

Conducting Employment Interviewing

Conducting candidate interviews is normally optional but very important in the selection process. Interviews provide further evaluation of referred candidates' quality of experience, education and training. Interviews must be properly conducted in an impartial and objective fashion. Questions asked of candidates must be strictly job-related, and the interview process and its results must be well-documented. All, some, or none of the referred candidates may be interviewed, unless otherwise specified in a local merit promotion plan or collective bargaining agreement - check with your civilian personnel section (CPS) or career field management team if the position has been identified as a career program covered position.

Interview questions should be prepared in advance and the same job related questions, should be asked of all candidates being interviewed. Some installations further require that the CPS review questions before interviews are conducted to ensure that they are job related, appropriate, and help obtain useful information to further differentiate candidates.

Interviews can be conducted in a face-to-face meeting or over the phone. If candidates are located in the same commuting area, a personal interview is usually appropriate. If they are geographically distant, a telephone interview may be more appropriate. If repeated efforts to contact candidates are unsuccessful, the selecting official should document this fact.

There are three main types of interviews:

- The Exchange of Information is a very limited form of interview in which the manager and candidate discuss the duties of the position to be filled, work schedules, TDY requirements, and other factual matters. It is intended to familiarize candidates with the nature of the position, the work setting, special operating equipment, and other unique aspects of the work environment.
- The Selection Interview is usually a one-on-one meeting between the selecting official and the candidate. The primary purpose of this interview is to provide the manager with additional job related information upon which to base a selection. The majority of interviews are selection interviews, which are used to make further distinctions among referred candidates.
- The Ranking Interview is generally used by the civilian HR function and/or a panel of experts in combination with other factors to determine the final ranking of candidates prior to referral to the selecting official. These types of interviews are less common and are often best suited for professional, highly specialized, or cutting-edge positions.

Interview results should not be given undue weight in determining the best qualified candidate(s). Rather, they should be combined with the results of other assessment methods and evaluation criteria to determine a candidate's final position relative to other competitors.

The Uniform Guidelines on Employee Selection Procedures contained in 29 CFR 1607 apply to all selection procedures used to make employment decisions, including interviews. The guidelines are designed to aid in the achievement of equal employment opportunity without discrimination on the grounds of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, or other non-merit factors.

Related Resources

- [Structured Interviews: A Practical Guide](#)
- [29 CFR 1607, Uniform Guidelines on Employee Selection Procedures](#)