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The Ultimate **ROCKSTAR** Employee Toolkit

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR MANAGERS

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Name:

Date:

REMEMBER THIS

All applicants *will say anything to get a job.*

They need three character traits. They must be *hungry, humble and have people smarts*

Set job expectations. They have to know *this can be 12 hour days in the heat, rain and wind. Walking on roofs and getting dirty.*

They will exaggerate their capabilities. If they were that awesome they would still be working at their last job.

Make sure we are a *step up not down* for them

Prior to the interview they must provide us with their *last paystub, three of their last jobs/ references with phone numbers and a contact person.*

Never hire someone who is "good enough;" always wait for the best. Waiting to hire the right person for a role is painful, but will save you time, money and your sanity in the long run. They are out there and you will find them.

DETERMINE IF THEY ARE HUNGRY

"What is the hardest you've ever worked on anything in your life?" Look for specific examples of real but joyful sacrifice. In other words, the candidate isn't complaining, but is grateful for the experience.

"What kinds of hours do you generally work?" Hardworking people usually don't want to work nine to five, unless their unique life situations demand it. And if they do, they are usually getting additional work done at home. That's not to say that some people aren't stuck in dead-end, nine-to-five jobs and are itching to get out and do something challenging. But if a candidate is satisfied with a predictable schedule and talks too much about "balance," there's a chance he isn't terribly hungry.



“How many jobs do you have right now?” *Hungry people generally have more than one job*

“Did you work hard when you were a teenager?” Look for specifics, usually relating to schoolwork, sports, or jobs. And when it comes to sports, it's not about participation and having fun. Look for examples of difficulty, sacrifice, and hardship. I like to ask people about how hard they worked in high school. Did they really try to do well? Did they have a job? Did they train extraordinarily hard in a sport?

“Have you played any team sports before?” People who play team sports such as basketball, soccer and rowing are driven, focused on achieving goals and physically fit, which helps keep their mind in peak condition. Generally, they will also be great communicators, cope well under pressure and perform well during team events.

“What time do you normally get up on a weekday? How about the weekend?” *Early risers have more energy, want to get ahead and are more productive.*

“What’s the best job you ever had?”

“What made it the best?” *Listen to this to find out if they liked the work or the people at work.*

“Describe your best boss? Why was he/she the best?” *This can tell you if they need constant encouragement and positive feedback.*



“What do you do in your free time?” Find out if their hobbies and interests will conflict with work. If they read selfhelp books or business books they are hungry. Team sports, work with their hands are good signs.

“Describe your life 5 years from now?” Look for goals like buy a house, be a manager, own my own business.

“What is your passion in life? What do you like to do when you're not working?” Look out for too many time-consuming hobbies that suggest the candidate sees the job as a means to do other things.

“Which book are you currently reading?” Passionate people tend to read books or listen to audio books to improve their skills. Whether the books are specific to a skill such as sales and marketing or they're reading a book focused on self-development doesn't matter, they are all good signs.

If they're reading a fiction book and haven't read an educational book for a while, that's a red flag to me. Superstars are always looking to better themselves, and the smartest people I know are always learning and absorbing new information.

“What's the one thing you've accomplished in your career that you're most proud of?” This gives you insight into what makes them tick and also lets you assess how they define success. If, for example, they worked at their previous company for 12 years and their biggest accomplishment was beating their sales target in a single quarter, they may not be a superstar. On the other hand, if they were promoted five times in their previous role during a two-year period, then you may have a superstar on your hands.



“What do you do for fun?” *Balance is an important part of success, and I've found that superstars strive to do well in most, if not all, areas of their life including physical fitness, relationships contribution and learning.*

As an example, if someone hits the gym three days a week, volunteers on Saturdays and is learning how to play the piano “just for fun,” then it's fair to say they value achievement, goal setting and are continually looking to improve themselves. This will translate into their job.

“What motivates you to come into work every day?” *There are a number of ways for people to answer this question, but I have found those that carry a great energy and hit on curiosity as a reason to run up the stairs every day. Great hires know that learning never ends and they maintain a high degree of intellectual curiosity throughout their day-to-day work.*

“Why do you think you're a good fit for the position?” *This one works best when you're hiring people with strong personalities that need to push through constantly hearing “no,” such as for sales reps or sales leaders, and it's more of a comment than a question. By simply making this statement, they can do one of three things. They can ignore you and skip over the comment. They can agree and try to move on. Or, they can try to sell you on the benefits of bringing them into your business, specifically focusing on the main reasons you can't afford not to hire them.*

“What was the last career-related book you read or CD have you recently listened to that was related to your job duties or skills?”

“Are you currently reading a job-related book? If so, which one?”



“What was the last job-related class or course you took?” These types of behavioral interview questions will help determine if the person is continually learning and growing on their own time.

