How to Interview and Hire Top People

A strong interview produces evidence you can compare. Build the conversation around the work, give candidates a realistic picture of the role, and use a consistent decision process.

BEFORE AND DURING THE INTERVIEW

1. **Define success.** List the essential responsibilities and the outcomes expected in the first 90 days. Choose four to six job-related competencies to evaluate.

2. **Prepare a structured interview.** Use the same core questions and scoring criteria for each candidate for the same role. Assign interviewers clear areas of focus.

3. **Ask for specific examples.** Probe for the situation, the candidate's own actions, and the result. Clarify vague answers without coaching the candidate toward a preferred response.

4. **Demonstrate relevant skills.** Where appropriate, use a short, job-related work sample with consistent instructions and evaluation criteria. Provide an accessible process.

5. **Explain the opportunity.** Describe responsibilities, pay range, schedule, work setting, and the next steps. Leave time for the candidate's questions and be candid about challenges.

Evaluate evidence

A polished interview is only one data point. Compare demonstrated skills and experience with the actual requirements.

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Make a consistent hiring decision

Record job-related evidence promptly. Have interviewers score independently before the group discusses candidates.

SAMPLE COMPETENCY SCORECARD

Competency	Evidence to look for	Rating / notes
Technical or functional skills	Relevant methods, tools, and accurate work	_____
Problem solving	Clear reasoning and a justified approach	_____
Collaboration	Constructive actions and shared outcomes	_____
Execution	Planning, follow-through, and measurable results	_____

Sample rating scale: 1 = evidence falls short of requirements; 3 = meets requirements with a relevant example; 5 = strong evidence of effective performance in comparable situations. Define role-specific anchors before interviewing. Use “not assessed” when evidence is missing.

CLOSE THE LOOP

Resolve gaps with a focused follow-up. Complete approved reference or background checks through your established process. Document the decision against the criteria, communicate promptly, and confirm the offer and onboarding responsibilities.

Keep questions job-related. Use approved tools and protect candidate information. If AI helps prepare questions or organize notes, check its output and retain human responsibility for the evaluation.

Reference: U.S. Office of Personnel Management - Structured Interviews.

Connect hiring with onboarding

Carry the agreed success criteria into the new hire’s first-week plan and 30-, 60-, and 90-day check-ins.

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