

Document Preview – This is only a portion of the entire, customizable document.

Job Applicant Interview Script

When the applicant arrives, put him or her at ease using a friendly, businesslike attitude. Let the applicant know that you're glad that they've come and that you have set aside sufficient uninterrupted time to conduct the interview. You can start the interview with chatter about hobbies, interests, etc., if you are comfortable doing so and are confident that you can stay away from personal questions that might be considered discriminatory. Or you can simply ask one of the following questions:

"How did you happen to become interested in our organization?"

"How did you hear of the opening?"

Depending on the response, you can work in an overview of what you have planned.

"Before we start, let me give you some idea of what I'd like to cover today. I want to review your background and experience so that I can decide whether the job is suited to your talents and interests. So, I'd like to hear about your job, education, interests, outside activities, and anything else you'd like to tell me. And after we have covered your background, I want to give you information about our organization and the job, and answer any questions that you might have."

Work Experience

A discussion of work experience should vary widely based, in part, on how long the applicant has been employed. Questions appropriate to a recent high school or college graduate will make little sense when interviewing a professional with 15 years of experience. For an applicant with substantial experience, a reasonable starting point would be a discussion of the most recent position. In addition to focusing on the jobs themselves, it might also be helpful to discuss why the applicant has changed jobs in the past, the duration of each prior employment, chronological gaps in employment, etc. The following script would be appropriate when interviewing someone who has not been working long.

"A good place to start would be your work experience."

"I'm interested in the jobs you've held, what your duties and responsibilities were, your likes and dislikes, and what you felt you may have gained from them."

"Let's start with a brief review of your first work experiences, those you might have had part-time during school or during the summer, and then we'll concentrate on your more recent jobs in more detail."

"What do you remember about your very first job?"

Select specific follow-up questions for each job and move forward chronologically. It's been suggested that you move forward chronologically because there's a more natural conversational flow and you can see patterns of behavior emerge.

Your follow-up questions should ask for specific examples of behavior, not general or hypothetical responses. Don't ask "Are you dependable?" because all you will get in response is a "Yes."

Instead, say, "Tell me about a day you got to work on time, only because of extra effort." It is focused on specific examples of behavior. Similarly, instead of asking, "Are you organized?" say "Tell me about a time when your organizational skills made a project successful" or "How did you organize your work in your last position? How did you handle the unexpected?"

Ask specific, clear questions one at a time and let the applicant answer uninterrupted. Resist filling in every lull in the conversation; wait to see if the applicant will do so.

Avoid either verbally or physically giving the applicant a clue as to how you regard their answers; remain neutral.

To draw the applicant out without revealing what you're thinking, try using his or her own words. If the candidate says, "I like to work independently," you could respond with "Independently?" Of course, you could also use the opportunity to ask the applicant to give an example of what he or she did working independently.

After you have covered the applicant's work experience, you could move on to education.

Education