

Helpful Tips When Creating Interview Questions

Determine ahead of time what you are looking for when hiring your student employee. This will be very helpful when developing your interview questions. Here are some sample questions and helpful tips depending on what you want to know.

Ask Each Candidate the Same Questions

Create a list of questions ahead of time and ask all the applicants the same questions so that it is fair and equitable; although individual experiences and follow up questions may send you down different paths.

Job Specific Questions:

1. Provide an example of a time in your life where you had to stand out as a leader. What characteristics do you contribute to people you view as leaders in your life?
2. What do you feel are the three most important ways you will demonstrate professionalism in this career Peer mentor's role?
3. What about Fresno State and the community you go to school in provides you with the most pride? Tell me how you would showcase that pride to the students and parents you talk to.
4. Tell me about a positive customer service experience you have had in the past, what stood out to you that made it positive?
5. Please provide me a time where you went above and beyond the call of duty to get a job done? What was the end result?

Culture/Enthusiasm/Motivation Questions:

1. What do you know about this position/department?
2. Why do you want to work for the Career Development Office?
3. What motivates you on the job?
4. How would your colleagues/classmates/co-workers describe you?
5. What makes you the right fit for this position?
6. What does the perfect working environment consist of for you?
7. What sets you apart from the other candidates that we have interviewed?

Behavioral Based Questions: Use of past behavior to indicate future performance

1. Describe a time when you were required to use...
 - Problem-solving skills
 - Adaptability
 - Leadership
 - Conflict resolution
 - Multi-tasking
 - Initiative
2. Think of a difficult person or situation you have had to deal with on your last job. Tell us exactly what happened and how you handled the situation.
3. Tell us about an important goal you have set in the past and how successful you were in accomplishing it.

Inappropriate Questions

Ask only job-related questions. These are a few of the topics that should be AVOIDED:

1. Age/Gender - Generally, these questions should never be asked. If you believe these may be appropriate questions related to your specific position requirements, please contact your Human Resources Office.
2. Convictions - law enforcement agencies are exempt from this restriction. If you believe this may be an appropriate question related to your specific position requirements, please contact the Human Resources Office.
3. Residence - only as it pertains to future contact of the applicant.
4. Family/Marital Status - never appropriate.
5. Financial Status - never appropriate.
6. Race/Religion/Creed/National Origin - never appropriate.

Individuals with Disabilities - Discussing Disability during the Interview Process

Federal and state laws prohibit discrimination based on disability. Fresno State is required to provide reasonable accommodations for any otherwise qualified disabled person. This issue should be addressed only after a person has been offered employment.

No candidate should be asked if he/she has a disability. If a candidate initiates a discussion about his/her disability (whether visible or not), the interviewer should respond in a manner that clearly states that our interest is to find the best-qualified person for the job, and that Fresno State does provide reasonable accommodation for employees at their request. Focus your comments and questions on the duties and responsibilities of the job.

Pre-employment inquiries can be made regarding an individual's ability to perform job-related functions. Focus on *what* needs to be performed rather than *how* it needs to be performed. For example:

1. This position requires moving boxes and other objects weighing up to 50 lbs. Can you do this?
2. Do you have a driver's license? (If the job requires driving as an essential function.)
3. This position performs computer data entry 50% of the time. Can you enter data into a computer four hours per day?

An interviewer must not ask questions that are directly about a disability or that could indirectly elicit information about a disability. Pre-employment inquiries cannot be made regarding the nature or extent of an applicant's disability. For example:

1. Do not ask the applicant about any visible physical characteristics, i.e., scars, burns, and missing limbs.
2. Do not ask if the applicant is in good health.

Evaluating Performance - What to consider:

1. **Alertness:** How appropriately did the student answer the interview questions and how well did they think on their feet?
2. **Ambition/Motivation:** Did they show the desire to get ahead, learn new things, and be successful?
3. **Attitude:** Did they come across excited to be there and did they show that they wanted the job and could do what is required?
4. **Conversation:** Did the student speak well and answer the interview questions while asking follow-up questions when necessary?
5. **Experience:** Does the students' background match the job description and requirements?
6. **Sociability:** Was the student generally a positive person that you enjoyed being around?
7. **Suitability:** How does the students' personality and knowledge fit in with the work environment you have or want to establish?

Ending the Interview

We recommend ending the interview by telling the candidate what to expect next and allowing the student candidate to ask questions:

1. Part of Fresno State's hiring process includes checking references. Do we have all of the information we need to check your references on your application?
2. Do you have any questions for us?

Interviewing International Students

The process of obtaining work authorization varies in terms of time and complexity, depending upon the type of visa status for which the individual is qualified. The Office of International Student Services and Programs is available to assist departments with this process; however, concern about national origin discrimination in the workplace requires careful attention to the phrasing of work eligibility-related questions. The following question is an appropriate one to ask in order to obtain information about work eligibility:

“Employment at Fresno State is subject to verification of an applicant's identity and eligibility for employment as required by immigration laws. If hired, will you be able to provide evidence that you are legally permitted to work in the United States?”