



## FHR Navigator Interview Guide

Your goal is to have a fair and effective process for conducting interviews. Statutes governing fair employment cover the interview process as well as the selection of the candidate. To ensure fairness, you should:

- Conduct interviews in which each candidate is asked a predetermined set of questions and all candidates are measured against the same criteria.
- Treat all candidates in a fair, equal, and consistent manner.
- Eliminate cultural or other forms of bias in the interview process.
- Evaluate candidates effectively by developing and asking a variety of questions, including direct, open-ended, and situational questions.
- Keep your top candidates interested by completing the interview process quickly. To facilitate the interview scheduling, use the e-mail in the FHR Navigator Selection Certificate. This will allow you to notify the candidates.
- Choose the best candidate for the job.

### Types of Interviews

- **Competency-Based Interviewing.** Competency-Based Interviewing is the most effective method and can be used in all types of interviews. Competency-Based Interviewing identifies the skills, abilities, and talents that account for on-the-job performance. Integrating a behavioral competency model of interviewing, supervisors and managers move beyond exploring what and when a candidate did something to how and why they did it. The competencies that the candidate used are more important than the duties he was assigned in a previous job and for how long. Confirming transferable skill sets, defining behavioral indicators, and asking self-appraisal or third-party appraisal questions are some competency-based interviewing techniques.
- **Panel Interviews.** These are conducted by a small group of managers. Panel interviews allow for various perspectives on the competencies required for the position and each candidate's qualifications, providing a more objective measurement of the candidate's ability to do the job. If the position requires technical expertise that the hiring authority doesn't have, it is best to include someone who has such expertise.
- **Individual interviews.** These are one-on-one interviews. In some instances, the supervisor may conduct the first round of interviews and select one to three finalists for final interviews by the manager.

## Preparing for an Interview

Careful preparation is the key to a successful interview process:

- Assemble a diverse panel: include supervisor, and/or staff members who are knowledgeable about the job and who have some relationship to the job (e.g., those to whom the job will provide service or support). Include people of different genders, ethnic groups, and physical abilities whenever possible.
- Confirm that all panel members' schedules will allow for full participation.
- Make sure the committee's charge is clear and members know their roles and responsibilities.
- Have the interview/selection committee review the job description and requisition to define the job in behavioral terms. Select competencies to describe the desired candidate (experience, knowledge, education, and intellectual, interpersonal, and motivational competencies).
- Have the interview/selection committee review each candidate's resume
- Have the interview/selection committee prepare interview questions (see Developing Interview Questions).
- Have a copy of the job description, and an updated organization chart to provide each candidate before the interview.
- Arrange for interviews to be conducted in a quiet and private place, free of distractions and interruptions. Ensure that appropriate accommodations are made for people with disabilities.
- Allow fifteen-minute breaks between the interviews to make notes.
- Review the candidate's resume and supporting materials shortly before the interview to refresh your memory.
- After the interview each interview panelist should record his or her evaluation and recommendation.

## Developing Interview Questions

Ask questions that elicit the applicant's competencies relative to the competencies necessary to effectively perform the job. If you maintain a correlation between questions and requirements, you'll get pertinent information about the candidate's suitability. The PD+ Module of FHR Navigator allows you to store interview question with each position record.

## Types of Questions

- Open-ended questions are basic to any effective interview because they call for candidates to relate information and ideas that they feel are important. Example: "Tell me about your supervisory experience."
- Accomplishment questions ask the candidate to identify important accomplishments and what competencies were used to execute them. Example: "Tell me about your most recent important accomplishment in your job. What did you do and what was the outcome?"
- Situational questions ask candidates how they handled or would handle job-related situations, to evaluate their ability to recognize important aspects of situations, analyze them,

and provide reasonable options. Example: "Describe a situation where you had two assignments with conflicting priorities and how you handled it."

## **What You Can and Can't Ask**

Ask only questions that specifically pertain to the candidate's skills, knowledge, abilities, and interests related to the position, as described on the requisition and job description, based on the predetermined selection criteria. Questions related to gender, sexual orientation, age, marital status, color, race, religion, national origin, medical condition, pregnancy, or disabilities are inappropriate and against the law.

Whenever possible, let each candidate see the actual work location. Give each candidate a copy of the Job Description with the essential functions. Please note that questions about a candidate's disability or potential need for accommodation are prohibited before a job offer has been made.

## **Conducting the Interview**

- Set the interview climate. Choose a location free from interruptions and hold all calls. Arrange a casual seating arrangement that doesn't put the candidate in the "hot seat." If it is a panel interview, arrange the panel in a U-shape or circle.
- Establish rapport. Put the candidate at ease; refer to something you noted on the candidate's application to show you have carefully studied it.
- Set the agenda. Describe the interview structure; this will help you (the panel) and the candidate achieve a concise, focused interview.
- Take notes. This will help you ask follow-up questions and recall specifics about each candidate. Tell the candidate that you (and the panel) will be taking notes. Note key words/phrases - your notes need not be verbatim.
- Listen carefully. Don't anticipate the candidate's answers. Reserve judgment until the person has finished.
- Maintain control. If the candidate gets off track, ask a specific question that will bring the interview back on the subject.
- Allow silence and be patient. The candidate may need some time to put his thoughts together to provide specific answers to your questions.

## **Closing the Interview**

- Ask whether the candidate has anything more to tell you about his candidacy or any questions about the job/employer.
- Explain the next step in the process, including whether there will be further interviews, when you will make your decision, and how the candidate will be informed of your decision.
- Thank the candidate for interviewing for the position.
- Complete your notes and/or rating sheets immediately; don't rely on your memory.

- Decide whether the candidate meets, exceeds, or does not meet the requirements.
- Prepare for your next interview.

## Reference Checks

Always check references of your top candidates regardless of your impressions of their qualifications. A mistake is costly in time, energy, and money; take the time to check references before making a job offer.

Reference checks can reveal information about an applicant's behavior with prior employers that could be critical to your decision, regardless of the applicant's skills, knowledge, and abilities. Failure to check references can have serious consequences for your organization.

### Tips for Checking References

- Check references after you have interviewed the candidate. Checking references before the interview can create false expectations and affect your ability to evaluate the applicant's qualifications objectively.
- Advise the candidate that you will be checking references and ask permission to talk with the current supervisor.
- Ask the candidate for other references (other supervisors, co-workers, customers, etc.). Make sure to allow each candidate to provide you with the same number of references.
- Develop a set of job-related questions to be used on all reference checks.

Use the following guidelines when you are conducting all telephone reference checks, whether the candidate is a campus employee or an outside applicant:

- Introduce yourself and state the purpose of your call.
- Confirm that it is a convenient time to talk.
- Briefly describe the position for which the applicant has applied.
- Confirm the relationship between the person giving the reference and the applicant.
- Verify basic data such as job title, duties, salary, and dates of employment.
- Consider the source. Remember that the information is limited by the perception of the person giving it. If you receive negative information about an applicant, weigh it with data from other references before using it to make a decision.