Tips for Success

- **Prepare:** Review the job duties and responsibilities, in addition to the candidate’s application materials prior to the interview.

- **Budget your time:** Consider the time available to conduct the interview relative to the number of questions you want to evaluate.

- **Stay neutral:** Listen attentively but avoid small talk and approving responses. Stick to the structure of the interview and establish an appropriately formal tone.

- **Take notes:** Stay engaged with what the candidate is saying but don’t forget to record your observations during the course of the interview. Key facts and bullet points will keep recollections fresh.

- **Be consistent:** Ask the same questions in the same sequence for each candidate. Ask questions that are relevant to the knowledge, skills, abilities and experience required for the position. Ask follow up questions to probe, general, vague or incomplete answers. Make sure you have enough information regarding the candidate’s skills and experience.

- **Evaluate carefully:** Be careful of rushing judgement. As you progress from the initial questions through the various follow-ups, your assessment of the candidate’s responses may shift positively or negatively. Stay objective and be aware of potential biases that may influence your perceptions during the interview.

- **Avoid questions about...** race, national origin, gender, age, status as a veteran, sexual orientation, pregnancy or marital status, handicap or disability, military discharge, religion, arrest records.

- **80/20 Rule:** The 80/20 rule is a good principle to apply when interviewing. The candidate should be doing about 80% of the talking, leave you with 20% of the time to frame questions, probe for more information and insight, and where appropriate, promote the position so it is attractive to the candidate.

- **Explain the interview process:** Interviews can be quite intimidating for candidates. They may feel nervous at the prospect of being interviewed. You can minimize some of these nerves by “setting the stage” for the candidate. Ask warm-up questions to establish rapport and set the context for the interview.
1. Why did you apply for this position?
2. As you reviewed the responsibilities for this position, what most appealed to you?
3. What experiences have you had that make you a strong applicant for this position?
4. What professional accomplishment are you the most pleased about?
5. What would your current supervisor tell us are your strengths?
6. What would your current supervisor tell us you might do to strengthen your performance?
7. Give us an example of how you identify a new opportunity worth pursuing.
8. Tell us about a time you were in charge of a team and needed to get them focused around common goals.
9. Tell us about a time when you built strong relationships where none previously existed.
10. Describe a time you worked with multiple groups or people who had different interests.
11. Tell us about a time when you had to communicate the same information to different audiences and had to vary your style for each.
12. When you were in a leadership position, tell me how you organized your work load, set objectives and checked in with people.
13. Describe a time when you empowered others.
14. Give us an example of how your work habits change when you don’t know exactly what to do.
15. Describe a project/assignment where the outcomes or process was unclear.
16. Give us an example of your typical problem-solving approach.
17. Tell us about a time that you led the planning for an event or activity. Describe the steps involved and what you did.
18. Give us an example of a project you managed where setting milestones and measuring progress were critical.
19. Describe the most developmental work experience you’ve had.
20. Describe your best experience in either leading volunteers or being a volunteer.
21. What did you do to prepare for this interview?
22. What did you learn as you were preparing?
23. If hired for this position what do you see yourself doing in the first six months?
24. Describe a time you were involved in a conflict. What were the steps taken to resolve the conflict?
25. Describe your system of monitoring progress or keeping track of your various responsibilities.
26. Describe a goal you set for yourself and how you went about meeting that goal.
27. Describe an experience that you have had in working with someone who is different than you in some way.