



Human Resources Policy Manual

Employment-HR-110 Interviewing

- Federal statutes and court rulings have established that interview questions not relevant to the applicant's ability to perform the job may be discriminatory and therefore illegal under certain circumstances.
- **Hiring supervisors should ask the same core, job-related questions of all candidates to ensure consistency of treatment and comparability of responses among those interviewed.**
- Questions asked during employment or promotional interviews may be considered discriminatory if they have no bearing on the applicant's ability to do the job. Interview notes can be used in litigation of any discriminatory cases. Unintentional comments may be viewed as discriminatory.
- If a candidate volunteers personal or irrelevant information in the course of an interview, the hiring supervisor should immediately indicate to the individual that the information is not relevant to the ability to perform the job, and will not be considered in the hiring decision.

The following statements serve as a guide to help evaluate potentially discriminatory questions.

	Examples of Inappropriate Questions	Examples of Appropriate Questions
Name	What is your maiden name? Have you ever legally changed your name?	Are there other names under which you have worked that should be used to verify your academic credentials or prior work references?
Age	How old are you? How many years before you plan to retire?	Are you 18 years of age or older?
Birthplace	Where were you born? Where were your parents born?	Are you eligible to work in the United States?
Citizenship	Do you hold citizenship in any country other than the United States?	Are you eligible to work in the United States?
Physical Characteristics	How tall are you? How much do you weigh? What color are your eyes or hair? What is your race?	Can you perform the essential functions of the job with or without reasonable

	Examples of Inappropriate Questions	Examples of Appropriate Questions
		accommodation?
Health/Disability	What is your medical history? Do you have any disabilities? What are your disabilities? How will your disabilities affect your performance? Have you ever filed a Workers' Compensation claim against a former employer?	Can you perform the essential functions of this job with or without reasonable accommodation?
Marital Status	Are you married, single, divorced, separated, widowed? Are you living with anyone?	No appropriate questions with regard to marital status.
Family	Where does your spouse work? Are you the primary wage-earner for your family? Do you have children? What are your child care arrangements?	No appropriate questions with regard to family.
Relatives	What are the names of your closest relatives or friends?	Are you related to anyone employed by the University of Missouri, or to a member of the University of Missouri Board of Curators?
National Origin	What is your lineage, ancestry, national origin, descent, parentage, nationality, or the nationality of your parents or spouse?	Are you eligible to work in the United States?
Religion	What is your religious affiliation? What holidays do you observe?	Are you available to work on the days and shifts expected of this position?
Language	What is your native language? What language do you speak at home?	What is your fluency level in the language(s) required to effectively perform this job?
Financial Status	How is your credit history? Have you ever declared bankruptcy? Have your wages ever been garnished?	Questions regarding financial status are usually not job related so should generally be considered inappropriate.
Military Service	Was your discharge honorable or dishonorable? Why did you serve with a foreign military?	What training or experience that you gained in your military service is relevant to this job?
Organizations	Are you a member of any social clubs,	Are you a member of any

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	fraternities, sororities, lodges, teams, or religious organizations?	professional, trade, or service associations that are directly related to the requirements of this job?
Criminal History	Have you ever been arrested?	Have you ever been convicted of a crime? If so, is the nature of the conviction relevant to this job?
Substance Abuse	Do you have a history of alcohol or drug addiction? What medications are you currently taking?	Do you currently use any illegal substances, or any legal substances illegally?
Salary Level	What is the lowest salary you will accept?	Are you interested in the position at the level it is budgeted?
References	What is the name of your pastor or religious leader?	What is the name of an individual who would serve as a character reference?

See [HR 102 Equal Opportunity Program](#) .

Date Created: 9/26/97

Last Updated: 4/1/2005