

The Hiring Manager Interviewing Structure

Understanding the Proper Steps of the Effective Selection Interview

Directions

This is a useful planning tool to help you structure and conduct your selection interviews. This is a well-tested approach where each step has a specific purpose that should be completed, before you move on to subsequent steps. Failure to follow the steps in sequence can result in the introduction of possible bias of candidate response and possible negative impact to the reliability and validity of the information gained.

Step Explanation

Introduction

Get the candidate to engage in small talk in order to build rapport. You will want to get the person as comfortable as possible so that they are able to clearly think and answer questions. Provide refreshments and observe for discomfort. A cold mechanistic start is a real turn off to candidates. Be warm and open. Thank them for being there.

Structure

The hiring manager explains the agenda of the session and makes clear the expectations and the plan and sequence of steps in this interview. The manager sets the ground rules so that you control the meeting, not the other way around. This includes "I will ask my questions first, and then you can ask me questions later in the interview."

Work History

Ideally, this step should be performed on the telephone before scheduling the candidate in for face to face interviews. Why? Probing work history in detail often eliminates many candidates and saves time. The reason you do this early is that a clear understanding of Work History provides a context for asking your prepared questions. Work History consists of responsibilities, accomplishments, and successes and lessons learned.

Body

This is the heart of the interview where you ask in-depth behavioral questions about how the candidate has handled various situations and then probe their responses for lots of example of what they did and why. Write your questions down in advance so that you will be thorough. This is the largest and most critical part of the interview so allocate enough time to do it well. Take notes and make sure you follow a line of inquiry that gets to how the person performed their job. Good follow up questions are intended to create a "movie in your mind" meaning you should be able to picture clearly

how they went about doing their job. You will know what a typical work day and work week looks like for them.

Self-Assessment

After you have asked your most detailed questions, it can be useful to gain a balanced perspective of the candidate by asking them to describe what they think their strengths and weaknesses are. Be careful, candidates are often coached to “spin” their answers to this commonly asked question. You will want to probe for specifics in order for this information to be useful.

Describe the Position

It is important that you describe the position in detail after you have asked most of your questions, so that you do not bias their responses. At this point of the interview you can safely give them more detail of what you are looking for. Lay it out clearly.

Probe Their Thinking

Following your description of the attributes you are looking for, you will want to ask them questions about how well they think they map up to your requirements.

Answer Candidate Questions

This is where you turn the interview around and allow the candidate to ask questions. The reason you defer candidate questions about the job to this point of the interview is, again, to prevent biasing their responses. If you prematurely divulge too much about the job, you risk getting answers that consist of lots of spin. Note what they are interested in or concerned about. Provide honest and straightforward information about the challenges of the position.

Influence and Sell

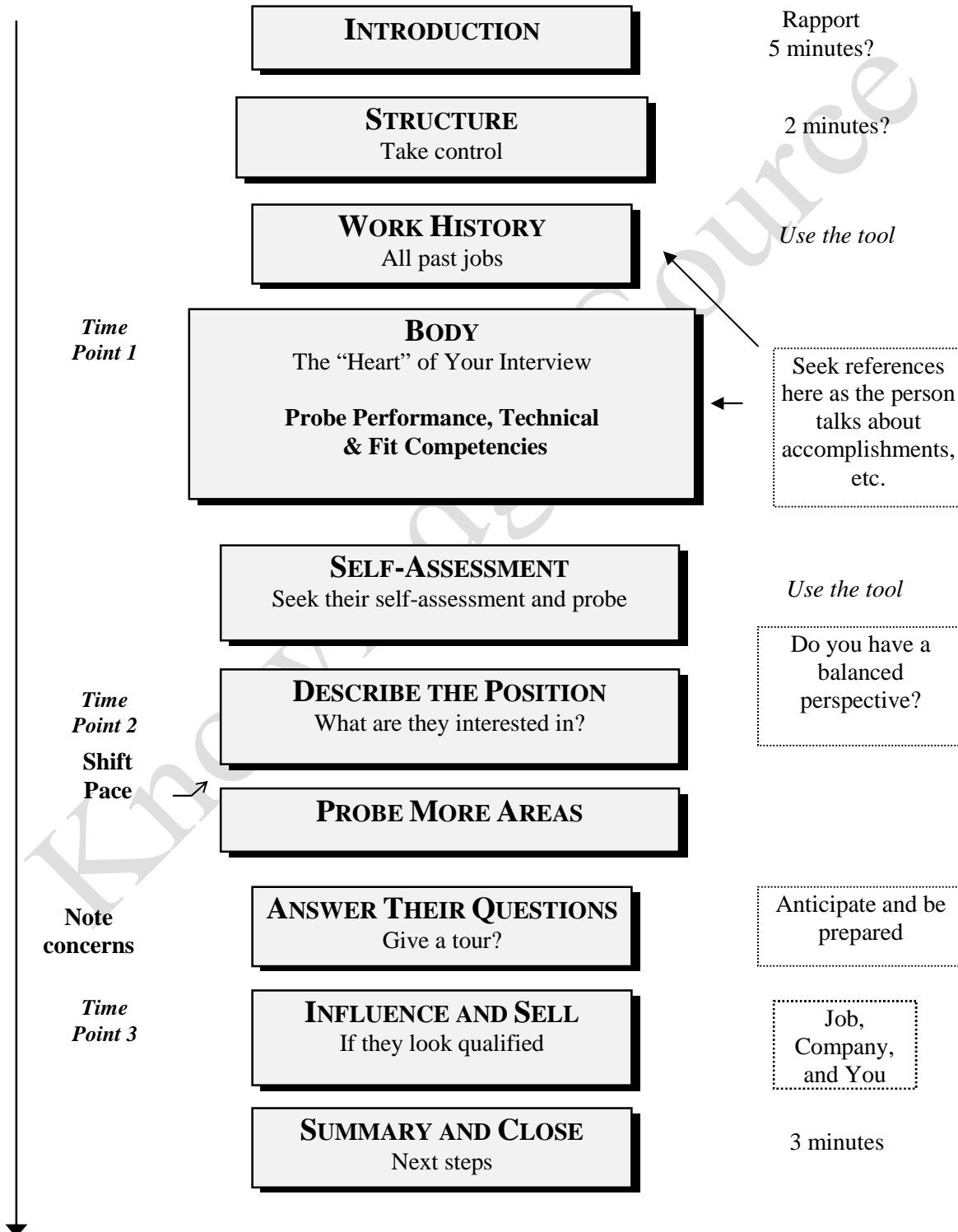
If you think that the candidate might be a good match for the position, you will want to point out the positives you see for them if they might take the job. Candidates expect to hear the positives - so be sure to point them out. However, be careful not to make statements that falsely raise expectations. Talk about the pluses of the job, the advantages of working for you, and why the company might be a good place for them to work at this point of their career. If you don't sell them on the job, you can be sure your competitors will!

Summary and Close

It is vital to end on a positive note. Thank the candidate for their honesty. Thank them for their time. Manage expectations – don't make statements that might imply to them they are going to be hired, if this is not clearly the case. (Example: “You did a really good job in the interview.”) Clearly describe what will happen next in the interviewing process. Manage expectations – if you have more interviews let them know this. When do you expect to be making a decision? How will you notify the candidate?

The Hiring Manager Interviewing Diagram

Understanding the sequence and steps of the interview. Use this for planning.



Knowledge Source