If the only book, class or course they have been through recently was because they were required to at their former job, then it may be that the person is more of a whiner than a winner. Winners take responsibility for continually educating themselves; they don't wait until their employer makes them take a class or read a book.

“Are They Humble?”

“When we call your supervisor how would he/she describe the way you treat clients and fellow team members?”

“If I were to ask your fellow workers to assess your level of humility what would they say?” Tell me about a time you were taken advantage of
Tell me about the most important accomplishment of your career....look for “we” not “I” to test for humility

“Describe the most embarrassing moment of your career. Or biggest failure.” Look for whether they are mortified or celebrate it as a learning experience.

“How did you handle the embarrassment or failure?”

“Describe your greatest weakness?” Look for real and painful, everyone has a weakness, if they don't they are not humble.



“I’d really like to know what you’d like to change about yourself or better yet what your best friends think you need to work on.”

“How do you handle apologies, either giving or accepting them? Tell me a story?” *They generally have a story and are not afraid to be sorry.*

“Tell me about someone who is better than you in an area that matters to you.” *Look for a genuine appreciation.*

“Tell me about a problem you were tasked with solving in your current job. How did you fix it?” *Again, this surfaces their problem solving and creative thinking skills or lack thereof. Did they have a thoughtful approach to solving the problem or did they pass it on to someone else?*

DO THEY HAVE PEOPLE SMARTS?

“How would you describe your personality?” *Look for how accurately the person describes what you are observing and how introspective he is. Smart people generally know themselves and find it interesting to talk about their behavioral strengths and weaknesses. People who seem stumped or surprised by this question might not be terribly smart when it comes to people.*

“What kind of people annoy you the most, and how do you deal with them?” *What you're looking for here are self-awareness and self-control. Smart people know their pet peeves, and they own the fact that some of those pet peeves are their own issues. They also know how to deal with annoying people in a productive, constructive way.*



GENERAL FOR EVERYONE

“Ever lose your DL?” *Tell them we run a driver’s license transcript and background check on all prospective team members.*

“Where did you work last?” *Check to make sure we have this information already and it is the same.*

“Who was your supervisor?” *Get their name and call them.*

“What is his/her phone number?”

“How would he describe you:”

- Job performance
- Honesty
- Work ethic
- Attitude

“Good” is not an acceptable answer to these questions.

“When we speak with your previous supervisors how many days will they tell me you had to either leave work or not come to work for personal or family matters?”

“How many days were you late to work in the last year?”



“Do you have kids?” *Find out who takes care of them in an emergency.*

DREAMER OR VISIONARY?

“Describe your ideal job?”

“What duties would you perform in you ideal job?”

“Have you ever performed these duties in another job?”

“How many days a week would you work in your ideal job?”

“How many hours a day would you work in your ideal job?”

“How much would you get paid per hour or per week?”

“How do you want to be remembered when you die?”



“Describe the hardest job you ever had?”

FIND OUT WHAT THEY KNOW ABOUT US.

If they know a lot they have done their homework and are hungry.

“What do you like about our business? How would you change what you don't like?” *This question does two things. First, it gives you insight into how a candidate will verbalize something they don't like. Will they talk about the problem and then immediately suggest a solution, or will they tell you that your business is perfect when in reality, it probably isn't? Look for people who talk 5 percent about the problem and 95 percent about the solution. By asking how they'd change what they don't like, you get a chance to hear how they'd go about solving problems. For example, if they say your customer service stinks but can't suggest even a basic idea to fix it, what chance do they have of fixing problems when they're working for you? Will they just give up and move on to something else? Probably. The best employees solve problems fast and on their own.*

“Why do you want to work at this company and what are your expectations?” *You need to know if people want to join your company for the right reasons. For example, do they know what it takes to be successful at an early-stage company? Are they prepared to embrace ambiguity? Are they ready to get their hands dirty? Are they ready to execute quickly with limited resources? Are they scrappy? Whatever values you hold true at the heart of your culture, you need to hire people who are aligned with how your business operates and the values you live by.*



GENERAL FOR MANAGERS

“What is the longest day you ever worked?”

“Describe the worst job you ever had?”

“Did you ever drive a truck with a trailer? When for who?”

“What do you expect from this job? *Get very detailed information It is really important for the applicant to have clear and realistic vision and expectations.”*

“What are your goals for this job? What are your long-term career plans and goals?”

Please tell us this about your current job:

- What you do
- How you do it
- Why you are leaving?

“Please tell us 5 strengths and 5 weaknesses you have?”

“Do you have any injuries?”



“Have you had any operations?”

“When is the last time you were on a roof? How high was it?”

