

APPENDIX C - SAMPLE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Typically, a wide variety of questions can be used to gain information about a candidate's ability to perform a job. The search committee members should use these questions as a guide to develop measurable questions that target specific job skill requirements.

1. Describe a time when you were faced with problems or stresses at work that tested your coping skills. What did you do?
2. Give an example of a time when you could not participate in a discussion or could not finish a task, because you did not have enough information. What did you do?
3. Tell me about a time when you had to use your verbal communication skills in order to get a point across that was important to you.
4. Give an example of a time when you had to be relatively quick in coming to a decision.
5. Can you tell me about a job experience in which you had to speak up and tell other people what you thought or felt?
6. Give me an example of when you felt you were able to build motivation in your co-workers or subordinates.
7. Tell me about a specific occasion when you conformed to policy even though you did not agree with it.
8. Describe a situation in which you felt it necessary to be very attentive and vigilant to your environment.
9. Give an example of a time when you used your fact-finding skills to gain information needed to solve a problem, and then tell me how you analyzed the information and came to a decision.
10. Give me an example of an important goal you had to set and tell me about your progress in reaching that goal.
11. Describe the most significant document, report, or presentation that you have completed.
12. Give me an example of a time when you had to go above and beyond the call of duty in order to get a job done.
13. Give me an example of a time when you were able to communicate successfully with another person, even when that individual may not have personally liked you.
14. Describe a situation in which you were able to "read" another person effectively and guide your action by your understanding of his/her individual needs or values.
15. In this position, how do you think you might be able to support the university's philosophy toward diversity?

16. What did you do in your last job in order to be effective with your organization and planning? Be specific.
17. Describe the most creative work-related project you have completed.
18. Describe a time when you felt it was necessary to modify or change your actions in order to respond to the needs of another person.
19. Give me an example of a time when you had to analyze another person or a situation carefully in order to be effective in guiding your action or decision.
20. What did you do in your last job to contribute toward a teamwork environment? Be specific.
21. Give me an example of a problem you faced on the job and tell me how you solved it.
22. Describe a situation in which you were able to positively influence the actions of others in a desired direction.
23. Tell me about a situation in the past year in which you had to deal with a very upset customer or co-worker.
24. Describe a situation in which others within your organization depended on you.
25. Describe your most recent group effort.
26. Describe the worst customer or co-worker you have ever had and tell me how you dealt with him or her.
27. Describe your previous work experiences and highlight any experience you might have that would benefit TWU and/or this department.
28. Starting with your last job, tell me about some of your achievements that were recognized by your supervisors
29. Describe your most rewarding work experience.
30. If you are selected for this position, what areas could you contribute immediately, and in what areas will you require more training?

ACCEPTABLE AND UNLAWFUL QUESTIONS:

Subject Area: Religion or Creed

Acceptable Inquires:

After a statement of regular workdays, normal hours, or schedule to be worked in fulfilling the requirements of the job, ask, "Does this present a problem?" If yes, "What are they, for purposes of assessing any accommodation based on business needs?"

Unlawful Questions:

Any inquiry into an applicant's religious denomination, religious affiliation, or religious holidays observed. "This is a (Catholic, Protestant, or Jewish) organization."

Subject Area: Citizenship

Acceptable Inquires:

"Are you legally authorized to work in the U.S.?" This question is addressed at the point-of-hire only.

Unlawful Questions:

Whether an applicant is naturalized or a native-born citizen. Requirements that an applicant produce naturalization papers.

Subject Area: Education

Acceptable Inquires:

Inquiry into applicant's academic, vocational, or professional education and the public or private schools attended.

Unlawful Questions:

Graduation dates alone may suggest possible age discrimination.

Subject Area: Race or Color

Acceptable Inquires:

None prior to hire

Unlawful Questions:

"Are you Puerto Rican?" "What is your AA/EO status?"

Subject Area: Marital/Parental Status

Acceptable Inquires:

None except those required under Federal regulations regarding independence, if applicable. "Can you meet the specified work schedule or do you have activities, commitments, or responsibilities that may hinder you from meeting work attendance requirements?" "Do you see any reasons why you could not travel for business?"

Unlawful Questions:

"Are you married?" "Single, divorced, separated?" "Do you plan to marry and Have children?" "What are the ages of your children?" "What will you do if your children get sick?" "What is your husband's name?"

Subject Area: Military

Acceptable Inquires:

Inquiry into applicant's military experience in the Armed Forces of the U.S. or in a State Militia. Inquiry into an applicant's job- related activities in a particular branch of the service.

Unlawful Questions:

Inquiry into applicant's general military experience and discharge (unless your position is restricted by the U.S. Patriot Act).

Subject Area: Gender

Acceptable Inquires: None prior to hire.

Unlawful Questions:

"Do you wish to be addressed as Mrs., Miss, or Ms.?"

Subject Area: Age

Acceptable Inquires:

None prior to hire. If applicant may be a minor, you may ask, "Do you have proof of age in the form of a work permit or certification of age?"

Unlawful Questions:

"How old are you?" "What is your birth date?"

Subject Area: Conviction

Acceptable Inquires:

If job-related, "Have you ever been convicted of a crime (give job-related reasons for inquiry)?"

Unlawful Questions:

Inquiries regarding arrest records prior to point-of-hire.

Subject Area: National Origin

Acceptable Inquires: None prior to hire.

Unlawful Questions:

Any inquiry into applicant's ancestry, national origin, descent, parentage or nationality (Unless position is restricted by the U.S. Patriot Act). "Is that a Spanish surname?"

Subject Area: Language Requirement

Acceptable Inquires:

If job related: Inquiry into language applicant speaks and writes fluently.

Unlawful Questions:

"What is your native language?" Any inquiry into how applicant acquired ability to read, write, or speak a foreign language.

Subject Area: Disability/Handicap

Acceptable Inquires:

After a statement has been made regarding the essential job functions and the working conditions, you may ask, "Are you able to perform the essential functions of this job?"

Unlawful Questions:

"Do you have any disabilities?" "Have you ever been treated for any disease or illnesses?"

Subject Area: Organizations

Acceptable Inquires:

Inquiry into applicant's membership in organizations that the applicant considers relevant to ability to perform the job.

Unlawful Questions:

"List all social clubs, societies, and organizations to which you belong."

Subject Area: References

Acceptable Inquires:

Persons willing to provide professional references.

Unlawful Questions:

Any inquiry concerning an applicant's race, sex, age, national origin, religion, marital status, or general medical conditions.

To ensure that the interview is conducted in a non-discriminatory manner, hiring authorities and search committee members should remember to:

1. Ask the same general questions and require the same standards for all applicants.
2. Treat all applicants with fairness, equality and consistency.
3. Follow a structured interview plan that will achieve fair interviewing.