

Interview Guide for Employing Young People



Introduction

Young people entering the workforce—especially those without previous employment—bring unique perspectives shaped by a digital age. They often value flexible work arrangements, competitive compensation, and a strong work-life balance. This guide is designed to help you create a positive and effective interview process that not only assesses a candidate’s potential but also provides a welcoming first experience with your business.



1. Preparing For The Interview

- **Be Organised and Prepared:**
 - Have the applicant’s resume/profile ready (either digital or hard copy).
 - Familiarise yourself with the candidate’s background and any available information before the interview.
- **Set Up a Positive Environment:**
 - Choose a quiet, well-lit space free from interruptions.
 - Ensure all devices are on silent mode and notifications are turned off.
- **Communicate Clearly:**
 - Provide the candidate with clear instructions about the interview process.
 - Offer a point of contact for any questions they might have before or during the interview.
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2. Conducting The Interview

Remember that for many young candidates, this may be their first formal job interview. Aim to create a supportive and friendly atmosphere by:

- Greeting the candidate warmly and thanking them for their time.
- Explaining the interview format and what you hope to learn about them.
- Being patient and understanding if the candidate appears nervous.



3. Key Interview Questions & What They Reveal

Getting to Know the Young Person:

- **"Can you tell me a little bit about yourself?"**
- *What to look for:*
 - Clarity and confidence in self-presentation.
 - Genuine enthusiasm and interest in the role.
- **"What interests you about this position?"**
- *What to look for:*
 - Understanding of the role and alignment with personal values or career goals.

Additional Questions to Build Comfort:

- **"Tell me about your day today."**
- *Insight:*
 - How they structure their day, manage responsibilities, and create routines.
- **"Do you participate in any extracurricular activities (e.g., sports, clubs, volunteer work)?"**
- *Insight:*
 - Initiative, teamwork, and passion beyond academic settings.
- **"What do you like to do for fun with your friends or family?"**
- *Insight:*
 - Social skills, work-life balance, and personal interests.
- **"Were there any lessons at school that you particularly enjoyed?"**
- *Insight:*
 - Academic interests, strengths, and potential areas for growth.

- **"Can you recall a time when you had to work on a school project that wasn't particularly interesting? How did you handle it?"**

Insight:

- Ability to self-motivate and persevere through less engaging tasks.

Position and Skill-Based Questions:

- **"Can you tell me about a time when you had to juggle multiple tasks at once? How did you manage?"**

Insight:

- Time management, organisational skills, and multitasking ability.

- **"What do you expect to learn from this job?"**

Insight:

- Openness to learning, personal growth, and long-term career aspirations.

- **"Describe a problem you solved using technology."** (For tech-reliant roles)

Insight:

- How they leverage digital skills to overcome challenges.
- This may show ways the candidate is leveraging this unique generational trend to improve their lives as opposed to just taking tech for granted.

- **"Tell me about a time you had a conflict with a supervisor, teacher, or in a group. How did you resolve it?"**

Insight:

- Conflict resolution skills and accountability in teamwork settings.

- **"Do you work well in a team?"**

Insight:

- Collaboration skills and willingness to work as part of a collective effort.

Additional Considerations:

- **Discuss any factors or circumstances that might impact the candidate's ability to perform the role.**
- Note:
 - Approach this question sensitively and focus on any support or accommodations that might be needed.





4. Questions To Avoid

To ensure fairness and compliance with employment laws, avoid questions that may be seen as discriminatory. For example, do not ask about:

- Marital status or family plans
- Race, ethnicity, or religion
- Disabilities (instead, focus on whether any factors might impact work duties and what accommodations might help)
- Personal circumstances unrelated to job performance



5. Interviewing Tips

Body Language & Engagement:

- **Maintain Eye Contact:**
Whether in person or virtual, eye contact helps build rapport.
- **Active Listening:**
Avoid distractions (e.g., checking your phone) and show genuine interest in the candidate's responses.
- **Friendly Demeanour:**
A smile and a warm tone can help ease interview nerves.

Creating a Positive Interview Experience:

- **Start on a Positive Note:**
Thank the candidate for their time and express your excitement about learning more about them.
- **Be Supportive:**
Reassure candidates that it's normal to feel nervous, and be open to clarifying any uncertainties they may have.
- **Provide Feedback:**
If possible, offer constructive feedback after the interview to help the candidate improve for future opportunities.



6. Addressing Unconscious Bias

Unconscious bias refers to the automatic judgments we make based on our backgrounds and experiences. These biases can inadvertently affect recruitment decisions. To minimise bias:

- Focus solely on job-related skills, experiences, and potential.
- Use standardised interview questions for all candidates.
- Remain aware of your personal biases and continuously work to challenge them.
- Create a diverse interview panel if possible.

By recognising and addressing unconscious bias, you ensure a fair process that fosters diversity, belonging, creativity, and a stronger overall team.



Conclusion

Employing young people, especially those without prior work experience, is about recognising potential and providing them with the opportunity to grow. By following these guidelines, your business can create an interview process that is respectful, insightful, and beneficial for both the candidate and your organisation.

For further assistance or to tailor this guide to your specific business needs, please feel free to reach out.