

Interviewing

WORKPLACE STRATEGIES

Conducting an interview with a candidate with a disability is primarily the same as interviewing candidate without a disability. The difference lies in developing effective communication strategies to concentrate on the applicant's knowledge, skills, abilities, experiences, and interests, not on the disability.

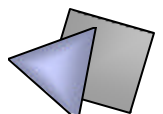
All questions during the interview must be job-related and focus on the candidate's ability to perform the job.

CONSIDERATIONS

- Learn about appropriate disability terminology and etiquette
 - Assess interviewing location(s) for accessibility for candidates with disabilities.
 - Implement standard procedures to ask *all* candidates if reasonable accommodations for any part of the interview process are required
 - Ask questions that are job-related, based on the Bona Fide Occupational Requirements of the position.
 - Rather than speculating or making assumptions, ask the applicant to describe how he/she would perform a certain job function or if reasonable accommodations are required.
 - Screen applicant tests for accessibility and/or biases and be prepared to adapt mechanisms to each individual.
 - Offer disability awareness training for interviewers. This can prevent assumptions about a candidate's capabilities and assist interviewers in developing effective interviewing techniques.
- Contact the Canadian Human Rights Commission for information on legislation governing human rights in jurisdictions regulating the organization's workplace(s), guidelines detailing appropriate questions and alternative ways to phrase questions.

SAMPLE QUESTIONS

- *How would you perform the _____ function of this position?*
Allow the candidate to highlight their strategies for performing the job.
- *How do you like to be managed?*
Look for a candidate who has specific ideas.
- *If you were to secure this position, what would be your short-term/long-term goals and how would you achieve them?*
Look for an applicant whose goals fit in well with those of the company/organization and whose "method" is well thought out.
- *What's been the biggest disappointment in your business career?*
If the candidate names and describes one, explaining how it was effectively dealt with, this illustrates a problem solver and positive thinker. However, the applicant should not point fingers and place blame on others.
- *Tell me about a time when you had a conflict with a fellow co-worker.*
Look for an answer that shows resolution skills, a positive approach and teamwork.
- *Are you a team player or an individual achiever?*
The desired answer will depend on corporate culture and the nature of the job, but if the person says both, reinforced with an example for each, this is a good answer that shows flexibility.



Illegal Questions:

- Do you have any disabilities or impairments which may affect your performance in the position for which you are applying?
- Have you ever been hospitalized? If so, for what?
- Have you have a major illness in the last 5 years?
- Have you ever filed for workers' compensation insurance?

ETIQUETTE

Each individual with a disability is an individual, with different degrees of disabilities, abilities, attitudes and expectations.

Developing knowledge on communication etiquette can ensure that each prospective employee with a disability is considered equally

(without bias or preconceptions) on his/her own merits, throughout the recruiting, interviewing and hiring process.

- Extend the courtesy of a handshake to the individual, even if they are an individual with quadriplegia or an amputee.
- When addressing the applicant, look at him/her directly. Tension is only increased if eye contact is avoided.
- If the individual is accompanied by a sign language interpreter or helper, speak directly to the individual with a disability, they are the candidate.
- Be aware that some wheelchair users may choose to transfer themselves out of their wheelchairs (into an office chair, for example) for the duration of the interview.
- When interviewing an individual who is blind, identify everyone who is present.
- If assistance is offered, wait until the offer is accepted. Then listen or ask for instructions.

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