



# Selecting the Best Employees for Your Small Business

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In cooperation with the  
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# Hiring Decisions

- Hiring decisions are very important
- Employees play an important role
- Wrong hire can result in alienation of customers and workers
- Short cuts can mean bad hiring decisions

*One small business owner, who failed to fill a customer service position effectively, said:*

*“We’re fast to hire and slow to fire.”*



# Hiring New Employees

- This online workshop focuses on the interview and selection process in hiring new employees.
- Put the odds in your favor by improving your approach to find the candidate who best fits the job opening and company environment.



# This online workshop will cover:

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1. Getting Ready for the Interview
2. Choosing the Interview Approach
3. Preparing Interview Questions
4. Conducting the Interview
5. Steps to take after the interview
6. Sample testing

# Getting Ready for the Interview

- Careful planning is essential
- Screen applicants to a manageable number
- Look for a good fit with company





# Preparing for the Interview

- Compare job description to applicant's information
- Ideal skills, personality traits, characteristics
- Additional information needed
- Clarification and elaboration
- Place and time for the interview

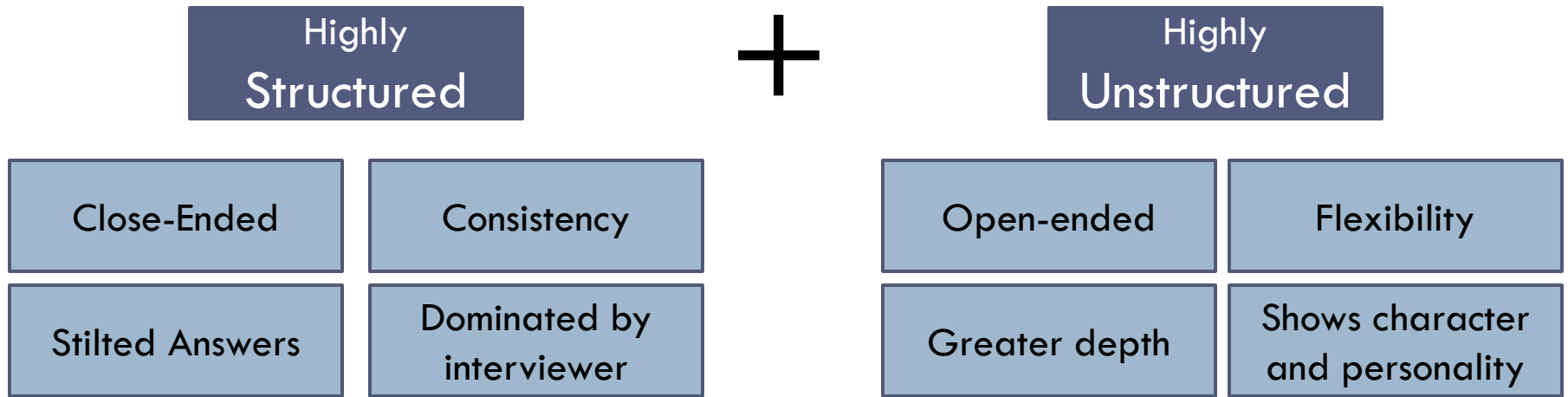


# Information to Convey

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- Job description and workplace conditions
- Skills and requirements
- Company information and culture
- Benefits
- Compensation

# Choosing the Interview Approach



*Strive for a combination of both*





# Preparing Interview Questions

- Based on what you need to evaluate an applicant
- Irrelevant questions may be unlawful or unprofessional
- Prepare questions that enable you to delve more deeply
- Clarify job candidate's information
- Self assessment, developmental goals and career aspirations
- Behavior or performance based questions



# Will the applicant fit your organizational environment and leadership approach?

- How would your best friend describe you?
- Describe the characteristics and behaviors of the best managers or supervisors
- Describe behaviors and characteristics of an ideal boss



A word cloud of leadership and personality traits. The words are arranged in a roughly circular pattern. The largest word is 'Supportive' in green, oriented vertically. Other prominent words include 'Motivating' in red, 'Confident' in black, 'Serious' in yellow, 'Creative' in blue, 'Hard-working' in orange, 'Artistic' in purple, 'Flexible' in brown, and 'Challenging' in blue.

Supportive  
Motivating  
Confident  
Serious  
Artistic  
Flexible  
Challenging  
Creative  
Hard-working



# Gain Insight

A worker is increasingly irritable and co-workers complain of rudeness and doing less work – How would you handle the situation?

A customer complains about a job you thought was well done –  
How would you respond to that?



# Avoid asking certain types of questions

- Some questions may be considered unlawfully discriminatory
- In Maine it is unlawful to discriminate on the basis of race, color, gender, physical or mental disability, religion, age, ancestry or national origin, sexual orientation or whistleblower.
- Questions relating to physical, emotional or mental handicaps may be asked only to determine if applicant will need accommodations to perform a job.
- Do not ask questions that are not specifically related to ability to perform the job.

For more information please contact the Maine Human Rights Commission, 207-624-6290, TTY: Maine Rely 711



# Examples of questions that may be considered unlawfully discriminatory are:

- Are you engaged? Married? Planning to marry?
- Do you have or plan to have children?
- Where do you go to church?
- When were you born? How old are you?
- What accent do you have?
- What is your family's ethnicity?



If an applicant volunteers information about any of these areas, do not respond or follow-up on their comments.



