

Interviewing for Exceptional Hires at NYU: Quick Tips

*As an interviewer, you play a key role in helping to ensure NYU's employee selection process is conducted in a consistent and effective manner. Before interviewing a candidate or serving on an interview panel, we strongly encourage you to complete the 30 minute online course **Interviewing for Exceptional Hires** (LDR 650) available on NYUiLearn. Here are some quick tips covered in that course.*

Before the interview:

- Prepare for the interview by reviewing the job description of the position for which you are hiring and the candidate's application, resume, and cover letter. Additionally, consider preparing interview questions in advance so that you can better focus on the candidate's responses.

During the interview:

- Conduct the interview in a private, comfortable space. Seat yourself closest to the exit so the candidate cannot obstruct your exit in case of an emergency.
- Make the candidate comfortable with a warm welcome, including starting on time, removing distractions, making introductions, building rapport, and providing an overview of the interview agenda.
- As a general matter, 20% of your questions should be general, 20% technical, 20% about fit, and 40% behavioral:
 - **General** questions help you get to know the candidate and help the candidate get warmed up (e.g., Tell me about yourself. Why do you want to work at NYU? What is your proudest accomplishment?)
 - **Technical** questions dig deeper into key areas of responsibility (e.g., Tell me how you would use social media to attract applicants. Tell me about the most complex Excel spreadsheet you created.)
 - **Fit** questions helps assess whether the candidate would succeed in the position (e.g., What kind of supervisor do you like? What aspects of your job are most crucial?)
 - **Behavioral** questions ask the candidate to provide specific, concrete evidence of how they have handled work challenges similar to those they will find in the role they are interviewing for (e.g., Tell me about your most difficult client and what you did to build a positive relationship with them. If you had it to do over again, would you do anything differently? How did you handle the last time your supervisor was wrong and you were right? Were you ever in a situation where you had too many things to do in the time available? What happened and how did you handle it?)
- Interview questions should be job-related. The chart below provides some examples of acceptable and unacceptable interview inquiries. If you have any questions about a given interview question, please check with Human Resources **BEFORE** asking the question during an interview.
- Close the interview by asking, "What questions do you have?" Let the candidate know what the next steps in the hiring process are, and that the candidate can contact the Recruiter if the candidate has any questions about the process. NYU makes a point of following up with all candidates we interview. Finally, escort the candidate back out to the waiting area, thanking the candidate for the candidate's time.
- If you feel uncomfortable at any time during an interview, excuse yourself. If you need to cut an interview short say something like, "I have all the information I need at this point. Thank you for coming in."

After the interview:

- Finalize and retain any of your interview notes summarizing your assessment of the candidate.

*To learn more and prepare further for your role as Interviewer, complete the 30 minute online course **Interviewing for Exceptional Hires** (LDR 650) available on NYUiLearn.*

Acceptable and Unacceptable Questions

- ***Age***—Unacceptable: Questions about age, date of birth, or dates of attendance or completion of school. Acceptable: A statement that age will be verified for legal age requirements (e.g., are you at least 18 years of age? If not, can you submit a work permit upon hire?)
- ***Birthplace or Citizenship***—Unacceptable: Questions about the birthplace or citizenship of an applicant, or regarding the applicant's parents, spouse, or other relatives. Acceptable: Are you authorized to work in the United States?
- ***Caregiver Status***—Unacceptable: Questions regarding child care, the care of a relative with a disability, or the care of any other person with a disability who lives with the applicant.
- ***Color or Race***—Unacceptable: Questions about the race of the applicant or color of his or her skin; requiring that a photograph be affixed to an application; requesting that the applicant submit a photograph at his or her option; requiring a photograph after the interview but before employment. Acceptable: A statement that a photograph may be required after hire.
- ***Credit Standing or Criminal Record***—Unacceptable: Asking the applicant about his or her credit standing or criminal record.
- ***Disability or Predisposing Genetic Characteristics***—Unacceptable: Asking if the applicant has any mental or physical conditions, or other impairments; about the applicant's general health; about any predisposing genetic characteristics, or if the applicant has ever received worker's compensation benefits. Acceptable: Is the applicant able to perform the essential functions of the position for which he/she has applied with or without reasonable accommodation?
- ***Ethnicity or National Origin***—Unacceptable: Questions about the ethnicity or nationality of the applicant or the applicant's spouse, parent, or other relatives; the applicant's native tongue; how the applicant acquired the ability to read, write, or speak a foreign language. Acceptable: Asking the applicant about foreign languages the applicant reads, speaks or writes, if job-related.
- ***Familial, Marital, Parental, Partnership, or Pregnancy Status***—Unacceptable: Questions regarding the name of a spouse/domestic partner, parent, or child; concerning the number or ages of children or dependents; about pregnancy, childbearing or birth control; whether the applicant is a victim of domestic violence. Acceptable: Statement of policy regarding work assignment of employees who are related. Asking for the names of the applicant's relatives already employed by the University.
- ***Gender, Gender Identity, Sexual Orientation***—Unacceptable: Questions about an applicant's gender, gender identity, or sexual orientation.
- ***Organizations***—Unacceptable: Requiring that the applicant identify all organizations, clubs, societies, and lodges to which he or she belongs. Acceptable: Asking about membership in organizations that the applicant considers relevant to his or her ability to perform the job.
- ***Prior Lawsuits***—Unacceptable: Asking if the applicant has filed a past lawsuit, complaint, or charge.

- **Religion or Creed**—Unacceptable: Questions regarding the applicant’s religion, doctrine, or beliefs; religious days observed; if the applicant’s religion or creed prevents him or her from working weekends or holidays. Acceptable: A statement of regular days, hours, or shifts to be worked.
- **Salary History**—Unacceptable: Inquiring about an applicant’s prior salary, benefits, or other compensation (collectively, “salary history”). Acceptable: Informing the applicant about the position’s proposed or anticipated salary or salary range; without inquiring about salary history, engaging in discussion with the applicant about his or her expectations with respect to salary, benefits and other compensation; inquiring into the objective measure of the applicant’s productivity such as revenue, sales, or other production reports; considering an applicant’s salary history where the applicant disclosed his or her salary history voluntarily and without prompting.
- **Unemployment Status**—Unacceptable: Asking if the applicant is currently unemployed. Acceptable: Asking if the applicant has a current and valid professional or occupational license; a certificate, registration, permit, or other credential; a minimum level of education or training; or a minimum level of professional, occupational, or field experience. Asking if the applicant is currently employed by the University.