



8 TIPS FOR INTERVIEWERS TO FIND A PERFECT CANDIDATE

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If you're a manager or business owner responsible for hiring staff you're probably looking for interview tips to make your job a little easier.

If you're new to the role of hiring manager, you're probably more familiar with being on the receiving end of interview questions. And while being interviewed is undoubtedly nerve-wracking, you might be surprised to find that conducting an interview can be just as daunting.

So, we asked **Paul Di Michiel**, a human resources executive and career coach, and **Karen Gately**, a leadership and people-management specialist, for their top tips for interviewers.

1. Preparation is Key

One of the top tips for interviewers includes asking relevant questions based on each candidate's resume, advises Mr Michiel.

"Spend time going through each resume and develop relevant questions around each individual's background and experience.

"Develop an interview guide which can be used for all interviews, ensuring a consistent evaluation of all applicants."

We say ...

Those who fail to plan, plan to fail. Make sure you do your homework when it comes to planning your interview or you may miss a great candidate.

2. Avoid Useless Questions

The trend to ask questions about a candidate's biggest weakness or where they see themselves in x years, or worse, what they would be if they were an animal, car or crayon, is definitely not one of the top tips for interviewers.

"I'm sorry, but you're not Sigmund Freud. How would you even hope to 'analyse' the responses to such questions?"

"Ask relevant, insightful, practical and useful questions that elicit the information you need to make an informed hiring decision."

We say ...

I'd be a yellow crayon because it's a happy colour! Interviews are time-consuming so don't waste time on irrelevant questions – stay on point!

3. Ask Behavioural Questions

One of the most relevant tips for interviewers includes asking behavioural questions to discover whether a candidate's skills match those of the job.

For example, if you're hiring for a customer service role, don't ask '*What customer experience have you had?*', ask instead:

Can you give me an example of where you went above and beyond for a customer?

Can you tell me about a time when you dealt with a challenging customer situation?

These questions directly ask for examples, rather than generalisations.

"If someone has demonstrated these skills in the past, you can be more certain they can replicate these skills in the future."

We say ...

Concrete examples of achievement say more than generalisations. Make sure you ask for demonstrated skills that are critical to the role you're hiring for.

4. Be Polite and Friendly

You liked the candidate enough to schedule an interview, which is taking up their time as well as yours. So, be polite and treat every candidate with respect, advises Mr Di Michiel.

"Throw away the swinging lightbulb – don't play good cop and bad cop! Put the candidate at ease.

"Engage in conversation, have some small talk and allow them to be relaxed enough to perform in the interview.

"Let's face it, most people would rather be the interviewer than the interviewee!"

We say ...

It also makes good business sense to leave a good impression. If candidates leave feeling unsettled or dismissed, what does that say about your business? And consider what they'll say to their friends, family – and social media following! Definitely one of our favourite tips for interviewers!

5. Give the Candidates the Opportunity to Ask Questions

Make sure you focus on engaging in a conversation with the interviewee, rather than launching into an interrogation, said Mr Di Michiel.

We say ...

A conversational tone will glean far more useful information, which you can use to make an informed hiring decision.

6. Be Prepared to be Flexible

Karen Gately, a leadership and people-management specialist, said interview preparation is important, but the interview questions you prepare are unlikely to be the ones you need to ask.

“Discovering the depth and breadth of an individual’s skills and experience, and ultimately suitability for the role typically requires both a structured and flexible approach to interviewing.

“Knowing what you should and shouldn’t ask, starts with understanding the outcomes you need to manage and achieve.

“The questions you ask need to not only help you to accurately assess and select the right person for each job but also build a positive relationship with every candidate as well as comply with the law,” said Ms Gately.

We say ...

We agree, one of the less obvious top tips for interviewers! Prepare, then relax! Use **active listening** skills to ensure you interview each candidate as an individual.

7. Avoid Confusing Interview Questions

Avoid confusing your candidate – another of the important top tips for interviewers! Don’t ask questions that are difficult for candidates to understand.

“Keep in mind that the point of an interview is to gain an accurate insight into each applicant.

“Confusing candidates with overly clever or off-putting questions undermines your own process.”

We say ...

Of all the top tips for interviewers, we agree – keep it simple and stay on point.

8. Stay Within the Boundaries of the Law

Perhaps one of the most critical tips for interviewers is to remain within the law.

In Australia, it’s critical to avoid asking **unlawful interview questions** as anti-discrimination laws protect candidates.

“It is typically unlawful to consider personal characteristics such as someone’s age, race, gender, disability, marital or parental status when contemplating hiring them.

“Equally, asking questions relating to national origin, religion, political opinion, personal attributes or sexual preferences are likely to be regarded as discriminatory.”