



BEST PRACTICES FOR EMPLOYMENT INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

AUDIENCE: HR Community

In alignment with our institutional statement on diversity and in support of the University of Wisconsin–Madison’s mission, vision, values, and commitments, this resource provides best practices for developing inclusive interview questions that can be used throughout the hiring process.

GENERAL BEST PRACTICES

At UW–Madison, we use a standardized interview process where every candidate is asked the same questions in the same order, the interview takes place in the same setting, and the same time allotment is given to each candidate. This approach helps reduce bias by ensuring that each candidate is treated equitably. In addition, we also recommend the following:

- Create a list of questions that are behavior-based that focus on job-related experiences, behaviors, knowledge, skills, and abilities.
- Carefully consider what your questions are designed to uncover. Focusing on a candidate's abilities rather than just their experience helps include people from diverse backgrounds and perspectives in your hiring process.
- Avoid language that’s biased toward a specific gender, age range, race, culture, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, socioeconomic background, political affiliation or ability.
- Avoid questions that are already answered in the candidate’s application materials. (Resume, cover letter).
- Avoid yes/no questions.

COMMON INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

The following is a list of commonly used inclusive interview questions to serve as a reference when creating a list of questions.

- Tell us about a time when you took steps to ensure that everyone (on your team, in your organization) felt included. Describe the situation, the actions you took, and the outcome.
- Describe a time when you had to help resolve a conflict between two colleagues. Describe the situation, the actions you took, and the outcome.
- How have you incorporated diverse viewpoints and perspectives into your decision/policy making? Please provide a specific example.
- How have you reviewed current policies, processes, or programs to ensure that they are equitable? What steps did you take to address these inequities (if applicable)?
- What steps have you taken at your current (or last) employer to create an inclusive work or learning environment? What lessons did you learn from that experience?



- Please describe how you work to create a work environment that is welcoming and inclusive. Please provide a specific example.
- Tell us about a time when you had to deal with conflict at work. Describe the situation, the actions you took, and the outcome.
- Please share an experience when you had to consider someone's (or a group's) specific needs when creating or assisting with a solution.
- Tell us about a time when you helped create or foster an environment of honesty, inclusion, and respect for others. Describe the situation, the actions you took, and the outcome.

If you have any additional questions, please contact Talent Acquisition at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, Office of Human Resources. They are available Monday through Friday, from 7:45 AM to 4:30 PM, and can be reached at 608-265-2257 or uwjobs@wisc.edu.

