

20 Tips for First Time Hiring Managers

Hiring can be a daunting task, especially for first-timers. If interviewees get anxious, interviewers can feel just as nervous. Candidates aren't the only ones with sweat on their palms. This important component of the recruitment process shouldn't be treated lightly because it's an indicator of its failure or success. This means you have to ask the right questions appropriately, have a professional demeanor, and read a candidate's body language at the same time. How do you pull all these things off? You start investing in educating yourself with the best possible hiring process, especially if you are a hiring manager.

Interviewing Job Candidates

The art of interviewing is a challenging one to master. Before you sit down and start asking questions, sharpen your [HR skills](#) first through these 25 tried and tested tips. These tips will be broken down into three stages: the preparation stage, the interview stage, and the post-interview stage.

Preparation Stage

A good interviewer does his or her homework before facing a candidate. If you want your conversation to go well, you have to unleash your inner boy or girl scout and prepare for it. Before a candidate walks into your office's door, take your time and effort to do all of these things:

Go Over the Job Description

Make sure you know the position you'll be interviewing about from the inside out. No detail should be overlooked—a candidate may end up expecting an answer if he or she asks a question. If your company's using [job description templates](#), review each one, and make adjustments (if necessary).

Carve Out a Candidate Persona

What's your ideal candidate? This should already be determined before you even start formulating interview questions. Picture out your ideal candidate's experiences, skills, talents, and interests.

Choose Relevant Questions

A good interview isn't possible without equally great questions. These questions should match the job you'll be talking about. Ask about a candidate's skills and professional experience to gauge their fit for the job they're gunning for.

Aside from knowledge and skills assessment, add behavioral and situational questions into the mix. This can help you identify a candidate's soft skills, which can be quite useful while at work. Throw in a few questions about cultural fit as well. Does his or her values align with that of your company's?

Establish a Rating System for Candidates' Answers

This helps you have an objective assessment of their responses. A "poor" to "excellent" scale can work well here, so you can opt to adapt that. While many interviewers skip this step, it's best to include this in your preparation process.

Build an Interview Structure

Create an outline to paint a clear picture of how your interview is going to flow. You can do this by mapping the order of the exact questions you're going to ask, and the time it'll take to answer them. This helps you stay on track and make the most of your time.

Review Job Candidates

You don't have to know everything about every candidate, but you should at least do your research on their skills and experiences. Have a thorough review of their cover letter, resume, and portfolio. In other words, do a [background check](#). If you find anything interesting, take down notes—you may want to bring them up during your interview.

Get Your Pitch Going

Interviews are two-way streets; while you're evaluating a candidate, he or she is evaluating your company too. Make sure you have a compelling pitch to encourage the candidate to accept what your company has to offer.

Have a Schedule and Venue Ready

Before [inviting a candidate](#), have a set time and date for the interview. This will give a candidate an idea of how long it's going to run for. Reserve an appropriate venue so your conversation can go undisturbed. Notify your colleagues about your unavailability during interview hours to avoid further interruptions.

Be Considerate

Gestures such as offering a cup of tea or glass of water may be small acts, but they're a plus in candidates' books. Thoughtfulness is often appreciated, especially in nerve-wracking situations like interviews.

Interview Stage

Here comes the fun part: the actual interviewing. A job interview is more than asking questions to candidates for evaluation purposes. Here's how you can go about interviewing a candidate without a hitch:

Be Welcoming

Break the ice by giving the candidate a warm welcome before kicking things off. Exuding positive vibes not only calms things down, but it also tells the candidate that you're not out to get them.

Ease Them In Through an Introduction

Interviews are high-pressure situations that shouldn't be rushed. Introduce yourself briefly and tell a candidate why you're hiring in the first place. Ask the candidate to make his or her introduction as well after you're done with yours.

Be Observant

Your focus is of utmost importance here. Pay attention to their answers and body language. Have a notebook and pen with you, especially if you want to jot down the interesting things you'll pick up during the interview. Your notes will help you keep track of candidates' performances, which will be extremely useful when you have to compare them once all your interviews are done.

Be Mindful of Your Biases

Everyone has subconscious biases. Unfortunately, they can affect your perception of candidates during interviews, which can lead to poor choices. Confront these biases by holding out on making decisions before an interview ends.

Be Open to Collaboration

Have a team member with you during your interview. An extra head will allow you to make more logical decisions due to different perspectives.

End on a Good Note

Allow candidates to ask questions and answer them as honestly as you can. [Appreciate the candidate](#) for their time as well. After wrapping up your interview, you can describe the next stage and give an estimated timeline so they'll have an idea of what to expect.

Post-Interview Stage

Work doesn't stop after your interviews. Many interviewers consider the post-interview stage as the most challenging one because they have to make decisions here. Aside from that, they have to be the bearer of bad news to the candidates who didn't get the jobs they were looking for.

Here's how you can become a good interviewer in this stage:

Choose Suitable Candidates

Go over your notes and scorecards. After making your comparisons, you should be able to [pick the right candidates](#) for the jobs you're offering.

Notify the Chosen Candidates Through Job Offers

Give them a phone call and inform them of their selection. Send a [formal letter](#) or email after they've accepted your offer. Your letter or email should include details such as job responsibilities, compensations, and benefits.

Inform Rejected Candidates

Breaking bad news is never easy, but in this case, it's necessary. Give acceptable explanations for their rejections so they can fully understand why they haven't been accepted. And more importantly, make sure to [reject candidates politely](#).

Keep in Touch

Some of those rejected candidates may be suitable for other positions. Maintain contact until a position is open for them.