

# Panel Member Instructions

**Do's and Don'ts:**

**Do:**

- Allow equal interview time for each candidate.
- Make sure the seating arrangement allows the candidate to feel comfortable.
- Secure an interview room free from interruptions and distractions.
- Explain the purpose of the interview.
- Acquire sufficient information for making a documented rating decision.
- Complete an interview worksheet on each candidate before interviewing the next.
- Prepare for the interview – be familiar with the KSAs to be measured.
- Express appreciation for the candidate's participation, and time away from work.
- Conclude the interview by summarizing what will happen next in the rating process.

**Do not:**

- Accept any additional materials from the applicant during the interview process.

**Interview Questions:**

It is very important that interviews do not violate EEO laws and regulations. Since many discrimination charges frequently involve the interview process, there are some areas that are sensitive and should not be part of the interview. There are legal and illegal subjects that you should be aware of. Legal areas may be addressed in the interview, but the questioning should be tactful and appropriate for the job to be filled.

<b>Interview Subjects</b>	<b>Illegal</b>	<b>Legal if Job Related</b>
Age	Any question which tends to identify applicants between 40-64 years of age is illegal. Example: Do you remember the 1940 election?"	There is no legal question you can ask regarding this subject. The HR office may request documentation to verify age if necessary, to ensure legally set minimum age and maximum age limits are met.
Citizenship	Any of the following cannot be asked: Are you a citizen of the United States? Are your parents/spouse a US citizen? When did you acquire US citizenship? Are you/spouse/parent native born or naturalized?	There is no legal question you can ask on this subject. The HR office may request documentation to verify citizenship requirements.
National Origin	Any of the following questions cannot be asked: What is your national origin? What language is spoken in your home? What is your native language?	There is no legal question you can ask regarding this subject.
Race/Color	You may not ask any question that directly or indirectly relates to race or color.	There is no legal question you can ask regarding this subject.
Religion	The following questions cannot be asked: What church do you attend? What religious holidays do you observe?	There is no legal question you can ask regarding this subject.
Sex	You may not ask any question which inquiries as to one's gender: For example: What are your plans regarding having children in the near future?	There is no legal question you can ask regarding this subject.

	Do you mind having a male/female supervisor? Can you work with a group of men/women?	
Marital Status/Family	Any of the following questions can not be asked: Are you married? Divorced? Widowed? With whom do you live? Do your children live with you? What ages are your children? Is your husband/wife in the military	There are no legal questions you can ask regarding this subject.
Education	You may not ask questions that specifically ask the nationality, racial, or religious affiliation of a school; the candidate's education level in general, if not related to the job being filled.	You may ask questions concerning a candidate's academic, vocation, or professional education as long as it pertains to the KSAs related to the position being filled.
Organizational Affiliation	You may not ask the following question: To what organization, societies and clubs do you belong?	You may ask questions related to this subject if they are related to the job being filled and how the candidates' participation in the organization may fulfill the KSAs.
Work Schedule/Travel	Do not ask any questions that relate to childcare, ages of children or other non-job related areas.	If the job being filled has special requirements, (i.e., travel, overtime, unusual hours, etc.) these conditions may be stated. For example: In this job you would have to travel 1 week in every month. Does this present a problem to you?
Military Discharge	The following question may not be asked: Were you honorable discharged from military service?	There is no legal question you can ask regarding this subject.
Economic Status	The following questions may not be asked: Do you have a good credit rating? Do you have any trouble with bills/collection agencies?	There is no legal question you can ask regarding this subject.
Security Clearance	The following question may not be asked: Do you have a secret/top secret /other security clearance	If the job to be filled requires a certain type of security clearance, this condition may be stated.  For example: "This job requires a top secret clearance. Does this requirement present any problem?"
Personal Plans	The following question may not be asked: Do you have plans to live in this area long?	There is no legal question you can ask regarding this subject.
Participation in Certain Activities	Do not ask the following questions: Do you plan to contribute to the Combined Federal Campaign/take savings bond/join the coffee club?	There is no legal question you can ask regarding this subject.

**Prohibited Personnel Practices:**

During this process, please be aware of what constitutes a prohibited personnel practice:

1. Illegally discriminate for or against any employee/applicant.
2. Solicit or consider improper employment recommendations.
3. Coerce an employee's political activity.
4. Obstruct a person's right to compete for employment.
5. Influence any person to withdraw from competition for a position.
6. Give unauthorized preference or improper advantage.
7. Employ or promote a relative.
8. Retaliate against a whistleblower, whether an employee or applicant.
9. Retaliate against employees or applicants for filing an appeal.
10. Unlawfully discriminate for off duty conduct.
11. Violate any law, rule or regulation which implement or directly concerns the merit principles.
12. Knowingly violate veterans' preference requirements.