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The Blayze Unguem Employers Interview Guide

“ad unguem”

To seek perfection...

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The Interview

As you interview a candidate, keep in mind that your objective is to determine what the candidate is really saying about him/herself, and to determine if he/she is the right person for the job.

Preparation

You will be at an obvious disadvantage without some fairly comprehensive knowledge of the applicant's qualifications prior to the interview.

With preparation, your line of questioning can be thought out ahead of time and based on the particulars of his/her experience.

Privacy

Unless some unforeseen contingency arises that must be immediately resolved, courtesy dictates that your interview must not be interrupted.

Meeting the Candidate

At the outset, act in a friendly manner, but avoid prolonged small talk – interviewing time costs money.

- Introduce yourself by using your name and title.
- Mention casually that you will take notes ("You don't mind if I take notes, do you?")

Avoid a Hasty First Impression

Consider the first few moments as a warm-up period and avoid the temptation of forming a quick impression, positively or negatively.

Be Enthusiastic

People like people who like them. They are also conditioned to think of an 'interview' as a potentially hostile situation and be on their guard.

Consequently, you should be upbeat and positive. Do this genuinely if you can. Otherwise, engage your 'sincerity simulator'.

Sell the Position

Most interviewers are so intent on evaluating the candidate that they fail to sell the positive aspects of the position and their company.

To maximize hiring results, determine what the candidate hopes to obtain in a position and realistically emphasize the benefits your company has to offer in relation to those desires.

*Different perks appeal to different people
Personalise the interview as much as possible*

Job Definition

Avoid any grey areas by making the job description as clear as possible.

Realistically define the paths of upward mobility that can lead to increased responsibility based on merit.

Be very careful not to oversell, as this can lead to discontent and staff turnover at a later date if expectations are raised and not met.

Shut up

You should be talking about 10-20% of the time at most. (This is a common weakness and can often lead to you interviewing yourself!)

Listen Hard

Sometimes you can pick up a word or a phrase in an answer which you can play back to the interviewee and get something much more intimate, interesting or honest.

Interviews aren't scripted Q&A's, they are intense professional conversations and you need to concentrate.

Capture the basic information

Use a template form for interviews that captures all the basic details for any notes you want to make, this will make it much easier to compare afterwards and help make sure that nothing is forgotten.

Don't Get Lost in the Detail

Matching technical experience to the technical specifications of the job is the easy part.

The most difficult and most important, calls for matching the attitude and personality of the individual with the job atmosphere and corporate culture of your organization.

It calls for an appreciation of the intangibles of the individual and empathy for the often delicate nuances of the job.

Look at the whole picture

Get past the canned speech

If the interviewee has prepared, it means you may have to listen to prepared statements and answers. Sometimes you have to let people do their duty and then you can get to the interview.

Building a rapport with them on non-controversial subjects (like their recent career history) can put them at their ease.

Don't try to trick people into saying something they don't want to say. Try to trick them into saying something in a natural, human way. A good interview sounds like an intelligent conversation over coffee not a stand-up PowerPoint presentation.

Don't Lose Control

Sometimes, especially with self-important interviewees, you can get into a bit of a tug-of-war over who is in charge of the interview.

Never forget that you are the CEO of the interview.

You don't have to be bossy, but it is important that you get what you need from the interview and you steer it in the direction you want to go.

Skilled interviewees will adroitly "steer" the interviewer with wide ranging questions on company policy, products, etc.

This is acceptable and expected within limits, but chances for a penetrating, revealing interview of the candidates are smothered in the process.

Focus on what you need

Sometimes people get absorbed in detail or start to waffle and abstract. Sometimes you need a specific quote or a good story.

A timely intervention is sometimes required to redirect the interview.

Phrases like 'do you have any stories that illustrate that point,' or 'how does this relate to the bigger picture' can be very useful ways to do this.

Identify the Real Applicant

There are “two” candidates present in most interviews . . . the “real” applicant and the role playing his/her perception of what you are looking for in the ideal candidate.

Naturally every candidate wants to appear in the most favourable light. You must however, distinguish between the real and the make believe.

To do this, **use open-ended questions and focus on two primary areas - attitudes toward work and attitudes toward people.**

Interview Questions

Interviewing is not an easy task. Below are a few sample questions that have been developed to elicit information about the candidate and his/her experience and to help determine how that person will fit into a particular company or position.

