

Career Management Digest

The Job Interview: No Tricks, Only A Treat

How many can say they love (or even like) job interviews? When most people are asked that question, the answer is usually, "NO way ...it's very stressful!" Whether you are looking for a **new** position with a **new** employer or looking for a new position within your current company, the job interview can feel like a huge challenge. Our October issue will focus on making that interview a little more like a treat!

They Asked Me What? Strange Interview Questions

Small talk gets a bad rap, but it may be crucial to getting the job you want.

While some dismiss the practice as "idle talk," others argue that the mastery of small talk is a crucial skill to have because of its ability to bridge divides and make forced intimacies a little more bearable.

What's more, recent research suggests that excelling during the seemingly idle small-talk portion of an interview can give you an edge over other candidates.

If this isn't convincing enough, you might consider taking a cue from Ana Recio, the senior vice president of global recruiting at Salesforce.

Recio, who leads a global team of more than 350 people, hires more than 8,000 people a year, and has 20 years of hiring experience at tech companies like Salesforce and Yahoo!, tells Business Insider that she loves to kick off interviews by asking candidates: "What is your favorite pump up song, and why?".

"It may seem like just a fun icebreaker, but how they respond also allows you to get a deeper sense of them, and if they might be a good fit with your company's culture," she explains.

Luckily for candidates, there is no right or wrong answer to the question. Instead, how they answer can speak volumes about their personality and fit.

"Creating and maintaining a strong culture is a top priority for today's companies that want to attract and retain the very best talent, and assessing culture fit is an important aspect of the interview process," Recio says.

So, be prepared for an unusual question at your next interview. If asked "If you were a tree, what kind of tree would you be and why?" or "What's your favorite color and why?," give it your best shot. You may be just the person they are looking to hire! Source: Article by Rachel Gillett, Business Insider

~Bonnie Vanecek, Customer Service Specialist, Workforce Development Inc., Goodhue County



They Asked Me What? Illegal Interview Questions

Interviews can be SCARY enough, but what do you do when an employer asked an ILLEGAL QUESTION??!?!?

FIRST: WHAT IS AN ILLEGAL QUESTION??? Any question that could allow an employer to discriminate against you, including topics such as:

- * National Origin
- * Citizenship
- * Age
- * Marital/Family Status
- * Disability
- * Arrest/Conviction Records

Employers may want to check your criminal history as part of an employment background check, depending on the kind of work you want to do. This means they may ask about:

- * Military Discharge status
- * Race

* Gender

* Religious affiliation

(businessinsider.com)

BE CAREFUL, though! Employers ARE ALLOWED to ask you whether you can perform the basic duties of the job you are interviewing for (monster.com/career-advice).

SECOND: WHAT SHOULD YOU DO IF YOU ARE ASKED AN ILLEGAL QUESTION BY A POTENTIAL EMPLOYER??? Here are some options:

1. Don't lie, but politely decline to answer.

"I am going to decline to answer this, mainly because I have read through the job description and have researched this company and based on the strengths, knowledge, and experience I bring to this interview, I believe that I am the best candidate for this job."

2. State that the question asked does not accurately highlight or impact how you are able to perform the job.

"I am confident that I will be able to successfully perform the duties of this job."

3. You can answer, but be very careful that it does not impact your job outlook with the company.

"Yes, however, I am an exceptionally hard worker and always make sure to get the job provided to me completed in exemplary fashion."

~Amy Lofquist, Career Counselor, Workforce Development, Inc., Steele County



INTERVIEWS: FROM "Both Sides Of The Desk"

Interviews do not have to be scary. Whether you are part of a one-on-one interview or multiple people are at the table with you, it's important to remember interviews are conversations, not Interrogations. An interview is an opportunity for the potential employer to get to know about your skills, experience and personality. It's a chance for them to find out if you will fit into their company culture. It's also a chance for you to find out the same about them.

Keep the interviews:

- Positive and upbeat
- Talk skill sets and accomplishments
- Use stories and examples that prove you're qualified
- Let initiative / ambition / and interpersonal skills come through

Every interview response should attempt to eliminate fear or doubt in the mind of the employer. You might want to prepare by writing out answers or practicing interview questions with others who are interested in your success. Remember that once you invest this time, discipline, and effort in your own job search, you become more confident and self-assured that you're ready to win the job and ready to work.

There are basic assumptions that can be made about employers:

- They are always looking for good workers.
- Good workers are very hard to find and are more costly to recruit.
- Discrimination is real, but can be overcome by proving your value to the employer.
- Most employers would rather do anything else than recruit, interview, and hire new workers.
- Employers don't read minds... and like people who are prepared to meet their expectations.

Now... Put yourself on the other side of the interview table. What are the FEARS in the mind of the employer?

That.... If hired, you'll be incompetent, or you'll need too much time to get your feet on the ground, become productive, and pull your own weight. Prove them wrong.

That.... If hired, you won't put in an honest day's work; you'll goof off, or need someone to constantly check your work. Prove them wrong.

That.... If hired, you'll be lazy, will only give the minimum effort, and have to be told when to do everything. Prove them wrong.

That.... If hired, you'll frequently call in sick, arrive late, leave early, refuse overtime, and constantly ask for raises. Prove them wrong.

That.... If hired, you're a quitter and you'll walk out at a time when they need you. Prove them wrong.

That.... If hired, you're a chronic complainer, a braggart, or someone who blames others for your mistakes, blunders, sloppy work, or forgetfulness. Prove them wrong.

That.... If hired, you're arrogant, conceited, rude, antagonistic, overly pushy, abrasive, broody, or moody. Prove them wrong.

That.... If hired, you'd say or do something to disgrace or embarrass the company, the department, the manager, or your fellow workers. Prove them wrong.

That.... If hired, you'd steal, embezzle, lie, or cheat. Prove them wrong.

That.... If hired, you won't show pride in your work or your appearance... Prove them wrong.

Once you are offered and accept a job, show that you are interested in keeping that job, being promoted and considered for additional training and responsibility. Simply focus on this one idea: PROVE to that new employer that they did NOT make a mistake by hiring YOU!!!

~Ed Duda, Career Counselor, Workforce Development, Inc., Olmsted County

WEBSITES WORTH TREATING YOURSELF TO:

<https://www.themuse.com/.../how-to-answer-the-31-most-common-interview...>

www.monster.com/career-advice/.../100-potential-interview-questions

money.usnews.com/.../the-10-most-common-interview-questions

www.forbes.com/sites/.../2014/06/.../10-job-interview-questions-you-should-as

<https://biginterview.com/blog/2011/08/best-questions-to-ask-end-interview.html>

<https://www.livecareer.com/quintessential/interviewing-dos-donts>

<https://www.linkedin.com/.../job-interview-all-time-classic-dos-donts-bernar..>

<https://www.roberthalf.com/.../dos-and-donts-of-dressing-forbes>

<https://www.reed.co.uk/career-advice/body-language-interview-dos-and-donts>

More information is a Google search away!

~Valerie Kvale, Placement Specialist, Workforce Development, Inc., Freeborn County

