THE DO'S AND DON'TS OF CONDUCTING INTERVIEWS PHILANTHROPY NY-OCTOBER 6, 2016

Jeanne Haws (Wellspring Advisors); Maureen Rayhill (Helmsley Charitable Trust); Maria Pignataro Nielsen (Atlantic Philanthropies); Manisha Mehta (Wellspring Advisors)

Genesis of today's panel

•So much guidance for CANDIDATES about how to conduct an interview – but what about for INTERVIEWERS?

Today's presentation

Conducting interviews for job and team "fit" – Maureen
The Don'ts – interview topics to avoid – Maria
Beyond the interview – using writing samples, real-life situations to assess competence – Manisha
Q&A: What didn't we cover - all

CONDUCTING INTERVIEWS FOR JOB AND TEAM "FIT"

Purpose

Determine whether candidate is a match for the job
Professional/technical capabilities
Interpersonal skills
Inform the candidate about the job and the organization
Sell the job!

Resume Walk Through

- ° Let the candidate tell her/his story
- ° Conversation, not inquisition
- ° Ask follow-up questions best information typically gained here
- ° Listen for substance: Does experience match job requirements?
- Listen for style: Does candidate check in? How does candidate speak about him/herself?
- Listen for preparation: Does candidate connect experience with job requirements?

Technical Questions

- Ask specific questions about skills; Will related experience translate to the role?
- Probe for substance make sure the candidate really possesses required knowledge
- ° Team typically knows better than HR the weeds of a role; we rely on you to do deep dive assessment on candidate's skills

Behavioral Interviewing

Behavioral interviewing is a style of interviewing developed in the 1970's by industrial psychologists. The theory behind behavioral interviewing is that "the most accurate predictor of future performance is past performance in a similar situation". Behavioral interviewing emphasizes past performance and behaviors.

Behavioral Questions

Ask questions that get at how candidate approaches work – leadership, collaboration, adaptability, communication, motivation, time management, customer service, managing stress
Example: "Tell me about a situation when you had a staff member who was a great performer but who then started to show problems: showing up late or missing deadlines. How did you address this?"
Listen for clues about these behaviors when candidate talks about experience – transitions, attribution, decision-making

Gauging the Fit

- ° Experience/Skills; will candidate add value to team?
- ° Interpersonal style; can you envision working with candidate?
- ° Why is candidate interested in role?
- Get candidate to talk about something they are comfortable with and confident about – get more authentic answers and presentation
- What questions did the candidate ask? Did they research? Are they curious?
- ° Meet again

Represent your organization

- ° Candidates interview you as much as you interview them
- ° Allow time to answer candidate questions
- ° Be open, candid, interesting and interested

INTERVIEW DON'TS

What NOT to do in an interview

°Common flaws in interviewing

°Inappropriate questions

Interviewing "common flaws" 1. Being unprepared

- "Winging it" just letting the conversation meander without asking consistent questions to each candidate; not thinking about questions to ask beforehand
- Losing focus; exploring non-pertinent/relevant areas diverging from script and going off on irrelevant tangents.
- For panel interviews not being clear up front who is asking what and sticking to time to make everyone gets to ask what they want to ask

Interviewing "common flaws"

- 2. Losing track and running out of time.
- 3. Talking to much as an interviewer trying to be helpful, but taking away time from learning about the candidate.
- 4. Asking leading questions indicating to the candidate how s/he should answer, or rushing to fill silences/answer questions for him/her.
- 5. Asking poorly designed questions that don't relate to the job.

Interviewing "common flaws"

- 6. Being swayed by charm/interpersonal skills rather than knowledge, skills, experience.
- 7. Letting slide unclear or unsatisfactory answers without following up.

Equal Employment Opportunity Commission – Protected Classes

Race, Color, Religion, National Origin, Sex, Familial Status (Civil Rights Act of 1964)

Age (Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967)

Pregnancy (Pregnancy Discrimination Act)

Citizenship (Immigration Reform and Control Act)

Disability Status (Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990)

Veteran Status (Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act)

Genetic information (Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act)

Why are these "protected classes" relevant?

Because you do not want to ask a question that could lead someone to say, later, that they were discriminated against because of how they answered a question you asked.

