

## Ask Right to Hire Right: Effective Interview Questions

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Looking for a simple, yet effective way to immediately improve your interviewing and staff selection process? Define the [qualities, talents and skills](#) you'd most like to have in a new employee. Then, devise a [series of interview questions](#) that allow your applicant to demonstrate she has the desired qualities, talents and skills.

Many organizations are spending a great deal of time defining competencies for each position. You can, if you have the time and resources to do so. You don't have to embark on a lengthy process, however.

Use a simple job description with a set of [behaviorally-based interview questions](#) to pinpoint the people you want in your organization. When your interview questions ask the applicant to tell you about behaviors and actions she has actually demonstrated in the past, your selection process will improve.

### Identify Characteristics of Your Best Employees

At [ReCellular, Inc.](#), a cellular phone remanufacturing and reuse company in Dexter, Michigan, a team of people put together a list of interview questions that immediately improved their hiring process. The team first defined the qualities, characteristics and basic aptitude they wanted to find in a potential remanufacturing employee. They wanted to find people who shared these characteristics:

- Excellent Attendance and Dependability
- Flexibility
- Integrity and Honesty
- Motivated and Dedicated
- Detail-Orientated
- Team-Orientated
- Strong Work Ethic
- Positive, Polite, and Approachable
- Continuous Improvement Orientated
- Good Communication Skills
- Actual Hands-On Demonstration of Capability to Sort Phones and Identify Cosmetic Problems With Phones

### Develop Interview Questions to Identify These Characteristics

The team then worked with several online resources to structure questions that would indicate whether candidates had these characteristics. No list of questions is totally comprehensive, however, these questions are helping the interviewers find better candidates.

- What made you decide to apply at ReCellular?
- Tell me about yourself and your last/current job/class.
- When we call your previous employer or references what are they likely to tell us in regards to your dependability/attendance?
- Tell me about a time when you demonstrated your trustworthiness or integrity in school or at work.

- Tell me about a time when you were working hard to complete a task and you were asked to leave that task before completing it and start a different job.
- Tell me about a time when you had to go above and beyond the call of duty to get a job done.
- Give me an example of a time when you had set a goal for yourself and tell me how you went about accomplishing it.
- Give me a specific occasion on which you followed a policy with which you did not agree.
- Give me an example of a time when you were able to successfully communicate with another person even when that individual may not have personally liked you (or vice versa).
- Tell me about a time when you improved a task or job you were working on.
- In what kind of a work environment do you do your best work?
- The potential employee then demonstrates the ability to sort phones and identify cosmetic problems on an actual box of phones.

This process is helping the organization select better employees. You can simply, and with a few hours of work, develop a similar list of questions for job applicants.

### **Determine Job Interview Questions in Advance of the Interview**

Determining a list of job interview questions in advance allows comparisons of applicants across interviews. It also assists your organization to take a more team-oriented approach to interviewing and selecting candidates.

When you have a pre-determined list of job interview questions, you need to provide less training to teams of employees selecting new team members. You control the flow of the conversation and avoid asking [illegal interview questions](#).

Your hiring decisions will improve and you'll have a better handle on the characteristics and abilities your applicants will bring to the workplace.

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