

**Nonprofit Risk Management Center**  
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**Planning and Conducting Effective Interviews**

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**Planning and Conducting Effective Interviews**

October 20, 2011 - 2 PM Eastern

Presented by  
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**The Goals Of Staff Screening**

- Select the most suitable staff to help the organization fulfill its mission.
- Screen out applicants who constitute an identifiable risk to the organization or its service recipients.

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### Hiring Risks

- Illegal discrimination
- Hiring the wrong person

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### How Are We Doing?

- 88% of employees leave for reasons having to do with the job, the culture, the manager or the work environment.
- 66% of workers do not identify with or feel motivated to drive their employer's business goals or objectives.

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### Selection Risks

- Claim of discrimination in hiring
- Claim of negligent selection ("negligent hiring")
- Loss of productivity, loss of business, decreased morale, increased turn over

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### Types of Interviews

- Structured – preset list of questions asked of all candidates
- Situational and/or behavioral – what would you do in this situation vs. what did you do in this situation
- Non-directed – conducted with minimum number of questions planned in advance or asked by interviewer

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### Types of Interviews

- Individual
- Team, group or panel
- Telephone
- Person to person
- Impromptu
- Dinner

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### Interview Guidelines

1. Develop a plan – Identify core questions based on required and preferred skills, knowledge and abilities listed in position description.
  - define the real work involved, not necessarily skills or experiences, but the challenges and critical features.
  - Look for comparable accomplishments as well as career gaps and learning opportunities.
2. Guide the interview – Minimize distractions, allow same amount of time for each applicant.

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### Interview Guidelines

3. Take good notes and obtain information about references.
4. Maintain confidentiality.
5. Remember and comply with legal mandates.

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### Common Interviewing Mistakes

- Lack of updated job description and knowledge of job duties
- Snap judgments
- Negative emphasis
- Feelings/mindset

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### Interference with Accurate Assessments

- Halo/horn effect
- Candidate-order or contrast error
- Telegraphing
- Too much/too little talking
- Inadequate/inconsistent record keeping

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### Do applicants lie?

According to the Society of Human Resource Management ([www.shrm.org](http://www.shrm.org)) over 53% of all job applicants lie to some extent on their resumes!

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### The Most Common Lies

- Embellished responsibilities – 38%
- Skill set – 18%
- Dates of employment – 12%
- Academic degree – 10%
- Companies worked for – 7%
- Job title – 5%

Source: [www.careerbuilder.com](http://www.careerbuilder.com)

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### Topics To Avoid or Be Wary

• Nationality	• Arrest record
• Age	• Military – veteran status
• Marital/family status	• Religion
• Affiliations	• Race
• Personal	• Color
• Disabilities	• Pregnancy
	• Genetic information

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### Characteristics of Good Interview Questions

Help prospective employer to judge -

- Technical qualifications (education, experience, skill set)
- People skills
- Problem solving approach
- Team fit

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### Characteristics of Worst Questions

- Illegal
- Useless
- Hackneyed

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### Best Interview Questions

- What's your ideal job?
- What do you do in your free time?
- What have your colleagues said about you?

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### More Best Interview Questions

- What weakness has most impacted your ability to succeed at your career?
- Describe a situation in which you had to work with a difficult person.
- What can I tell you about what we're doing here?
- Do you volunteer within the community?
- What's something you're passionate about?

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### Worst Interview Questions

- What's a problem you've encountered and how did you solve it?
- Where do you see yourself in five years?
- What kind of animal are you most like?

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### Worst Questions

- Tell me about yourself.
- What are your strengths and weaknesses?
- What can you do for us that others can't?
- Why do you want to work here?
- What would your last boss (or friends) say about you?
- Why should we hire you?

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### Why Are They The Worst?

- Candidates have a canned response.
- Candidates have been coached by books and websites.
- Interviewer conditioned to what he/she wants to hear.
- Nothing to do with job or job performance.
- All of the above

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### More of the Worst Interview Questions

- What interests you about our organization?
- Have you ever brought a lawsuit against an employer?
- Can you work under pressure?
- If you were a **Lost** character, what one would you be?
- How do you define sexual harassment?
- Do you ever abuse alcohol or drugs?

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### Warning Signs in Answers

- Answers are big on objectives.
- Candidate surprised by question.
- No acknowledgement of any area that could be improved.
- Most crucial function of current job unknown.
- Candidate really wants to work for organization, but can't say why.
- Says that current organization doesn't offer enough room for growth.
- References can't offer specific details on job performance.

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### Questions for Line Staff

- What is customer service for our organization?
- What do you consider good customer service?
- A co-worker is rude to customers, what would you do?
- You are scheduled to leave at 6 pm. Your replacement worker doesn't show up. What would you do?
- Tell me about a time when you had to deal with a co-worker who wasn't doing his/her fair share of the work. What did you do and what was the outcome?

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### More Questions for Line Staff

- Tell me about a time that you didn't work well with a supervisor. What was the outcome and how would you have changed the outcome?
- Have you worked with someone you didn't like? If so, how did you handle it?
- Tell me about a time that you helped someone.
- Tell me about a time that you misjudged a person.

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### The Most Important Question (or two)

- Of all the things accomplished in your career, what stands out as the most significant? Now could you go ahead and tell me all about it?
- Pose a realistic job related problem and have applicant relay the process to resolve it.

— Lou Adler, CEO and founder of The Adler Group—a training and search firm—the most important interview question of all time

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### The Critical Three Foci of the Best Questions

- Why this job –What skills are critical to being successful? Does applicant have the skills required to be successful?
- Why this applicant – Is there an understanding of the job and industry? Is this job a logical fit?
- Why this organization– Does applicant's skill set provide a good fit given the organization's profile?

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### Next Month's First Wednesday Webinar Financial Risk Management for Nonprofits

November 2, 2011  
2 PM Eastern

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### Next Month's Third Thursday Webinar Managing Workplace Safety Risks

November 17, 2011  
2 PM Eastern

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Questions???

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