



HR TIP SHEET

Interviewing

An interview is an exchange of information between an employer and a candidate to determine if they possess the required qualifications, experience and competency to successfully fill a vacant position within the organization.

The interview enables the employer to evaluate the candidate in relation to the demands of the organization and the position. An interview also allows the candidate to gain further information about the organization and to assess the corporate culture and demands of the job for a personal fit.

Why are interviews important?

- Interviews provide an opportunity to meet, further screen candidates, and verify the accuracy of the information provided in the candidate's resume and screening assessments.
- Interviews help to evaluate a candidate's knowledge, skills, abilities, and behavioural and technical competencies.
- Interviews provide the organization with the opportunity to communicate company's policies, beliefs, work culture, and expectations.
- Interviews allow a company to select and hire the best talent to fill the job vacancy.

Common mistakes interviewers make:

- Not having a structured interview template that outlines the key questions to be asked.
- Not recording the candidate's responses.
- Asking casual, open-ended, or subjective questions opposed to specific job related questions that are structured to evaluate the candidate's overall suitability. For example,
 - "Tell me about yourself..."
 - "Where do you see yourself in five years from now..."
- Asking different questions of each candidate.
- Not having pre-determined answers created to evaluate the candidate's responses.
- Showing up unprepared, without the candidate's resume, job description, and / or job specification to refer to throughout the interview.
- Not employing a rating scheme to evaluate candidates' responses.

Common rating errors:

- There are several common rating errors that interviewers often unconsciously commit, which affects their perception and overall ranking of candidates.
 - Central tendency rating error occurs when interviewers avoid rating the candidates either very high or very low. This causes a cluster of ratings around the middle of the rating scale and makes it hard to differentiate between candidates when trying to narrow down the final list.
 - Similarity effect occurs when candidates who are similar to the interviewers with respect to race, gender, or other characteristics receive a higher rating.
 - The halo effect occurs when the interviewer lets one favoured qualification, trait, or experience influence all other factors, resulting in an unduly high overall performance rating.
 - Similar to the halo effect, the horn effect allows one disfavoured qualification, trait, or experience take precedence and result in an unfairly low candidate rating.
 - Primacy effect occurs when the interviewer's judgement is dominated by information obtained prior to the interview or during its early stages.

The Interview Process:

Before the interview

- Select the interview panel
- Coordinate the meeting: determine the time, location, and room number
- Review the predetermined qualifications and selection criteria
- Prepare an interview questionnaire outlining specific questions and ideal answers
- Design a rating scale that provides a performance rating to weighted qualifications, competencies, and experience. (Weighting indicates the importance of each criterion by assigning it a percentage.)
- Prepare answers to questions concerning compensation
- Provide the candidate applications, interview questions, and rating scale to the interview panel
- Meet with the interview panel to brief them on the interview process

During the interview

- Make the candidate feel at-ease
- Explain the interview process
- Listen and observe non-verbal communication
- Ask the candidate to talk about their accomplishments and areas of interest
- Ask the candidate to react to simulated situations similar to those that reflect the realities of the vacant position
- Rate the candidate's responses to the questions
- Check for affinities between the interview panel and the candidate
- Close the interview by giving the candidate the opportunity to ask questions and by explaining the next steps of the recruitment process
- Collect candidate references

After the interview

- Finalize interview notes and complete the rating scale, include your comments
- Briefly discuss your rating and comments with the interview panel

For more tools and tips on how to interview your ICT human resources, go to the Information and Communications Technology Council website www.ictc-ctic.ca and inquire about their HR tools to help you manage your ICT human resources more effectively. Look for the *ICT Competency Profiles framework* to inform you of the competencies needed for 36 ICT work streams or ask about their latest version of the *Human Resources Management Guide*.