

Inappropriate Interview Questions

Interview questions must be job-related. Questions designed to elicit information that can later be used in a discriminatory manner when making a hiring decision should be avoided. The following subjects include factors that when used or considered during an interview, might be interpreted to violate non-discrimination laws. These subjects should be avoided.

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| Address | Specific inquiry into foreign addresses, which would indicate national origin. |
| Age | Age, date of birth or any other inquiries that would require applicants to disclose their age. |
| Ancestry | Applicant's nationality, lineage, ancestry, national origin, descent or parentage; length of residency in the United States; ancestry of immediate family or spouse's family; and questions regarding how the applicant acquired the ability to read, write or speak a foreign language. |
| Birth Place | Birth-place of applicant, applicant's parents, spouse, or other relatives, or any other inquiry into national origin. |
| Children or Dependents | Any inquiries regarding the number, age, and child care arrangement for the applicant's children or other dependents, or intentions regarding becoming a parent in the future. Such questions could be regarded as discriminatory against single parents. |
| Citizenship | Inquiries regarding country or citizenship other than the United States; inquiries to naturalized citizens regarding citizenship status of parents or spouse; or date of acquisition of U.S. citizenship. |
| Convictions, Arrests and Court Records | Any inquiries regarding arrests; questions regarding conviction and court records that are not substantially related to the function and responsibilities of the position. |
| Disabilities | Inquiries regarding an applicant's disability. If an applicant volunteers this information during the course of the interview, it can be considered in relation to the applicant's ability to perform the essential functions of the position. If an applicant has an obvious disability or voluntarily discloses a disability that causes the committee concern about whether that person could perform the essential functions of the job, the committee can ask the applicant to describe or demonstrate how, with or without reasonable accommodation the applicant will perform essential job functions. However, if this question is asked of one applicant, it must be asked of all applicants, not just those with obvious or disclosed disabilities. |
| Education | Any inquiry asking specifically the nationality, racial or religious affiliation of a school. |

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| Financial Status, Credit Record, or Car Ownership | These questions are unrelated to the applicant's ability to perform the requirements of the position and tend to discriminate against certain groups. Financial status inquiries regarding past ownership, bankruptcy or garnishment of wages. |
| Graduation dates | Any inquiries concerning the dates that an applicant graduated from high school or college, which might indicate an applicant's age. |
| Health Issues | Any inquiries related to an applicant's health, especially in regard to whether an applicant has AIDS or is HIV positive. |
| Marital Status | Any inquiry regarding whether the applicant is married, single, widowed, separated or engaged to be married may imply discrimination against women because of common societal assumptions that women often leave jobs when they get married or have children. In addition, societal assumptions regarding married and single, divorced, widowed or separated people may contribute to an atmosphere of perceived discrimination. Discrimination on the basis of marital status is illegal under Oregon Law and Board Rule. |
| Military Discharge | Any inquiry regarding the nature of a person's discharge. |
| Military Service | Inquiries into the dates that an applicant either joined or left military service, which could be used to determine an applicant's age. Questions should not be asked about the nature of the person's military discharge or whether they ever served in another country's armed services. |
| Name | Inquiries about name that would indicate an applicant's lineage, ancestry, national origin, descent or marital status. |
| Opposite Sex | Any inquiries regarding how an applicant would feel about working or traveling with members of the opposite sex are potentially discriminatory because answers are not always considered equally from men and women. |
| Organization | Inquiries regarding organizations which would indicate by their character or name the race, religion, color or ancestry of the applicant. |
| Photographs | No photographs may be requested or required prior to selection. |
| Political Issues | Any questions regarding political party affiliation or opinions on political issues. |
| Pregnancy | Any inquiries regarding pregnancy or potential pregnancy of an applicant. |
| Race or Color | Any inquiries regarding an applicant's race, the racial group with which the applicant may identify, or regarding other physical features which may be directly or indirectly indicative of race or color. |

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| Relatives | Inquiry regarding spouse's name, because it may indicate marital status. Names or addresses of any relatives certainly should not be requested. |
| Religion | An applicant's religious denomination or affiliation, church, parish, pastor, or religious holidays observed should not be discussed during an interview. The relationship of a person's religious beliefs to their professional employment is an improper area of inquiry until after the selection is completed. At that time, any potential need for accommodation to a person's religious beliefs or practices may be discussed. Though applicants may not be told that employees are required to work on religious holidays, they may be asked if they are available to work on specific days (for example, Saturdays or Sundays), but it must be asked of every applicant and should not be phrased in the context of religious observances. However, an applicant's religious beliefs must be accommodated unless such accommodation creates undue hardship to the university or department. |
| Union Membership | Any questions regarding current or past union membership or activities should be avoided. |
| Workers Compensation | Inquiries into an applicant's workers compensation history are inappropriate. An employer may not discriminate against an applicant because that applicant has utilized the workers' compensation system, nor may an employer base a hiring decision on the likelihood that an applicant may cause increased workers' compensation costs in the future. |