# Conducting the interview

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Careful planning is essential to an effective interview

- Comfortable space and no interruptions
- Welcoming greeting
- Outline the interview process



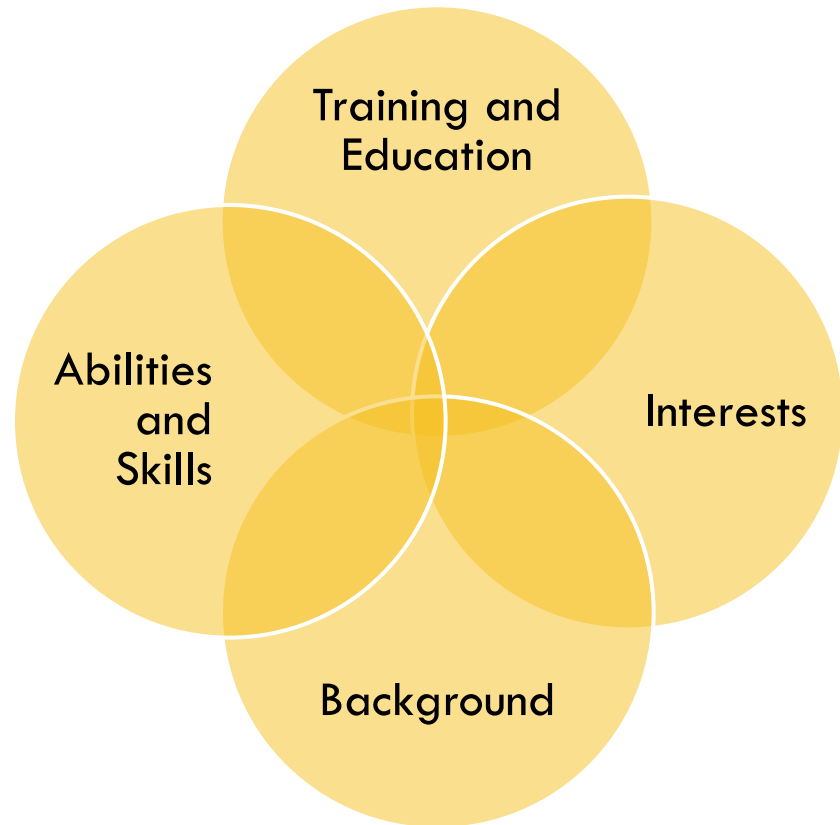
# Start the Interview

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- ✓ Work experience
- ✓ Likes and dislikes
- ✓ Reasons for changing jobs
- ✓ Valuable experiences
- ✓ Ideal job
- ✓ Avoid leading questions

# Training, Education and Interests

- Training and education
- Abilities and skills
- Areas of improvement
- Outside interests
- Other areas of background







# A good fit for the company

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- A good fit and why
- Discuss company environment, compensation, benefits
- Applicant's questions
- Level of interest in position
- Include next steps



# Concluding the interview

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- ✓ Thank applicant
- ✓ Next steps
- ✓ Tour company
- ✓ Introduce to employees
- ✓ Remember key points and take notes



# What to do next

- ✓ Interview is not enough
- ✓ Check references, second interview and test abilities
- ✓ Trusting instincts can backfire
- ✓ Background checks
- ✓ Confirm abilities, skills and characteristics

**don't settle  
for less!**



# Reference checks

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- Call applicant's references
- More likely to give a candid assessment by phone
- Ask more in-depth questions
- Read between the lines
- Pay attention to voice intonations



# Conduct a Second Interview

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- Include members of the company

## Benefits:

- ✓ Committed to the decision
- ✓ Want to make it work
- ✓ New hire feels acceptance
- ✓ Applicant learns about environment and culture



# Testing Skills and Abilities

- Devise tests that measure abilities and skills related to job
- Tests vary depending on the position
- Role playing as part of the assessment process
- Best candidate becomes much more clear



# Summary and Conclusions

- ✓ Carefully planned interview will help greatly in evaluation
- ✓ Applicants who look and sound good are not necessarily a good fit
- ✓ Do not pick only people like yourself
- ✓ Check applicants references and background
- ✓ Involve others in the selection process
- ✓ Administer tests of abilities
- ✓ If your search is not successful start over

*Find employees who will make OUTSTANDING contributions!*



# Pre-employment testing

The following examples of tests were actually used by small companies in Maine to assess the skills of employment candidates. These tests were administered to job applicants who met criteria for employment in the first interview. The tests focus on abilities essential to performing the jobs successfully. The tests are simple, low cost and easy to administer.





# Arithmetic and Numeric Skills Test

1.  $9 + 208 + 751 + =$  \_\_\_\_\_
2.  $4306 - 1492 =$  \_\_\_\_\_
3. 2652 divided by 4 = \_\_\_\_\_
4.  $17 \times 4 =$  \_\_\_\_\_
5.  $75/100 =$  \_\_\_\_\_%
6. Check the one answer choice which contains only letters or numbers, regardless of their order, which appear in: G-N-9-8-D-7-C-5
  - \_\_\_ D-8-C-5-M-7
  - \_\_\_ C-M-7-4-G-8
  - \_\_\_ N-5-D-9-7-C
  - \_\_\_ 6-D-G-N-9-5



# Writing samples

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What are the most important things to you about a job or position in a company?

How would you describe the ideal supervisor or manager for you?

How would your best friend describe you?



# Assessing Job Aptitude and Skills

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Devise a test according to the job or position for which you are hiring.

For example, a company hiring a folder in textile operation structured a test of applicants' manual dexterity by actually having them fold garments after instruction and screen printers to actually demonstrate screen printing skills. The same company asked applicants for its controller position to actually construct Excel spreadsheets to analyze an accounting problem and to perform financial statement ratio analysis.

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