

GUIDE TO NON-DISCRIMINATORY INTERVIEWING

Interview questions must directly relate to advertised qualifications and skills. Care should be taken to avoid inadvertently asking inappropriate questions at the interview. The following are adapted from federal Equal Employment Opportunity guidelines. (This document comes from Southern Oregon University.)

1. You may not ask questions about one's race, color, national origin, religion, sex, sexual orientation, disability, or age.
2. You may not ask questions about marital status (e.g., whether the candidate is single, married, divorced, separated, engaged, or widowed), pregnancy, plans for a family, or child care issues. You may inquire if the applicant has any commitments that would preclude her or him from satisfying job schedules. If such questions are asked, they must be asked of both sexes.
3. You may not ask questions about weight and height unless this information is job-related.
4. You may not ask questions about one's state of health.
5. You may not ask questions about disabilities.
6. You may not ask questions designed to discover one's age.
7. You may not ask questions concerning the candidate's place of birth or similar questions about the parents, grandparents, and spouse of the candidate.
8. You may not ask in a series of interviews for a given position questions of one sex and not the other.
9. You may not ask questions about a foreign address which would indicate national origin. You may, however, ask about the location and length of time of one's current residence.
10. You may ask if one intends to become a U.S. citizen (i.e., for proof of his or her citizenship), if one intends to become a U.S. citizen, or if one's U.S. residence is legal, as well as the status of one's visa. You may not inquire if a candidate is native-born or naturalized.
11. You may not ask what is one's mother tongue or how one's foreign language ability has been acquired.
12. You may not ask about one's willingness to work on any particular religious holiday. You may ask about one's willingness to work a required work schedule.

13. You may not ask if a candidate has filed or has threatened to file discrimination charges.
14. You may not ask questions about any relative of a candidate which would be unlawful if asked of a candidate.
15. You may not ask questions about organizations that would reveal the race, color, sex, marital status, sexual orientation, or national origin of the applicant. You may not inquire about the applicant's membership in clubs, social fraternities, societies, and lodges or other organizations which are not job related. You may inquire about membership in job-related organizations (e.g., does an applicant for a position in an English department belong to the Modern Language Association?).
16. You may not ask about military service in the armed force of any country but the U.S., nor may you inquire into one's type of discharge. You may ask questions concerning service in the U.S. armed forces if such service is a qualification for the position being sought.
17. You may not ask questions which would reveal arrests without convictions. You may ask about convictions but not arrests for crimes which relate to the candidate's qualifications for a position.
18. You may not ask questions about one's credit rating or request financial data.
19. You may not ask about the maiden name of a married woman applicant or the original name of an applicant whose name has been legally changed.
20. You may not ask the name of an applicant's pastor or religious leader.