



## **Top 10 tips for successful interviews**

If you have a job to fill, the way to go about it is to interview at least one person and ideally several.

Right?

Maybe not. It depends on the interview. Because research has shown that unstructured interviewing has as much chance of selecting the right person for the job as tossing a coin.

If you select the wrong person, you've lost a significant sum in advertising costs, agency fees, interview time, training time and costs, internal disruption and lowered morale. Plenty of research has shown that the cost of getting it wrong is two or three times the annual salary of the individual.

If the interview process casts you or your business in an unfavourable light as an employer, it's likely the applicant you want for the role will turn you down. And the others you interviewed will pass on their negative impressions to their friends and family. You may even lose customers and local reputation.

Here are our top tips for identifying the right person for the job so that you have a significantly better chance of selecting the right person than tossing that coin.

And when you've found the right person, how to make sure they want to accept your offer:

- 1** Analyse what you're looking for and how you'll recognise it
- 2** Screen out the no-hopers before interview so you use your interview time effectively
- 3** Plan beforehand which parts of the individual's CV you'll focus on and core questions for all applicants. Structuring the interview does improve its ability to predict performance in the job.

- 4 Bring out the best in each applicant with good listening and questioning
- 5 Make sure you don't ask illegal questions but face up to sensitive ones
- 6 Assess what you hear objectively and analytically against the requirements for the job. Gather information systematically in order to predict how the applicant would be likely to perform in the job.
- 7 Screen out any personal, irrational biases as they will skew your assessment:
  - **The self-fulfilling prophecy effect** - making up your mind about an applicant in the first few minutes then spending the rest of the interview confirming you were right by the sort of questions you ask and the non-verbal feedback you give the applicant. The first impression becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy.
  - **The stereotyping effect** - assuming that particular characteristics are typical of members of a particular group. Some people even make stereotyped assumptions about people with red hair.
  - **The halo and horns effect.** Once interviewers rate candidates as 'good' or 'bad' in some aspects, they often replicate this judgement across the board, reaching unbalanced decisions.
  - **The similar-to-me effect - where the interviewer gives** preference to candidates they perceive as having a similar background, career history, personality or attitudes to themselves. The result is a team of clones of the manager.
  - **The personal liking effect** - making decisions on the basis of whether they personally like or dislike the candidate.
- 8 Let applicants demonstrate to you what they've found out about the company and what they want to know about the job.
- 9 Use ability tests and personality profiles to supplement your judgement at interview
- 10 Communicate the decision within the timeframe you gave the applicant.

**Recruiting doesn't have to give you a headache or damage your company's image, but you do need to be prepared, in control and know what you're looking for.**

**Need help with an upcoming recruitment exercise? - defining what you're looking for and how you'll recognize it, wording the advert, questions to ask at interview, coaching in interview skills, decision making?**

**Email The Human Resource on [enquiries@thehr.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@thehr.co.uk) to arrange a no-obligation chat.**

