

Nondiscriminatory Interviewing Tips

In almost all instances, the following topics should be avoided in an interview:

- Matters related to a candidate's race, ethnicity, ancestry, or national origins are not open for discussion.
- If necessary, you may ask whether a candidate has legal permission to work in the U.S., or whether he/she is a citizen or permanent resident of the U.S.
- A candidate's religious preference is his or her private affair.
- Attempts at any jokes related to race, religion, sexual orientation, disability, sex, etc., must be avoided.
- Candidates should not be questioned about child care arrangements, birth control practices, plans for family, etc. It must not be assumed that these issues are relevant to a woman's candidacy.
- It is unwise to make assumptions or to seek information about a candidate's spouse or partner and employment unless the applicant indicates this is a factor to be considered.
- Marital status and living arrangements usually are not employment-related topics and should not be discussed.
- Avoid discussing age. Do not assume that young and vital are synonymous, or that stability and good judgment are functions of age.
- Avoid introducing biases into the discussion as a means of testing a candidate's response. For example, do not say to a man, "You would be the only man in the office. Do you think you can handle the teasing?"
- Comments about a candidate's physical appearance are inappropriate even when intended as compliments. It is best to avoid making such remarks at all.
- The American with Disabilities Act makes it illegal to ask questions about an applicant's disability or perceived disability. It is crucial to focus on the job and not on the disability.