

Seven top tips for effective interviewing by Ross Clennett

Interviewing is a critical skill for any HR practitioner, recruiter or line manager. In a previous century poor interview skills were largely hidden by the ready availability of alternative candidates when a less-than-optimum recruit was fired or resigned. Those days are long gone. Instead the impact on a company's morale, reputation and profitability makes poor interviewing skills one of the least-recognised, yet costly areas of a company's internal processes.

Ineffective interviewing skills have three major consequences:

- a) The best candidate is less likely to be identified,
- b) The wrong candidate is hired because the interviewer 'liked them'
- c) Unimpressed, the best candidate rejects the job,

Interviewing is similar to coaching in that what appears to be 'just a conversation' is in fact a structured, purposeful dialogue with a clear outcome in mind.

If you want to be an effective interviewer here are my Top 7 tips;

- 1) Before an interview commences understand what you need to know from the candidate to assess their appropriateness for the job and the **questions** you will ask to most effectively discover that information,
- 2) Use a **structured, behavioural** interview format. By doing so you increase your chances of identifying the most suitable candidate for the job from 20% to 80%
- 3) All good candidates have choices so never assume they want to work for you. Have a couple of powerful **examples** that clearly demonstrate the benefit of working for your organisation,
- 4) Understanding the **context** of a candidate's past job performance is critical in ranking competing candidates and making an effective job match,
- 5) Evidence based answers are the **only** effective way to assess competencies. Theoretical knowledge or answers ('would do', 'could do', 'should do') have a low correlation to actual competencies and performance,
- 6) Understand both the **core competencies** and the **primary motivators** of the candidate to ensure that they can both **do** the job and they **want to** do the job,
- 7) Never assume **anything**. Ask, check and probe until you are satisfied.

Effective interviewing skills ensure you dramatically increase your chances of recruiting the right person, the first time. There's nothing wrong with hiring people you like, but you'll like them a lot less if they don't have the right competencies or motivation to perform the job effectively.

Ross Clennett, MRCSA, started his professional recruitment career in London at the beginning of 1989. Since then he has worked in the UK and three cities across Australia. As a Certified Master Practitioner of Neuro Linguistic Programming (NLP) Ross communicates his passion for recruitment to others in a simple and powerful way through keynote speaking, workshops and individual coaching. For a free copy of Ross's ebook [Succeed Quickly or Fail Slowly: A High Performance Framework for Recruiters](#) please visit www.rossclennett.com

