



**CARICHAM**  
Centre of Excellence



# OPERATIONAL EXCELLENCE

## Helpful Hints for Interviewing

## Overview

Miriam-Webster dictionary defines "Inter" as a prefix with 8 meanings which all point to a one thing/person relating in some way to another:

1. Between, among, in the midst
2. Reciprocal, reciprocally
3. Located between
4. Carried on between
5. Occurring between, intervening
6. Shared by, involving, or derived from two or more
7. Between the limits of, within
8. Existing between

When we think of an interview, often the mindset is that there is a person or people out there who really want to work for us or who need a job. It is important to remember that the **interview** is a shared experience. The candidate is also deciding whether they actually want to work with you.

While you can spend any amount of time that you determine is best in an interview, depending on your operations, in general, you have approximately 1 hour. This is limited time to obtain the critical information you need to help you determine whether you should select the candidate to become a part of your team or not.

The following hints are provided from a perspective that sees the interview as just that. A view of your organisation from the candidate's perspective as well as a view of the candidate from your perspective. The process is inter-related, hence **interview**.



## Job Description

**Have the job description with you. This is your guide during the entire process.**

**If you don't have a job description make a list of what the person will be responsible for in the position.**

**Create a list of questions that relate to those responsibilities.**

**Make time to talk to other employees who will be working with the new employee on a daily basis to get their feedback on the important questions to ask.**

**Remember that your organisation is an inter-related whole and the new employee is being hired on behalf of the whole organisation, not just by you.**

## Resume

**Review the resume before the interview. Contact the references. Ask them whether they would hire the person again.**

**Have the candidate's resume with you. This guides you in making your questions more relevant to each candidate.**

**Relevant questions demonstrate to the candidate that you took the time to know more about them.**

**Specific details are one sign of a good employer. It makes the candidate aware then you are paying attention.**

**You are making a good impression and you are also letting the candidate know that their work will be assessed similarly.**

## Create the Roadmap

**From the beginning let the candidate know how the interview process will go.**

**Give a brief description of the company.  
Give an overview of the responsibilities of the job.**

**Let the candidate know that that first, you will be asking questions, then they will have a chance to ask you questions.**

**Providing this structure sets up the parameters of the interaction.**

**Providing this structure keeps you both focused during the process.**

**Providing this structure lets the candidate know what to expect and can relax them.**

**Knowing they will have a change to ask questions can prevent interruption of your questions and the flow of conversation.**

## Let Them Talk More

**Listen carefully to what the candidate is saying.**

**Have they answered the question that you asked?**

**There are many tools, services, and much information for candidates on how to perform well during interviews.**

**Candidates can fill the time with words but not really answer the question.**

**Remember they may be nervous. It's your job to get your questions answered.**

**Listening allows you to evaluate the answers and to ask follow up questions.**

## Ask Behavioural Questions

**How the candidate behaves is just as, or more important, than the knowledge and skills they possess.**

**Ask for specific examples of behaviour in the past and performance in the past.**

**Past successes can be a great indicator of future performance.**

**Similarly, past failures, and how they were dealt with, can be a great indicator of future reactions to failure.**

**Ask a few questions that begin with:  
"Tell me about a time when you..."**

## Non-verbal Signals

**You are looking for appropriate dress, eye contact, and other unspoken signals.**

**The candidate is also observing you. They are watching and listening and learning.**

**Be sure your tone is professional and appropriate.**

**Clearly articulate the company's mission and vision along with the job duties.**

**Dress appropriately. Remember to pay attention to your manners as well as to theirs.**

**You are representing your company and department.**

**When you ask questions look at the candidate to note non-verbal changes in their body language. However...**

**Unless you are a psychologist, remember that people may fidget for many reasons.**



## Extend Professional Courtesies

**Be on time. You expect this of employees so demonstrate it from the interview.**

**Offer the candidate a glass or bottle of water. In our climate this is usually kind.**

**You could also give a tour of the office or production area.**

**You could introduce them to colleagues and staff they would be reporting to or working with directly.**

**Determine how much information and interaction is appropriate. This may depend on whether there is a second interview stage.**

## Familiarity & Formality

**Keep all your questions job-related during the interview.**

**In our close communities and our small societies, it is common to be familiar with candidates and/or their friends/family.**

**Chatting increases the risk for hiring on familiarity versus job qualifications.**

**Even if the candidate is not familiar, chatting may cause you to hire based on liking them versus job qualifications.**

**Balance being formal and professional with being polite and courteous. Don't get too "chummy" or familiar.**

**This could send the wrong message to the candidate as well as to other employees.**

## Share the Decision

**Whether it's by email, letter or phone, it's important to follow up.**

**Let the candidate know whether they got the job.**

**Sometimes candidates ask for feedback. You can share what they did or said really well that was impressive.**

**If the candidate was a good fit but another candidate was better, you may tell the candidate that you will keep their information on file for future openings.**

**Balance being kind and encouraging, with being professional.**

**If for some reason the selected candidate does not accept the job, or continue in the position, you can contact the alternate.**

**Remember you are interviewing multiple candidates so assume the candidate is "interviewing" multiple employers.**



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