SELF AWARENESS

“Who inspires you and why?” *I like to learn from people who their points of inspiration are. Who are their role models and what makes those people special to the candidate? You often garner quite a few insights from this question as it gives you a peak into the behavioral patterns an individual respects and in many cases models themselves after.*

“What’s your superpower?” *Everybody is great at something. Everyone has a superpower. It is the go to trait you pull from when times get tough and you need put your head down, crank and produce. People should be honest about this and you should encourage an honest answer.*

“How do you rely on others to make you better?” *I like this question because it gives people the opportunity to showcase one of my favorite traits: self-awareness. The best hires know that they don’t know everything. They are aware of their strengths and limitations and can speak to them both with transparency and candor.*



WINNER OR WHINER?

Whiners believe that their personal life is completely separate from or has nothing to do with their professional life. In fact, nothing could be further from the truth. Our personal and professional lives are intricately connected.

What happens at home affects our work and what happens at work affects our home. Winners understand this and are constantly working at balancing their personal responsibilities with their professional requirements.

Victims or complainers are toxic

Candidates who are winners are committed to:

- Learning and growing
- Creating and maintaining a positive attitude
- Working on consciously choosing their thoughts, words and actions because they know that those three things produce their results

Interview Questions that Reflect Attitude

Tell me about a time that you caused an issue with your team and how you managed it?

Have you had any differences with your previous managers? If so, how did you handle them?

Have you ever felt that your skills were being overlooked? What did you do to improve the situation?

While you want to avoid direct questions about how the candidate was treated in previous jobs (such questions could lead to possible legal hiring action), you can listen for how the candidate handled various situations with their co-workers and managers. Someone once said, if John has a problem with Susan and John has a problem with Mark and John has a problem with Mary and Joe, then John is the problem. Whiners create problems from companies. Winners create positive results for companies. Hiring great people means that you rank attitude as important (or maybe even more important) as hiring someone for their skills.



TOXIC TEST

Ask for the five things the person liked least about his or her last (or current) company. Asking for one thing is pretty common. Asking for five pressures the person to reveal either strategic insights or signs of toxicity.

One type of toxic employee is the perpetual victim who feels that anything that went bad was someone else's fault. Check for this by asking interviewees to describe an experience in which things did not turn out as hoped and see how they react. If they only blame others for the problem and never admit their own faults, you have a red flag that they might do this at your company later on.

We have a pretty intensive process in which candidates must pass multiple "gates" that assess their skills, experience, attitude and, most important, cultural fit. The extended process culls those who are acting from those who are being genuine. Anyone can put on an act for an hour. It's more difficult to hide your true colors after a day of meetings and events with our team.

FINAL IMPRESSIONS OF THE CANDIDATE

One final suggestion -- notice how you feel when an interviewee walks in the room and when they walk out of the interview

CHECKING REFERENCES

Put the Reference Provider at Ease It's critical that a reference not feel that he is holding the future of the candidate in his hands, because this makes him want to be overly positive or, in many cases, cautious and general. Explain that the purpose of your call is not simply to ask if the candidate was a good employee, but rather whether she would thrive in the job she's interviewing for. In other words, ask the reference to serve as a consultant, one whose job it is to ensure that there is a fit that will benefit everyone. If that sounds dishonest or tricky, consider that it's nothing but the truth. All you want to do is describe the culture of the team the candidate will be joining and find out whether the reference thinks it's a match. Assure the reference that he or she isn't the only person providing input and that everything will be kept confidential and discreet. Ask the reference to serve as a consultant, one whose job it is to ensure that there is a fit that will benefit everyone.

Look for Specifics It's fine to start by asking the reference to give you three or four adjectives that best describe the candidate. Those might be good indicators of humble,



smart. But spend your time asking about specific behaviors and about how the candidate compared to other people the reference has managed or worked with. Adjust the interview questions from the previous section, and see how they match up with what the candidate said.

Focus on Areas of Doubt Use the reference check to explore areas that you are unclear about relating to the candidate. If you're really clear on humility and smarts, probe specifically for hunger. Use the time wisely, and get to questions that reveal specific behaviors rather than general assessments.

Pay Attention to References Who Don't Respond When reference givers do not respond to your requests for a reference, it is possible that they aren't enthusiastic about the candidate. Remember, the candidate provided the names of the references. Most people are excited to provide a positive reference for a former employee or colleague. When they aren't, they often delay or avoid doing so.

Ask What Others Would Say Just as you would ask the candidate what others would say about him or her, ask references the same question. It gives them permission to say, "I always thought she was a hard worker, but some of her colleagues weren't so sure." That allows them to feel like they aren't bad-mouthing the candidate, but at the same time makes it easier to share important information.

Use LinkedIn to connect with individuals who have worked with the candidate before. Ask them if they'd be amenable to a 10-minute conversation and then read between the lines. Many people won't say something overtly negative, but their reports won't be glowing either. **Does this involve some extra work? Yes. But it's worth its weight in gold if you can spare your team a toxic addition.**



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