

Interview Preparation Skills and the Selection Process

Oklahoma Department of Corrections

Course Information

Course name:	Interview Preparation Skills and the Selection Process
Training credit:	1 Hour
Catalog codes:	DOC 516/CLEET#16-2011
Category:	Online in-service; Supervisory
Course author:	E. Thomas, Compliance Specialist; JAN2004
Annual review/revision by:	Valerie Hale, CTS, EDU; 28JULY2016
Human Resource review by:	Kelli Hall; H.R. Management Specialist III, Human Resources
Approved by:	Phil Gilstrap, Training Manager, EDU; 17 AUG2016
Target Population:	All DOC and Supervisors
Date Source:	OP-110235 Hiring and Promotion Procedures; Eff. Date 02/24/2016

Course Objectives

Upon completion of this course each employee will be able to:

Explain the interview process in accordance with OP-110235 Hiring and Promotional Procedures.

Distinguish between behavior and skill as it relates to the interview process.

Examine the process of developing interview questions based on essential job tasks and duties.

Explain the strengths of the structured interview.

Identify competency ratings and their meanings.

Formulate a strategy to assist in preparing for an interview.

Introduction

During your career with our agency, you will most likely apply for a promotion, and you may be asked to participate on an interview committee. In either case, it is important to understand how the interview system works.

This course provides a basic overview of the behavioral-based interview process, which is the method our agency uses for promotional interviews.

The Interview Process

Have you ever wondered just what happens when it is time to fill a vacant position through promotion?

Once the facility/unit has received approval to fill a vacant position, the job announcement will be posted at each work site, and is available for review on our website: <https://www.ok.gov/doc>

Interested employees/applicants can complete a resume/OPM-4B and submit to the hiring unit/person specified on the job announcement. All application documents must be received by the end of the business day, on the closing date indicated on the announcement.

Interested employees/applicants must provide all required documentation which demonstrates possession of the minimum qualifications for the position

The Human Resources Management Specialist (HRMS) will schedule all qualified, eligible and available applicants for an interview and provide notification to those applicants.

It is the responsibility of the employee/applicant to make themselves available for the interview at the selected date and time.



Interview Committee Criteria

Interview committees will normally meet the following guidelines:

- The committee will consist of 3-5 members.
- Each member must have completed agency training in the interview and selection process.
- Each member must occupy a position assigned to a pay band or range equal to or higher than the position being hired.
- The chairperson may not be the appointing authority unless the final hiring decision will be made by that committee.
- No member may be a relative of, residing in the same household as, or in a domestic relationship with any applicant.

Responsibilities of the Committee Chairperson

The chairperson of the interview ensures that:

- The resumes/HCM-4Bs, supporting documents, and performance evaluations are reviewed by the committee.
- All qualified applicants are interviewed and rated, and a record of the interview and selection process is made in accordance with OP-110235.
- All interview applicants are notified of the results of the interview.

The Behavior Consistency Principle

The Department of Corrections interview process is based on the Behavior Consistency Principle, which is a structured interview method. The Behavior Consistency Principle states:

***“The best predictor of future performance is past performance;
the more recent the past behavior, the greater its
predictive power;
and
the more long-standing the behavior, the greater its
predictive power.”***

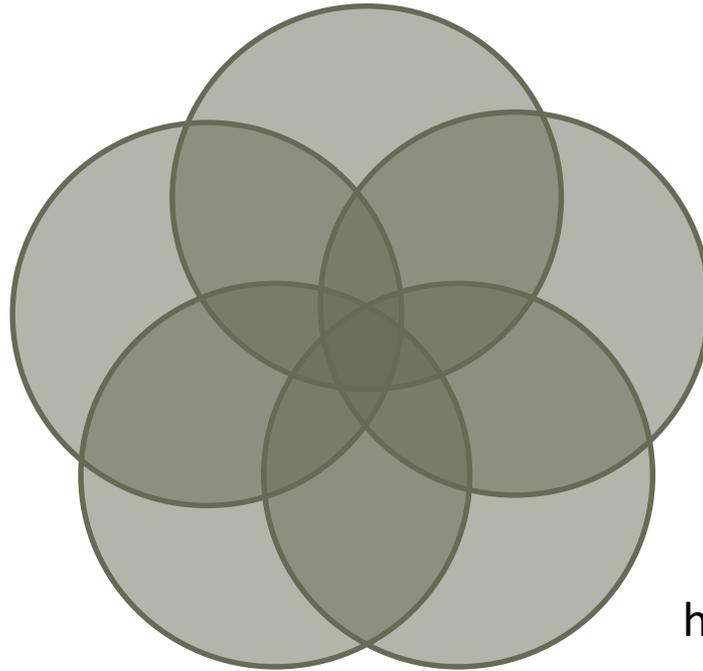


Strengths of the Structured Interview

Bias is reduced because candidates are evaluated on job-related questions, which are based on an analysis of job requirements. Subjective and irrelevant questions are not asked.

Reliability and accuracy are increased.

Job-related questions, uniform ratings and evaluation methods are consistently used for each applicant.



