

Tips Interviewing Candidates with Disabilities or Neurodivergence

Common Interview Conduct of Interviewees

- Potential untraditional greeting
- Inconsistent or no eye contact
- Unusual voice tone or way of speaking
- Lack of interest in “small talk”

Pre-Interview

- Request if any accommodation is needed
- Provide names of all interview attendees
- Schedule interviews at accessible time and location
- Provide length of interview
- If possible, provide top 3-5 questions to be asked

During Interview

- Explain the purpose of the interview, your role, and how you will use the information gathered during interview.
- Always speak directly to the person with disability, even if there is an interpreter or support coach
- Utilize typical tone and cadence
- Allow sufficient time for candidate to respond to questions
- If you don't understand what was said, it is okay to ask to repeat. Then, allow the person to respond.

What should I do if someone discloses their disability during the interview?

- **Thank** the candidate for feeling comfortable enough in you and the company to disclose this information.
- Let the candidate know your company is an Equal Opportunity Employer and hires people with autism and disabilities.
- Tell the candidate as a hiring manager, your job is to find **great talent**. It doesn't matter if someone has a disability or not. They are interviewing because they are qualified for the job.

Avoid



- Vague questions
- Non-relevant questions
- Hypothetical scenarios
- Abstract questions
- Yes/No questions

Ask



- Direct questions
- Relevant questions to their employment experience
- Situational questions

Situation

Tip/Technique

For situational and experiential questions, use the **present** or **past** tense instead of the conditional sense.

Do Not Ask: “What would you do if...?”

Ask: “What do/did you do then...?”

Many people with autism think literally so it's important to be **precise** when asking questions.

Do Not Ask: “Tell me about yourself” or “What do you want to be doing in 10 years?”

Ask: “What are/were your principle day-to-day duties at XYZ Company?”

If an candidate is elaborating too much, be **direct** and politely cut them off.

Say: “Thank you. You've given me enough information on that. Let's move on to another topic.”

If a candidate's answers are too short, try **follow-up** questions that bring out the specifics, details.

Say: “Please give me more details about...” or “What exactly did you do in that situation?”

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