

The Pitfalls of Interviewing

How many times do you hear managers complaining about the “wasted time in interviewing”? Here are a few tips that will help in selecting and recruiting employees more successfully.

First impressions

Initial impressions can often be deceptive, but research shows hiring decisions are made subconsciously in the first three minutes, usually before any appropriate questions are asked. Positive decisions can be reversed later in the interview, but adverse ones rarely are. So try and keep an open mind at least until the end of the interview!

General etiquette

Ensure that email invitations to interview are friendly in tone (these could be future colleagues) and include the practicalities: interview location, car parking, whether travel expenses will be refunded and who to ask for at reception.

Double check that someone is aware of the candidate’s interview time, knows the applicant’s name, which individual(s) are to interview them and where they will be interviewed so they can inform the interviewer(s) of the candidate’s arrival. If candidates need to wait, offer them cloakroom facilities, a seat and a drink.

When interviews run late, ensure that someone apologises for the delay and keeps the candidate informed. When the candidate enters the room, provide a friendly greeting, smile and introduce the interviewer(s) by name and job title.

Too much chat

Many interviewers do more talking than listening and apart from initial pleasantries and closing thanks, they should normally confine themselves to asking pertinent questions and to answering candidate’s questions.

Preparation

Five minutes' preparation can save 15 minutes' interviewing time. Check that all necessary documentation is to hand: CV, job description, Terms and Conditions and a description of the organisation so any potential questions can be answered concisely.

Interviewers often forget or are unfamiliar with candidates' CV's at the beginning of an interview. Consequently, they waste interview time asking for information already available to them. By not planning key questions beforehand, many fail to uncover vital information.

Questions

Interviewers shouldn't ask too many closed questions (which are only answered by a yes or no). Silence is also a powerful tool, especially if combined with a smile, as candidates will be encouraged to talk more. Having a set of pre-arranged and relevant questions available will structure the interview more effectively.

Follow Up

Interviewers should tell candidates during the interview what the next steps will be in the selection process and when they may expect a decision. If there are unexpected delays in giving a decision, a holding email should be sent to explain the delay. Unsuccessful candidates should always be informed as soon as possible and thanked for their interest in making an application and attending the interview

By following these tips, managers will gain confidence in selecting the right employees and may even enjoy the interviewing process!



“Putting the Human into Human Resources”

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