



Driving Miss Daisy – Interviewers Need to be Prepared Too!

Chauffeurs need a special license to drive. Interviewers should have special skill sets as well. Even though the person conducting the interview may be in the driver's seat, it doesn't mean they have had their license very long, or are 100% prepared to be driving at that moment.

To be effective in hiring the correct person for the job, a hiring manager should know the job description of the position to be filled. If asked, the interviewer should be able to tell you what the job priorities will be, the expected activities, what resources are to be used, and what standards will be accepted.

Not everyone who conducts an interview is the Human Resources Manager or has been properly trained in the subtleties of running a good interview. The person with whom you are interviewing may actually be a field or line supervisor, the owner of a small company, or someone new to the practice of interviewing.

Let's assume for this article that the person behind the wheel of this interview is trained and experienced in the fine art of interviewing. Interviewers will want to know about frequency of job changes, unexplained breaks in employment, reasons for leaving past jobs, and how your references will turn out. They will also review whether your education and/or experience meet the requirements of the job description.

The most effective type of interview is one in which the interviewer uses a combination of non-directed questions allowing you to narrate your experiences and express your interests with a checklist of specific questions with which you can be rated as to your potential success on the job.

During the interview, the series of questions you typically will be asked will be open-ended as much as possible. Often you will be asked for contrasts and comparisons. Frequently the interviewer will base a question on an answer you previously gave them.

Here are a few sample questions to help you prepare:

Adaptability - What kinds of problems have you had in switching from one job to another?

Administration - If you were going to evaluate your own performance, what factors would you consider most important?

Attention to Detail - Have you ever had an experience in which you were glad you had paid attention to some particular detail? Please describe it.

Control - What did you do when you found a subordinate was not meeting your standards?

Decision-Making - Describe a work-related problem you had to face recently. What procedures did you use to deal with it?

Delegation – Describe your normal methods of assigning work to subordinates.

Flexibility – Tell me about a time you had to surmount an obstacle to reach a goal. What was the problem, and what did you do about it?

Independence – What were the limits of authority in your previous job? Did you ever find it necessary to go beyond them?

Initiative – Tell me about a time your effort helped carry out some project or idea.

Integrity – Do you feel some rules should be obeyed more strictly than others? Give me some examples.

Judgment – What was the best/worst decision you ever made? What were the alternatives? How did you go about making it?

Leadership – Tell me about a time you had to gain the cooperation of a group over which you had little or no authority. What did you do? How effective were you?

These are just a few of the possibilities. If you notice, they are all open-ended questions or statements that ask you to describe something. The interviewer wants to hear about you so they can make an appropriate decision for the hiring process. The list of questions and answers is as varied as the positions

available. But knowing how to answer questions with more than a yes or no will help you be prepared for inevitabilities.

You get to take over the wheel.

Once the interviewer is done asking questions it is time for you to ask some of your own. Here are a few that you could adapt to the specific job for which you are interviewing.

- What are the company's strengths/weaknesses and does it capitalize or deal with them respectively;
- What changes are anticipated in (the particular industry) and what steps is the company taking to move into the future;
- What are the best opportunities for new hires in the company?

There are several types of interviews. Watch for an upcoming article describing the different types of interviews.

How we can help – We offer many resources to help you gain a new position on your way to a career. The Employment and Training Representatives at [Kane County Department of Employment and Education](#) can help you create a professional resume, refresh your interview skills, or help you find ways to network effectively. Visit www.illinoisworknet.com and click on the JOBS link, you can find additional tips to help you in your job search.

Four Offices to serve you:

Elgin – 30 DuPage Court	847-888-7900 x 230
N. Aurora – 2 Smoketree Plaza	630-844-6640 x 203
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