

Comprehensive List of Interview Question Do's and Don't's

NAME

DON'T ASK: Do you prefer Miss or Mrs.? What is your maiden name?
What an unusual name! What kind of name is that? French? Spanish?

Avoid inquiries that seek information on national origin, ancestry or marital status.

DO ASK: Is additional information, such as different name or nickname, needed to check job references?

AGE

DON'T ASK: How old are you? When were you born? How old are your children?
What year did you graduate from high school?
Don't ask to see birth certificate before making a job offer.

DO ASK: You may ask whether the applicant meets a minimum or maximum age requirement, but only if that is a bona fide occupational qualification (for certain public safety positions, for example)?

RACE

DON'T ASK: Any questions about race or color.

DO ASK: After the applicant begins employment, you may ask questions about race or color for affirmative action or EEOC reporting requirements.

GENDER

DON'T ASK: Any questions about applicant's gender.

DO ASK: After the applicant begins employment, you may ask questions about gender for affirmative action or EEOC reporting requirements.

RELIGION

DON'T ASK: What religion are you? What holidays do you celebrate? Can you provide a reference from a minister or pastor?

DO ASK: Can you meet the work schedule for this position?

**NAT'L
ORIGIN**

DON'T ASK: Where were you born? Where were your parents and grandparents born? Is English your native language? Are you a U.S. citizen?

DO ASK: Are you legally eligible to work in the United States?

DISABILITY **DON'T ASK:** What medical problems might limit your ability to perform these job duties? Will you need a reasonable accommodation to perform any job function? Have you ever been hospitalized? Ever been treated by a psychiatrist? Ever filed a workers' comp claim? Taking any prescription drugs? Have you ever been treated for drug or alcohol addiction? Have you ever been convicted on a drug-charge?

DO ASK: Can you perform the essential functions of the position? Can you perform all of the job duties of this position? Do you have the required licenses (for example, a driver's license or a professional licensure, like that of an R.N.)? Can you meet the attendance requirements of this job? How many Mondays and Fridays did you miss work last year?

**MILITARY
SERVICE**

DON'T ASK: Have you served in the military? What kind of military discharge did you receive?

DO ASK: You may ask about education or training that the applicant indicates s/he received in the military, if that information is relevant to the position for which the applicant has applied.

It is also legal to ask for a military discharge certificate *after* the applicant has been hired.

**MARITAL
STATUS and
PREGNANCY/
CHILDCARE ISSUES**

DON'T ASK: Are you single? Married? Divorced? Do you have any children? Who cares for your children while you are at work? Do you plan to have any (more) children?

DO ASK: You may ask about marital status for tax purposes *after* the applicant is hired. Similarly, you may ask about marital status and number of dependent children (or other dependents) for insurance purposes *after* the applicant is hired.

You may also ask whether an applicant can meet the job's work schedule. Be sure to ask this of all candidates, not just women.

CRIMINAL RECORD **DON'T ASK:** Have you ever been arrested?

DO ASK: Have you ever been convicted of a felony?

LANGUAGES **DON'T ASK:** What is your native language? How did you learn that foreign language?

DO ASK: If relevant to the job, you may ask whether the applicant reads or speaks any foreign languages fluently?

HEIGHT/WEIGHT

DON'T ASK: Unless relevant to the job.

DO ASK: If height or weight is a bona fide occupational qualification, you may ask applicants for this information.

CREDIT HISTORY

DON'T ASK: If an applicant's credit history is not relevant to the position, avoid questions about credit history or doing a credit check. Credit checks have been found to have an adverse impact on members of minority groups.

DO ASK: If the position involves financial responsibilities, you may do credit checks.

POLITICS

DON'T ASK: Don't ask *anything* about an applicant's political views or political affiliations.

DO ASK: Nothing!!!

MEMBERSHIPS and CLUBS

DON'T ASK: Don't ask about memberships in organizations that reflect race, color, gender, religion, national origin, or age. Don't ask an applicant to list *all* of the organizations to which s/he belongs, because that may be seen as "fishing" for prohibited information.

DO ASK: You may ask about professional memberships and about whether the applicant has served as an officer in any organization, if such information is relevant to the position.