You can ONLY ask about a question related to one of these classes if the response is directly related to the candidate's ability to reasonably perform critical aspects of the job.

Per the EEOC

As a general rule, the information obtained and requested through the pre-employment [INTERVIEW] process should be limited to those essential for determining if a person is qualified for the job; whereas, information regarding race, sex, national origin, age, and religion are irrelevant in such determinations.

https://www.eeoc.gov/laws/practices/

ROLE PLAY: NAME THAT "DON"T"

USING WRITING SAMPLES AND REAL WORLD EXAMPLES

Asking candidates to simulate activities before/during the interview

- •In some cases, it's appropriate to have candidates simulate activities similar to what they'd be doing on the job *before* you hire them.
- °The Management Center has suggested a few guidelines for asking candidates for work samples, exercises, or simulations.

http://www.managementcenter.org/article/how-to-ask-jobcandidates-for-work-samples-exercises-or-simulations/

Asking candidates to simulate activities before/during the interview

Pay attention to how you frame the request – respect the candidate's time – explain why you are asking for this.
 Sample language: 'Because we've had a tremendous response to our posting, we're asking the most promising candidates to complete a brief exercise relevant to the work of this position before we interview people directly. We realize this requires a bit of investment of your time, and we appreciate your help in determining if we're a strong fit for one another."

Asking candidates to simulate activities before/during the interview

- 2. Be thoughtful about the time requested. If you are asking for more than a few hours to do a writing exercise, consider compensating them.
- 3. Be ethical don't ask people to develop something for you that you'll actually use (e.g., a press release that you actually need).

The Management Center also has some sample exercise tests they suggest for recruitment --

http://www.managementcenter.org/resources/job-simulation-exercises/

Job-Simulation Exercises

Having candidates complete exercises similar to what they'd be doing on the job can give you a good idea of how they would perform if hired. This list of sample exercises tests for specific qualities.

Position	Must-have	Sample Exercise
соо	Critical thinking, writing	Observe the organization in action (delivering a training session, staging a rally, holding a hearing, etc.) and propose recommendations for improvement in a 2-3 page memo
Manager of programs	Strategic thinking	Read and analyze a set of goals and objectives and come up with recommendations to pursue
Director of communications	Public speaking, judgment	Rehearse a press conference or a call with a reporter about a controversial program we support
Manager of a small- or medium- sized department	General management, staff supervision	Simulate giving positive and corrective feedback to a supervisee
Fundraising associate	Persuasive communication	Write a brief funding proposal or cover letter to a donor

Wellspring experience – the interviews °Prepare, Prepare, Prepare! °First, meet as a team – identify what skills are missing (specific language? Expertise?) °Separately identify all the questions we want to ask °Content/field expertise, overall skills °Scenario questions – experiences we have faced as grantmakers – how would the candidate handle that? •Think about values – humility is a core Wellspring value (it's about the grantees, not us)

Wellspring experience – the interviews

- °Come back as a team, group all questions into categories, review together and narrow them into key questions that we HAVE to ask
- °Then assign questions to individual team members, and be sure to leave time for questions
- •AFTER the interviews debrief quickly after each one – and then come together at the end to identify top choice

Wellspring experience – the writing test

Purpose: to see if the candidate can analyze information in a clear, concise manner.
Process – provide to final 4-5 candidates who are coming for interviews. Give it to them a week before the interviews. Pay \$200 per writing sample.

Wellspring experience – the writing test

- Read a grant proposal and prepare a summary
 Synthesize the goals, strategies, activities, and outcomes compare to Wellspring's strategic framework
 Outline any questions one would ask the grantee
 - Discuss strengths/weaknesses in this proposal what are the challenges? Recommend remediation strategies – ways to monitor/address them.
 - Based on Wellspring's strategy, do you believe the proprosal would be an effective use of funding – why/why not?

Wellspring experience – the writing test

After the writing test has been submitted, the team reviews and discusses the following
Does the candidate write well – is the writing clear, concise?
Did they understand the proposal, our strategy and how this proposal fits into that strategy? Strengths/weaknesses?
What additional questions would they ask?
Anything they missed?

