**Job Interview Script**

**Stage I: The Opening**

When the applicant arrives, put him or her at ease using a friendly, professional attitude. Let the applicant know that you're glad that they've come and that you have set aside sufficient uninterrupted time to conduct the interview. You can start the interview with chatter about hobbies, interests, etc., if you are comfortable doing so and are confident that you can stay away from personal questions that might be considered discriminatory. Or you can simply ask one of the following questions:

*"How did you happen to become interested in our organization?"*

*"How did you hear of the opening?"*

Depending on the response, you can work in an overview of what you have planned.

*"Before we start, let me give you some idea of what I'd like to cover today. I want to review your background and experience so that we can decide whether the job is suited to your talents and interests. So, I'd like to learn about your career interests and job-related experience. After we have covered your background, I want to give you information about our organization and the job, and answer any questions that you might have."*

**Stage II: Gather Information Regarding Work Experience**

A discussion of work experience should vary widely based, in part, on how long the applicant has been employed. For instance, questions appropriate for a recent high school or college graduate may not be appropriate when interviewing a professional with 15 years of experience.

For an applicant with substantial experience, a reasonable starting point would be a discussion of the most recent position. In addition to focusing on previous roles, it might also be helpful to discuss why the applicant has changed jobs in the past, the duration of prior employment, chronological gaps in employment, etc.

The following options would be appropriate when interviewing someone who has not been working long:

*"A good place to start would be your work experience."*

*"I'm interested in the jobs you've held, what your duties and responsibilities were, your likes and dislikes, and what you felt you may have gained from them."*

*"Let's start with a brief review of your first work experiences, those you might have had part-time during school or during the summer, and then we'll concentrate on your more recent jobs in more detail."*

*"What do you remember most about your very first job?"*

Select specific follow-up questions for each job and move forward chronologically. When moving chronologically there's a more natural conversational flow and you are more likely to detect patterns of behavior that emerge.

* Your follow-up questions should ask for specific examples of behavior, not general or hypothetical responses. For instance, don't ask *"Are you dependable?"* you’ll likely get a simple ‘yes” response.Instead, say, *"Tell me about a day you got to work on time, only because of extra effort."*
* Similarly, instead of asking, *"Are you organized?"* say *"Tell me about a time when your organizational skills made a project successful"*

*or*

*"How did you organize your work in your last position? How did you handle the unexpected?"*

* Ask specific, clear questions one at a time and let the applicant answer uninterrupted. Resist filling in every lull in the conversation; wait to see if the applicant will do so.
* Avoid either verbally or physically giving the applicant a clue as to how you regard their answers; remain neutral.
* To draw the applicant out without revealing what you're thinking, try using his or her own words. If the candidate says, "I like to work independently**,**" you could respond with "Independently?" Of course, you could also use the opportunity to ask the applicant to give an example of what he or she did working independently.

After you have covered the applicant's work experience, move on to education.

**Stage III: Gather Information Regarding Education**

As in the case of the work experience portion of the interview, the education discussion must be tailored to suit the applicant's education level. The sample interview that follows would be appropriate for a younger applicant who has not been out of high school for any length of time. When interviewing for a professional position, the focus would shift to the professional education.

*"You've given me a good review of your work experience—now let's talk about your education. Why don't we start with high school briefly and then cover more recent schooling and any specialized on the job training you may have had. I'm interested in the subjects you preferred, your grades, extracurricular activities, and anything else of importance."*

Select specific follow-up questions for each educational experience and move forward chronologically. Don't necessarily accept answers at face value. Chronology reveals patterns. Take the information and patterns of behavior that you're being told and analyze them in terms of the performance skills you determined that you needed before the interview began.

**Stage IV: Gather Information Regarding Professional Activities and Interests**

*"Turning to the present, I'd like to give you the opportunity to mention some of your professional interests and activities outside of work—professional associations, or anything else you'd like to mention that you think might be relevant to our job. What would you like to mention?"*

* Select specific follow-up questions.

**Stage V: Self-Assessment**

*"Now let's try to summarize our conversation. Thinking about all we've covered today, what would you say are some of your strengths—qualities both personal and professional that make you a good prospect for our company?"*

Select specific follow-up questions as needed.

"You've given me some real assets, and now I'd like to hear about areas you'd like to develop further—all of us have qualities we'd like to change or improve. What are some of yours?"

Select specific follow-up questions as needed.

**Stage VI: Transition to Information-Giving Phase**

If you are still interested in the applicant, proceed to this phase of the interview. However, if you have already decided that the applicant is not suitable for the role, there isn't much point in describing a position that the applicant won't be filling.

*"You've given me a good review of your background and experience, and I have enjoyed talking with you. Before we turn to my review of our organization, and the job, is there anything else about your background you would like to cover?"*

*"Do you have any specific questions or concerns before I give you information about the job and the opportunities here?"*

*“All right, now I have some information I'd like to give you."*

* Review the organization, the job, benefits, location, etc.
* Tailor your presentation as appropriate to your interest in the candidate.

**Stage VII: Closing**

*"Do you have any other questions about us, the job, or anything else?"*

Let the applicant know what's likely to happen next, whether another interview will be needed, and how long it will be before a decision is made.

*"I want to thank you for coming today, we will be in contact with you within the next few weeks...."*