a high volume, processing role that requires accuracy and diligence.

When you are searching for authentic examples of success, you need to drill down to understand how the person behaved in certain situations or how they added value, here's a few examples you may find useful:

- ✦ Give an example of a time you had to
- ✦ How did you measure the success of
- ✦ Why did you choose this approach to
- ✦ Explain the benefits of tackling the problem this way

Listen

In a 1:1 interview scenario it can be difficult to capture all the information the applicant is sharing with you, and of course, after the interview you have no-one to talk through the selection process with.

It's important that the people conducting the interviews carry some responsibility for a successful hire, to be "bought in", so the team lead or head of department are often involved, along with a representative from HR. Having 2 or 3 people in a panel style interview allows for each one to focus on specific areas and capture the responses more accurately. For example, a team leader could determine if a person has the requisite skills needed within the team, while the HR representative could be best equipped to explain the culture of the organisation.

Work It!

You've spent the first part of the interview determining whether the applicant has the abilities and attributes you are looking for. If you think you've found a prospective new employee it's now time to really sell the role and organisation to them, you've got to work it! This could involve a tour of your facility, a short meeting with peers who can share first-hand experience of working in the company or a discussion about long term career goals to demonstrate that you are interested in the applicant's future.