

Interview Guidelines



Applications

Employment applications are a simple method for evaluating a potential employee’s experience, skills, training, and limitations. While resumes are helpful tools, they often do not contain the range of information that may be revealed by a completed standardized employment application.

Avoid questions on applications and interviews that are discriminatory and may violate privacy rights

The following is a list of acceptable and unacceptable inquiries at all stages of the pre-employment process, including the application, and interview:

Category	It is discriminatory to inquire about:	Examples of acceptable inquiries:
Name	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The fact of a change of name or the original name of an applicant whose name has been legally changed or maiden name 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The fact of an assumed name or nickname necessary to enable a check on applicant’s work records
Birthplace and residence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Birthplace of applicant or spouse • Birthplace of applicant’s parents • Requirement that the applicant submit birth certificate, naturalization or baptismal record 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicant’s place of residence • Length of applicant’s residence in city where the employer is located
Creed and Religion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicant’s religious affiliation • Church, parish or religious holidays observed by applicant, and whether religious beliefs prevent applicant from working on those days 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The employer may just state the regular work days, hours and shifts to be worked, as well as religious days on which operations are closed
Race or Color	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicant’s race • Color of applicant’s skin, eyes, hair, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None



Category	It is discriminatory to inquire about:	Examples of acceptable inquiries:
Photographs and fingerprints	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Photographs with application• Photographs after interview, but before hiring	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Statement that photograph and/or fingerprints may be required upon employment
Age	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Date of birth of an applicant• Age specifications or limitations in advertisements that might bar workers under or over a certain age• Dates of attendance or completion of elementary or high school	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Statement that the applicant's hire date is subject to verification that he/she meets legal age requirements
Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Specific years of attendance or graduation• Who paid for educational expenses while in school• Whether an applicant still owes on loans taken out while in school	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Academic, vocational or professional education and the public and private schools attended
Citizenship	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Any inquiry into whether applicant is or intends to become a citizen of the U.S.• Any requirement that the applicants produce naturalization• Requirement of production of naturalization or alien registration prior to employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Can you, after employment, submit verification of your legal right to work in the U.S.?



Category	It is discriminatory to inquire about:	Examples of acceptable inquiries:
National Origin and Ancestry	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Applicant's lineage, ancestry, national origin, descent, parentage or nationality• Language commonly used by applicant• How applicant acquired the ability to read, write or speak a foreign language	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Languages applicant speaks and/or write fluently
Language	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Applicant's first language• Language commonly used by applicant's home• How the applicant acquired the ability to read, write or speak a foreign language	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Languages applicant speaks and/or writes fluently
Relatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Name and/or address of any relative of applicant	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Names of relatives already employed by the company or by a competitor
Military Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Applicant's military experience in other than the U.S. Armed Forces• National Guard or Reserve Unites of applicant• Draft classification or other eligibility for military service• Dates and conditions of discharge	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Military experience of applicant in the U.S. Armed Forces, including any relevant skills acquired• Whether separation from military service was for any reason other than an honorable discharge• Whether applicant has received any notice to report for duty in the Armed Forces



Category	It is discriminatory to inquire about:	Examples of acceptable inquiries:
Organization(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Clubs, societies, lodges or organizations to which the applicant belongs, which might indicate race, religion, etc.• Names of any service organizations of which applicant is a member	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Applicant's membership is any union or professional or trade organization, unless they indicate applicant's race, religion, ancestry, sex or age
References	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The name of applicant's pastor or religious leader• Any questions of applicant's former employers or acquaintances that elicit information concerning applicant's race, sex, color, religion, national origin, physical handicap, marital status, age, sexual orientation or medical condition	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Names of persons willing to provide professional and/or character references for applicant• Names of persons who suggested applicant apply for a position with the employer• Request of applicant for written consent to a former employer's giving of a narrative job reference
Height or Weight	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Any inquiry into height or weight of applicant, except where it is a bona fide occupational requirement	
Notice in Event of Emergency	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Name and address of relative to be notified in case of accident or emergency	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Name and address of person to be notified in case of accident or emergency

Category	It is discriminatory to inquire about:	Examples of acceptable inquiries:
Sex and Marital Status	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sex of applicant • Marital status of applicant • Whether applicant has made provisions for childcare • Whether applicant is pregnant, or uses birth control • With whom applicant resides • Whether applicant lives with his/her parents • Applicant's maiden name • Name of spouse or children • Child support obligations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The name and address of applicant's parent or guardian (for minors only, if applicable to the job)
Disability or Physical or Mental Condition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inquiry into applicant's general medical condition, state of health or illness, physical or mental disabilities • Questions regarding receipt of workers' compensation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whether applicant is able to perform the essential functions of this job (if applicant voluntarily discloses a disability, can inquire whether applicant can perform the job notwithstanding the disability or with reasonable accommodation) • Statement that employment offer may be made contingent to applicant passing a job-related physical exam
Arrest Record	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The number and kinds of arrests of an applicant • Misdemeanor convictions for possession of marijuana that are more than two years old 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number and kinds of criminal convictions (must be accompanied by a statement that a conviction will not necessarily disqualify an applicant for employment)



Common Interview Questions

Typically, a wide variety of questions can be used to gain information about a candidate's job skills. Use these questions as guides to help you develop questions that target specific job skill requirements

1. Describe a time when you were faced with problems or stresses at work that tested your coping skills. What did you do?
2. Give an example of a time when you could not participate in a discussion or could not finish a task because you did not have enough information.
3. Give an example of a time when you had to be relatively quick in coming to a decision.
4. Tell me about a time when you had to use your spoken communication skills in order to get a point across that was important to you.
5. Can you tell me about a job experience in which you had to speak up and tell the other people what you thought or felt?
6. Give me an example of when you felt you were able to build motivation in your coworkers or subordinates.
7. Tell me about a specific occasion when you conformed to a policy even though you did not agree with it.
8. Describe a situation in which you felt it necessary to be very attentive and vigilant to your environment
9. Give me an example of a time when you used your fact-finding skills to gain information needed to solve a problem; then tell me how you analyzed the information and came to a decision.
10. Give me an example of an important goal you had to set and tell me about your progress in reaching that goal.
11. Describe the most significant written document report, or presentation that you've completed.
12. Give me an example of a time when you had to go above and beyond the call of duty in order to get a job done.
13. Give me an example of a time when you were able to communicate successfully with another person, even when that individual may not have personally liked you.
14. Describe a situation in which you were able to read another person effectively and guide your actions by your understanding of his/her individual needs or values.
15. What did you do in your last job in order to be effective with your organization and planning? Be specific.
16. Describe the most creative work-related project you have completed.
17. Describe a time when you felt it was necessary to modify or change your actions in order to respond to the needs of another person.
18. Give me an example of a time when you had to analyze another person carefully or a situation in order to be effective in guiding your action or decision.

Common Interview Questions



19. What did you do in your last job to contribute toward a teamwork environment?
Be specific.
20. Give me an example of a problem you faced on the job, and tell me how you solved it.
21. Describe a situation in which you were able to positively influence the actions of others in a desired direction.
22. Tell me about a situation in the past year in which you had to deal with a very upset customer or coworker.
23. Describe a situation in which others within your organization depended on you.
24. Describe your most recent group effort.
25. Describe the worst customer or coworker you have ever had and tell me how you dealt with him or her.