

INTERVIEWING TIPS

The information in this document provides general tips for conducting interviews. Following these tips should help reduce the likelihood of legal issues or challenges related to the interview itself. However, this is not intended to be a comprehensive guide for interviewing compliance.

- Plan questions in advance; ask everyone the same questions.
- Make the applicant feel comfortable. (It's stressful to interview for a job!)
- Don't tell the applicant what you want to hear. (If you tell them up front what you're looking for, you've given them the answers in advance!)
- Take notes, but only objective notes. (What you write can come back to haunt you!)
- Ask open-ended questions (rather than "yes"/"no" questions) to get the maximum information.
 - Don't ask: "Can you operate a motor grader?"
 - Instead: "Describe your experience operating motor graders and/or other heavy equipment."
- Ask only **job-related** questions; ask about:
 - Knowledge
 - Skills
 - Abilities
- Stay away from any questions/comments/observations about:

○ Age	○ Disability
○ Color	○ Pregnancy
○ Race	○ Family Medical History
○ National Origin	○ Military Status
○ Sex	○ Veteran Status
○ Religion	○ Protected Activity
- If the candidate raises one or more of these subjects voluntarily, do not ask additional questions about the subject or use the information in your documentation or evaluation of the candidate. If it's not job-related it is not pertinent to the hiring decision.
- Be careful about "small talk" before or after the interview; often this discussion leads to conversations about family or activities outside work. Stick with neutral topics to avoid learning something that could be used, or someone could perceive it had been used, in a discriminatory manner.

Formulating Proper Interview Questions

Do not ask questions such as:

- Are you a U.S. citizen? Where were you born?
- I love your accent; where are you from? That's an unusual last name; what nationality is that?
- Where do you go to church? What religious holidays do you observe?
- How old are you? When did you graduate high school? When do you plan to retire?
- Do you have children? Who keeps them while you work? Do you plan to have children?
- How much sick leave did you take last year? How did you get that scar?
- Have you ever been arrested? Have you ever been charged with a crime?
- Are you married? Where does your spouse work?
- Do you own or rent your home? Do you own a vehicle? How will you get to work?
- This is hard physical labor. Can you keep up with the younger employees?
- Do you have any health problems? Can you read small print? Do you have any back problems?
- Have you ever filed an EEOC claim? Have you ever filed a workers' compensation claim?
- Do you drink? Have you ever had a drug or alcohol problem?
- Were you honorably discharged from the military?
- Do you participate in clubs or organizations outside of work? Which ones?

Instead, consider asking these types of questions:

- Tell me about a time when you disagreed with your supervisor. How did you handle it?
- If I call your most recent supervisor, what would he/she say about you?
- Tell me about a mistake you made at work. What did you learn from it?
- What makes you a better candidate for this position than our other candidates?
- What is your work history?
- Why did you leave your last job? *OR* Why are you looking to leave your current job?
- Tell us about a time when you felt satisfied about an accomplishment at work.
- Describe a time when you felt frustrated at work. How did you handle it?
- Tell us about a time when you suggested an idea or a new way of doing a work task. How did you communicate your idea? How was it received?
- What motivates you to do your best work?