- You should always ask the same questions of each individual, you will be able to make a better comparison.
- Ask clear concise questions in a conversational tone.
- Ask open-ended questions which will force complete answers. "Why do you say that?"
- Don't ask direct questions that can be answered "yes" or "no."
- When the candidate answers your questions, ask for an example of past behaviour that illustrates his/her answer.
- Ask questions that are relevant to the role, there is no point asking a candidate about management style when they are not going to have that responsibility. Keeping it relevant will also help the Candidate know that you are focussed in what you are looking for.
- Remember you should never ask questions about race religion, age, ethnic background, sexual preferences, and marital status or health issues.

Questions Relating to the new Job / Company

- Why do you want this job?
- What qualities do you think will be required for this job?
- What can you contribute?
- Why do you want to work for this company?
- What do you know about this company?
- What interests you about our product (or service)?
- What can we (the new company) offer that your previous company cannot offer?
- You have not done this sort of job before. How will you cope/succeed?
- Why should we employ you?
- How long do you think it would be before you were making a significant contribution to the team/company?
- How ambitious are you?
- What do you like and dislike about the job we are discussing?
- What are you looking for in a new job?
- What would you like to avoid in your next job?
- You may be over qualified for this position?
- Are you prepared to relocate?
- Are you willing to travel?
- What level of salary are you looking for now?

Questions Relating to the Current / Previous Job

- How much does your last job resemble the one you are applying for?
- What are the differences?
- What do you think of the last company you worked for?
- Why did you join your previous company?
- Did they live up to your expectations?
- Why are you leaving now?
- Explain the organizational structure in your last company and how you fitted into it?
- What did you think of your manager/supervisor?
- How did you get on with your previous manager/supervisor, co-workers and subordinates?
- What did you do on a day to day basis?
- Did you increase sales or profits in your last job?
- Have you reduced costs at your last company?
- Did you feel you progressed satisfactorily in your last job?
- What problems did you encounter in your last job?
- What annoyed you about your last job?
- What did you earn in your last job?

Career related Interview Questions

- Why did you choose a career in ...?
- Why are you changing careers?
- What are your career goals?
- How long have you been looking for a new job?
- Do you prefer to work in a small, medium or large company?
- What would your ideal job be?
- Are you considering any other positions at the moment?
- Have you ever been fired?
- How often are you off sick?
- What will your referees say about you?

List of interview questions relating to the Candidate

- How would you describe yourself?
- How would others describe you?
- Do you consider yourself successful?
- What was your greatest success?
- How did you achieve it?
- What has been your biggest failure?
- How could you improve yourself?
- Are you a leader?
- How do you handle criticism?
- What sort of manager are you?
- What makes a good manager?
- Do you work well with others? Or are you a loner?
- Do you need other people around to stimulate you or are you self-motivated?
- Are you accepted into a team quickly?
- Can you act on your own initiative?
- How do you run a meeting?
- What motivates you?
- What management style gets the best results out of you?
- Do you know how to motivate other people?
- Are you competitive?
- Are you aggressive?
- What do you dislike doing?
- Do you feel you are ready to take on greater responsibilities?
- Can you work under pressure?
- What interests do you have outside work?

Close the Interview

Explain the next step in the interviewing process:

How many other applicants are being considered?

Will there be a second interview?

When is the position expected to be filled?

Guard against giving the applicant the idea that he/she has made an extremely favourable impression, even by implication.

If there is an interest, let the candidate know, but leave a way to gracefully back out in case a later prospect is far more qualified.

Be Friendly but non-committal

Decisive Action

Delays stretching out the hiring process have cost many Companies prime employees.

Keep the length and number of interviews consistent with the level of responsibility under consideration.

Keep in touch with the candidate though Blayze Unguem during the decision period to show your continued interest.

Above all, **keep your commitments!** Nothing turns a candidate off faster than promises not kept.

Additional Documents

Blayze Unguem truly understands what you have to go through in the process of hiring new talent and because of that knowledge we consistently deliver an unparalleled level of communication and service. Blayze Unguem offers Clients a further comprehensive range of [Value Added Services](#), but for a confidential discussion regarding your potential or ongoing employee issues, or for professional career advice, please contact Bradley Elliott on 0345 11 22 828 or drop us an email at info@blayze-unguem.com.