

TOOLKIT

Inclusive Interviewing

We are predisposed to look for homogeneity and feel safe surrounded by people who look and feel similar. Establishing inclusive interview processes mitigates bias and welcomes the broadest spectrum of candidates to our industry. A structured, behavioral-based interview approach focuses on tangible skills rather than resume achievements.

This Tool Kit is offered to help firms within the global asset management industry build successful interviewing practices. It can be customized to meet your firm's internal needs and resources, and includes several resources for consideration.

Goals:

- Remove biases from screening process
- Focus on demonstrated core competencies
- Assess candidates consistently and fairly



WHY

The benefits of an inclusive, behavioral-based interview approach are many and include:

- Better understanding of the value offered by candidates
- Identification of the best candidate for the role
- Achieved recruitment goals

HOW

Hiring managers, interview panels, and human resource teams may consider the following steps when developing a plan toward inclusive interviewing:

Pre-Interview: Tips for the Human Resource Team

- ☐ Identify core competencies and skills required for the role.
- ☐ Conduct a pre-screening phone interview (without video) to assess broad alignment with the role and your organization.
- ☐ Construct an interview panel that includes at least (a) direct line management; (b) an individual that interfaces with the role regularly (within OR outside of direct group); (c) an HR/recruitment representative.
- ☐ Construct an interview panel that represents a cross section of gender, race, and age.
- ☐ Provide the interview panel with a competency-based rubric to ensure candidates are being assessed on the same criteria.
- ☐ Pre-assign each interviewer specific competencies to assess.
- ☐ Provide candidates with an explanation of your organization's culture and business approach ahead of the interview. Identify what different experiences would present a unique value-add to your business.
- ☐ Consider the candidate's travel time and existing work schedule when arranging (the number of, and time required for) in-person interviews.

On-site Interview(s): Tips for the Panel

- ☐ Assess pros and cons of the candidate relative to the competency(s) assigned

- ☐ Use a behavioral-based interviewing style to identify practical experiences. Focus on how an individual handled various work situations in the past. Questions can be phrased as follows:
 - “Tell me about a time when...”
 - “Can you walk me through an experience when...”
- ☐ Preface questions with an explanation of the role’s needs. For example:
 - “In this role, client service is critical and building credibility is key. I would love to hear about an example from your experience where you needed to make a good impression in a meeting and how you prepared?”
- ☐ Be present. Have a genuine interest in the candidate’s story. Present yourself, as an interviewer, in a compelling way. Convey your background and experience within the organization.
- ☐ De-escalate stress. Make a personal connection initially. Some good examples are:
 - “I’m here to have a conversation with you regarding XYZ”; “I’ll tell you a little about myself and then I’ll flip it over to you.”
- ☐ Be gracious. When someone handles a question with hesitation or uncertainty, rephrase the question in a way that will get the answer you are looking for.
- ☐ Use neutral, un-coded language, and inclusive terminology.
 - Do not over or under play what is needed to be able to do the job well.
 - If the candidate does not have direct experience, think about whether the skill or concept can be taught.
 - Be conscious of language that may dissuade working parents, non-native speakers, or people with disabilities from taking the job.
- ☐ Be aware of personal biases. This includes “positive biases” such as hometown or alma mater affiliates.
- ☐ Provide feedback to the hiring manager that is consistent across candidates.

Post-Interview: Tips for the Hiring Manager

- ☐ Conduct a formal debrief.
- ☐ Include all interviewers’ feedback for discussion.

Toolkit | Inclusive Interviewing

- ☐ Bring in an objective oversight person to keep the conversation on track and in balance.
- ☐ Stack-rank candidates based on assessment of competencies.
- ☐ Optimally, make a hiring decision within 24 hours of the debrief and convey offer(s)/rejection(s) within 1 week of the interview loop.

Sources: DPNA member firms, including Audeliss (member, 2020)

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