



A Guide for Interview Panel Members

Hiring employees is possibly one of the most important decisions our district can make. The oral interview provides candidates the opportunity to demonstrate certain technical knowledge and communication skills, as well as other professional and personal attributes essential to the performance of the job they are seeking.

Ensuring a Fair and Legally Compliant Process

As members of the interview panel, you share responsibility for ensuring a fair and legally compliant process. To ensure a fair process, your assessment of the candidates must be based on job-related questions and not on other factors that could be considered discriminatory.

Nondiscrimination in Hiring

The California Fair Employment and Housing Act (Government Code Section 12900-12996) prohibits discriminating against any job applicant on the basis of the following characteristics:

- Color
- Race
- National origin
- Ancestry
- Age
- Marital status
- Pregnancy
- Military or veteran status
- Gender, gender identity, or gender expression
- Sexual orientation
- Genetic information
- Actual or perceived religious creed
- Actual or perceived physical or mental disability or medical condition

Panel members are prohibited from asking questions that touch on these protected characteristics and must avoid assessing a candidate's suitability for hire on their basis. Panel members are also prohibited from asking questions related to membership in organizations, clubs, societies, and lodges, or other questions that may indicate the candidate's race, sex, national origin, disability status, age, religion, color, or ancestry if answered.

Prevention

Panel members can ensure a fair and legally compliant process and prevent any claims of discrimination by asking questions based on the position requirements and the knowledge, skills, abilities, education, training, and experience needed to perform essential job functions. The questions provided for the interviews are based on these requirements and should be asked in a consistent manner. Each candidate must be provided an equal opportunity to respond to these job-specific questions. Therefore, it is essential that the approximate length of the scheduled interviews are consistent and the same questions are asked of all candidates.

Before we begin the interview process, let's take a look at the job description so that we have an understanding of the position duties and requirement. (*Review Job Description*)

Prohibitions

Panel members should not be discussing the candidates with each other during the day. This could influence how individual panel members assess the candidates. Preserving each panel member's unique assessment of the candidates, without the influence of others, is essential to a fair process.

Texting and the general use of mobile devices is prohibited during the oral interviews.

Roles and Responsibilities of Panel Members

The interview should provide the candidate the opportunity to do most of the talking while panel members listen carefully and take notes. In creating a relaxed and welcoming atmosphere, panel members should:

- Look at and focus your attention on the candidate
- Refrain from indicating agreement or disagreement with the candidate's responses to question

Panel members will rate each candidate in a number of different ways. First, you will rate each candidate's responses to each question using the following rating scale:

1 = Outstanding Answer	2 = Acceptable Answer	3 = Unacceptable Answer
Answer indicated depth in the candidate's knowledge, skills, and abilities required for the position. The candidate has experience in this area and demonstrated competency.	Answer demonstrated knowledge and/or understanding required for the positions. The candidate has some limited experience in this area but was confident in their abilities.	Answer lacked connection to the question and/or did not demonstrate the level of knowledge, understanding, and/or experience required for the position.

Following the oral interview, panel members will complete the following to assess the candidate's communication skills, interpersonal skills and professional qualities.

	Most Desirable	Least Desirable
Communication Skills	Candidate was clear and concise, maintained eye contact, and easily communicated their thoughts and ideas.	Candidate responses lacked clarity, were unclear, or were not directly relate to questions that were asked. They did not develop eye contract and/or rapport with the panel.
Interpersonal Skills	Candidate developed rapport with the panel. They appeared to be of good character. They knew a lot about the District and communicated a strong desire to be a part of our team.	Their responses demonstrated a lack of good judgement. They did not appear to know much about the district or demonstrate a strong desire to be a part of our team.
Personal Qualities	Candidate was positive, enthusiastic, confident, and poised. Candidate conducted themselves in a professional manner and their goals and values align with the organization.	Candidate responses demonstrated a lack of professionalism. They did not appear to know much about the district or demonstrate a strong desire to be a part of the district.

Communication Skills, Interpersonal Skills, Personal Qualities Rating: (Circle one)

1 2 3

1 = Demonstrated excellent communication, interpersonal, and personal qualities.

2 = Demonstrated desirable skills in some areas.

3 = Did not demonstrate or demonstrated few desirable skills.

Based on the candidate's responses to technical questions, and their communication and interpersonal skills rating, panel members will give each candidate an overall rating as indicated below:

Overall Rating: (Circle one)

1 2 3

1 = Recommend for hire.

2 = Give serious consideration if no other candidates are available.

3 = Below hiring standard; do not consider further.

Final Panel Preparations

Let's review the following:

- Confidentiality Agreements
- The interview schedule
- The list of candidates
- The oral interview questions