A written account is maintained of questions asked and the applicant's responses.

The results are highly predictive of candidate's job performance.

Pre-determined anchored rating scales are used to evaluate answers to interview questions. This reduces disagreements among interviewers and increases accuracy of judgments.

Procedures used to develop structured interviews are consistent with the advice of professional and governmental guidelines, and thus more legally defensible.

Allow managers to take part in the selection process.

Job related and consistent increases the perception of fairness and also helps candidates get a realistic perspective of the job which in turn may lead to self-screening.

Resume

There are any number of resume templates available on -line

Gets you to the interview

Emphasize accomplishments over responsibilities

Create a new version of your resume for every opportunity

Do not use cliché's- explain what makes you a good candidate in concrete, specific words

Do not cram text in or use a small font size – it has to be readable

Preparing for the Interview

Have a good understanding of the requirements of the position

Talk to someone who holds that position and review the job description

Review the examples you have prepared with someone else (i.e., your mentor/your supervisor)

Use specific, recent, and job related examples if possible

Prepare, in writing, the information you wish to convey about your abilities in each critical skill

Identify 5-7 critical skills used to perform the duties of the position

Practice, practice, practice!

Know what is on your resume

The Interview Questions

- Review the job description thoroughly
- Contact someone who currently holds that position and ask them what they do
- Identify the essential Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities (KSA) and special requirements for the position
- Develop several interview questions for each KSA or special requirements
- Write down your interview answers to the interview questions



Generic Examples of Interview Questions

- Describe a situation in which you had to draw a conclusion quickly and take action
- Describe a decision you have made which was unpopular and how you handled it
- Give me an example of a time when you had to make a decision without all the necessary facts present or without super



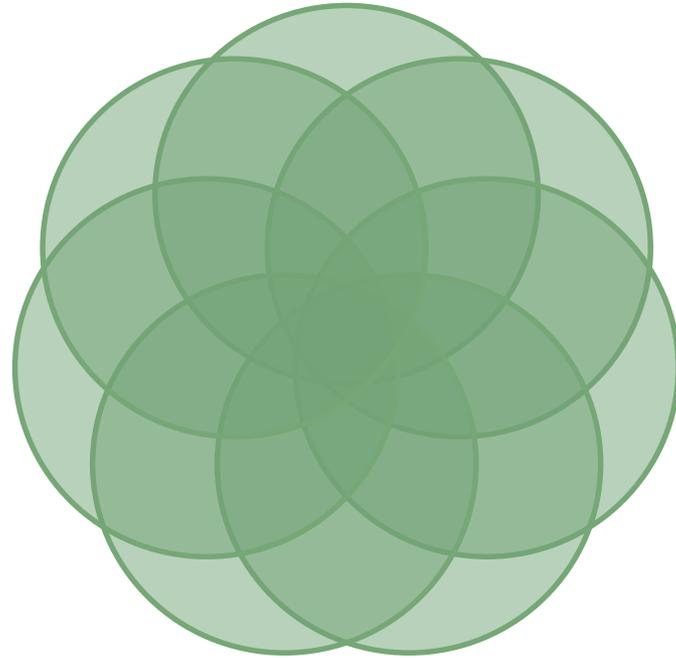
Day of the Interview

Dress appropriately

Arrive early

Tell the committee
what you want them
to know, even if they
don't ask

Make sure you
control the interview
by conveying all
information you want
the panel to consider



Be pleasant, cordial
(to everyone)

Differentiate yourself

Project a positive
image

DRESS FOR SUCCESS

Two-piece dark colored suit

- Appropriate colors: black, blue, gray
- Solid or very light conservative stripes
- Suit jackets are offered as single- or double-breasted. Select the style that fits your industry or personal style.

Crisp white or blue tailored shirt

Conservative tie that reaches mid belt

Polished shoes that match the color of your belt

Dark blue, black, grey or brown socks

- Match your suit - never wear white socks.

Remove body piercings, earrings and any obnoxious/flashy jewelry

Use cologne sparingly

Carry a portfolio folder or professional bag



Two-piece dark colored pants or knee-length skirt suit

- Wear neutral colored panty hose or dark tights if wearing a skirt

Crisp white or blue blouse, tailored shirt, or shell with conservative neckline

Polished, closed toe shoes with a low to moderate heel

- Try to avoid shoes with very high heels

No multiple earrings or gaudy jewelry

Use perfume and makeup sparingly

Nail polish should be a neutral color

Carry a portfolio folder, professional bag, or a simple conservative purse



After the Interview

- Follow up
- If you are unsuccessful, request assistance in identifying areas in need of development, not interview feedback
- Involve your mentor or supervisor in revising your development plan to address these areas



Behavior-based interviewing is built on the premise that past behavior predicts future behavior.

BEHAVIOR BASED INTERVIEW

Behavior-Based Interviewing

The Oklahoma Department of Corrections approach to interviewing focuses on examples of how the applicant has applied his or her skills.

- To understand the behavior-based approach, you must look at your experiences and know how to relate them to the position you are interviewing for.
- Behavior is used to describe a person's past actions and accomplishments, as well as his or her reactions during the behavioral interview.
- A complete description of behavior includes the situation under which an action occurred, the action itself, and the result of that action.

