

Examples of Employment Interview Questions that May or May Not be Asked

Interview questions should be focused on obtaining information necessary to assess the skills and qualifications of the candidate. Interviewers must avoid questions that request information that is discriminatory or have a discriminatory impact. The following are examples of questions which may or may not be asked.

NAME

Avoid The fact of a change of name or the original name of an applicant whose name has been legally changed.
Maiden name of a married woman

Acceptable Whether or not the applicant ever worked under another name or was the applicant educated under another name. (Allowable only when the data is needed to verify the applicant's qualifications.)

BIRTHPLACE & RESIDENCE

Avoid Birthplace of applicant
Birthplace of applicant's parents
Own home, rent, board or live with parents
Citizenship
Address of applicant's spouse and children who are dependents

Acceptable Whether or not the applicant ever worked under another name or was the applicant educated under another name. (Allowable only when the data is needed to verify the applicant's qualifications.)

CREED & RELIGION

Avoid Applicant's religious affiliation
Church, parish or religious holidays observed by applicant

Acceptable Unions or professional organizations, as long as that information is not used to violate the National Labor Relations Act or other federal statutes

RACE & COLOR

Avoid Color of applicant's skin, eyes, hair, distinguishing physical characteristics, scars, markings

PHOTOGRAPHS

Avoid Photographs with application

Photographs after interview, but before hiring

AGE

Avoid Date of birth or age of applicant, except when such information is needed to:

- maintain apprenticeship requirements based upon a reasonable minimum age
- satisfy the provisions of either State or Federal minimum age statutes
- avoid interference with the operation of the terms and conditions and administration of any bona fide retirement, pension, employee benefit or insurance plan or program
- verify that applicant is above the minimum legal adult age (18 years) but without asking for a birth certificate

Age specifications, limitations or implications in a newspaper advertisement that might bar workers under or over a certain age.

Driver's license number (contains driver's age)

Acceptable Applicant may be asked if he/she is over the minimum legal working age

LANGUAGE

Avoid Applicant's mother tongue

Language commonly used by applicant at home

How the applicant acquired the ability to read, write, or speak a foreign language

Acceptable Languages applicant speaks fluently (only if job-related)

RELATIVES

Avoid Name and/or address of any relative of applicant

Names of applicant's spouse and dependent children

Names of persons with whom applicant resides

Acceptable Name and address of person to be notified in case of accident or emergency

NATIONAL ORIGIN & ANCESTRY

Avoid Applicant's lineage, ancestry, national origin, descent, parentage, or nationality

Nationality of applicant's parents or spouse

MILITARY EXPERIENCE

Avoid Applicant's military experience in other than the United States Armed Forces
National Guard or Reserve Units of applicant
Draft classification or other eligibility for military service
Applicant's whereabouts in 1941-45, 1950-53 or 1964-73

Acceptable Military experience of applicant in Armed Forces only when used for employment history
Whether applicant has received any notice to respond for duty in the Armed Forces

REFERENCES

Avoid The name of applicant's pastor or religious leader

Acceptable Names of persons willing to provide professional and/or character reference for applicant
Name and address of person to be notified in case of accident or emergency.

GENDER & MARITAL STATUS

Avoid Gender or marital status or any questions that would be used to determine same
Number of dependents, number of children
Spouse's occupation

ARREST & CONVICTION

Avoid The number and kinds of arrest of an applicant

Acceptable Convictions that bear a relationship to the job and have not been expunged or sealed by a court

HEIGHT & WEIGHT

Avoid Any inquiry into height or weight of applicant, unless justified by business necessity

DISABILITIES

Avoid Any general inquiry as to whether applicant has any physical or mental disability

Acceptable Does applicant have any disabilities that would prevent him or her from satisfactorily performing the job. Must be accompanied by job

descriptions and mention of reasonable accommodation

Referral:

Last Updated 10/15/03