

Chapter 10

Interviewing & Testing

For many new entrepreneurs, the process of interviewing potential employees can be intimidating. However, a little preparation will simplify the effort. Knowing what specific criteria you are looking for, as you developed in the prior Chapters, will guide the questions you should ask, the answers you are looking for, and the personality traits you should watch for in a face-to-face meeting. That is, develop clear objectives regarding the information you intend to elicit through the interview process.

You must also be comfortable with the legal issues relating to interviewing, and plan your questions and hiring methods to be compliant with the various fair labor and anti-discrimination regulations.

This Chapter covers the basics of interviewing job candidates. You will develop your screening and interview questions, learn about the Don't Ask, Don't Tell rules of interviewing, and create a candidate evaluation form for selecting the best candidate for your company. Also included are some tips for conducting an effective interview.

Basics

Your ability to effectively interview potential employees greatly increases the chance of making good hiring choices for your

company. There are a number of specific techniques recommended by various experts, but none are right for all employers. It is important that the interviewing methods you select are comfortable for you and fit your personality. However, there are a few essentials to keep in mind to successfully identify the best employees for your business.

There are two basic interview styles – structured and unstructured. A purely structured interview consists of asking a set series of questions from every candidate in order to compare responses. An unstructured interview is more like a conversation; the interview follows whatever topics seem interesting during the chat. There are obvious advantages and disadvantages to both, but the ideal should include a bit of each type.

Develop a set of critical questions that you ask of all candidates, but be flexible in pursuing areas that pique your interest. This way, you have covered the base information you need to gather and have an opportunity to see more about each candidate’s personality and motivation.

Like all aspects of running your business, preparation and planning will ease the inherent stress of interviewing potential employees. Before your first interview, prepare your structured questions, your evaluation form, and clarify exactly what it is you are looking for in an ideal candidate. Review the candidate’s application and resume including specific questions about their experience.

Always be on time for interviews. Introduce yourself and talk for a few minutes about your company or anything else to help the candidate feel more at ease. Explain the structure of the interview, such as the types of questions you will be asking, the general information you want to know, when they can ask questions about the position or the company, and the like.

The majority of the interview time should be focused on identifying and assessing the candidate’s skills and qualifications and looking