Skill

Skills are behaviors that are observable, measurable, and trainable.

A technical job skill would include activities typically learned in a training program or academy environment.

Examples of technical job skills: typing, computer programming, machine operation, and developing financial statements.

Many times performance skills are learned during an individual's early life and are easily translated from job to job.

Examples of performance skills are work habits that reflect on areas such as: coping, creativity, versatility, interpersonal relations, etc.

KSA

What are KSAs?

Our agency interview process focuses on ***Knowledge, Skills and Abilities*** (KSA), which are required to perform a job and are generally demonstrated through qualifying service, education, or training.

- **Knowledge:** a body of information applied directly to the performance of a function.
- **Skill:** an observable competence to perform a learned psychomotor act.
- **Ability:** competence to perform an observable behavior or a behavior that results in an observable product.

Interview Questions

Conducting quality interviews requires careful and thorough planning. Committee members need to know the knowledge, skills and abilities that are required for the job, then design questions that relate to these KSAs.



Oral Communication



Oral communication typically includes:

- Skill in verbal communication with others.
- Clear presentation of information
- Influencing others in positive and negative situations.



Think about the KSA above, then try to create a question that will measure the points listed above.

Oral Communication

Sample question:

“Describe a situation where you had to make an oral presentation in a difficult circumstance. Be specific as to how you prepared for the presentation and describe the outcome.”



Decision Making

Decision making typically includes the ability to:

- Make decisions with available information.
- Take quick and appropriate action.
- Make decisions without easily changing, when challenged.

Think about the KSA above, then try to create a question that will measure the points listed above.

Decision Making

Sample question:

“Tell me about a time when you had to
‘take a stand’.”



Rating the Applicant

LEVELS OF COMPETENCY

Rating the Applicant

0-1 Low:

- This rating is given when the applicant uses examples of behaviors that represent **LITTLE or NO** knowledge or ability for that skill.

2-3 Medium:

- This rating is given when the applicant uses examples of behaviors that represent **SOME** knowledge or ability for that skill.

4-5 High:

- This rating is given when the applicant uses examples of behaviors that represent **SIGNIFICANT** knowledge or ability for that skill.

Each committee member will rate the applicant's response to each interview question on a scale of 0-5, or low to high.

Prior to conducting interviews, the questions and rating scales will be developed.

The committee will ask the same questions of all applicants.

Committee members will make a written record of the applicants' responses to the interview questions.

Each committee member will rate each response to an interview question from 0 – 5 when compared to the pre-established rating scale of low, medium and high responses.

The applicant's performance evaluation (PMP) will be rated by the committee as a whole, and one score for the PMP, from 0-2 points, will be determined. Applicants for whom PMPs are not available will receive a score of 0, applicants with a rating of "meets standards" or "exceeds standards" will receive 1 point. The scores for each applicant will be totaled and listed on the "Applicant Tracking Worksheet."

Applicants who possess a preferred qualification, which was posted on the job announcement, will receive 2 points.

Any applicants with tie scores will be ranked in the order of their seniority of the department.

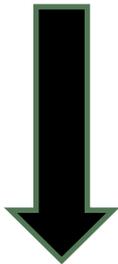
Recommended applicants will be listed on the "Applicant Tracking Worksheet" in alphabetical order.

What to Expect

DURING THE INTERVIEW



You may feel nervous during the interview, which is natural.



This is when your careful preparation, research and rehearsal will help you to interview successfully.

Each committee member will ask you questions based on the position's identified KSAs.



Try your best to relax! This will give you the confidence to do your best, and help to present a professional appearance and demeanor.

Do not be afraid to take your time answering questions. It is ok to be silent while you think; committees are trained to allow silence. It is generally better to think about your answer, then respond, rather than blurt out an inappropriate or irrelevant answer.



If you can not think of an example immediately, it is ok to tell the committee that you need a minute to think. (You may even ask if you may return to that particular question at a later time.)

After the First Interview

What should you expect after your interview is over?

The committee chairperson will contact you and advise if you will be recommended for a second interview.



The Second Interview

Based on the recommendations of the first interview committee, the appointing authority or designee may conduct a second round of interviews of the recommended applicants. The questions will be similar to the questions in the first interview, and:

- Interview questions and rating scales will be developed.
- A written record of responses will be made.
- Responses will be scored from 0-5 and totaled.
- Seniority will be a factor in the event of a tie score.
- The appointing authority may review the applicants' personnel files, and seek reference and verification information from previous employers or supervisors.
- The appointing authority may request other trained employees to assist in conducting final interviews.
- The appointing authority is not required to make any appointment, and may elect to keep a position vacant, re-announce the position, or fill the position through an alternative means such as the lateral transfer or demotion of a permanent employee.

Conclusion

This course was developed to give you a basic understanding of the behavioral interview process, and to give you some tips on how to prepare for your interview.

To learn more about this important subject, you should read the policy that applies to the interview process: OP-110235 Hiring and Promotional Procedures.

