

The job interview in a tendency organization

Interviewer's guide

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A JOB INTERVIEW IS A KEY TOOL IN THE PROCESS OF SELECTING AND HIRING CANDIDATES IN ANY ORGANIZATION, ESPECIALLY IN TENDENCY ORGANIZATIONS.

A tendency organization is one that defends a particular viewpoint in its values or vision of its work. There are many organizations of this type. They often belong to areas of research, dissemination, teaching or healthcare, for example: environmental NGOs, think tanks, hospitals, schools, religious institutions, maternity facilities, or political parties. In these cases, the job interview should insure the proper transmission of the values and viewpoints essential to the organization's work.

The purpose of the meeting is mutual understanding. That is to say, that the interviewer can judge the candidate's suitability with respect to technical qualifications as well as personal values necessary to working in the position in question, and that the candidate can get a better feel for the institution to determine if he or she would like to work there.

In this context, the interview is a key part of the selection process to strengthen the organization's DNA. It is often more important than other formal mechanisms directed towards maintaining institutional identity and mission.

Before the interview: preparation

1. Before the interview, it is important to define precisely the position to be filled, including when appropriate how it is implicated in respect for, loyalty to and completion of the mission statement. Depending on the type of work and its social impact, more or less intensive commitment to respecting and disseminating the mission statement may be required. Jobs close to the nucleus of the mission statement are especially relevant, and are called "tendency carriers." Among these are positions of "reinforced loyalty" like key posts in governance, training jobs and posts that link the institution with sensitive audiences (students, clients, patients or institutional relations, for example).
2. It is a good idea to go over the prevailing labor regulations in each country to determine how best to propose to the candidate the commitment we are going to ask of him or her regarding respect for and even dissemination of the mission statement. It is also important to know what limitations may be in force with regard to asking values-related questions during the interview, particularly when they refer to areas a priori beyond the strictly working environment.
3. It is important to make sure that the candidate has been able to access the documentation that the organization publishes on its information channels (web, etc.): its identity, mission and policies.

During the interview: What to talk about

1. Establishing a comfortable environment facilitates understanding. Truly communicating the organization's ethos will make the selection interview more relevant. It's important to maintain a friendly dialogue of sincere respect, so that the candidate feels free to express his or her opinion of the mission statement, and any doubts about the institutional aims, as well as the degree to which he or she identifies with the mission statement. Especially in positions that require its active dissemination and stimulus.
2. The success of the interview does not depend on whether or not the candidate is hired. What matters is discerning whether the candidate could do the job comfortably because he or she has understood the challenges, limits and obligations implicit in becoming part of a tendency organization. Cases in which the candidate is in a somewhat vulnerable employment situation require special caution
3. Going over candidates' career paths with them is good practice, as people generally "are what they have done." Talking about their work and personal experiences usually reveals the values that have guided their decisions and can help the interviewer get a glimpse of whether the person is in tune with the identity and mission of the tendency organization. It should be kept in mind that such consonance is gradual, depending on the position sought. Furthermore, the candidate's potential to develop and learn should be considered.
4. An interview is a good instrument for evaluating whether candidates have understood well the mission statement message; if the institution's mission is compatible with their lifestyle, and finally, if the institutional mandate goes against their convictions in any way. For example, a person who regularly goes hunting would not be the best spokesperson for a vegan organization.

This type of information should be weighed together with the context and the level of identification with the mission statement required of the post in question (knowledge of, tolerance of, respect for, dissemination of, admiration for, transmission of, promulgation of, sharing of, commitment to, identification with), before deciding on the candidate's suitability.

5. A selection interview is an appropriate atmosphere for clearing up any doubts that might come up regarding the job implications of the mission statement. For example, candidates could be ignorant of some aspects of the institutional mandate, or on the contrary, assume as work obligations attitudes or commitments that fall within the private realm, and thus misinterpreting what the organization expects of its employees.

After the interview: what to weigh

1. The post-interview consideration should weigh candidates' technical capacity as well as their capacity to respect – and in some positions to commit to – the institutional mandate, to the degree required by each position. Furthermore, to give proper consideration to a candidate's profile, the current situation and strategy of each organization should be taken into account, alongside its mission and identity.
2. In the evaluation, it can help to reflect upon the candidate's potential career path within the organization. In some companies, the questions the interviewers might ask themselves after seeing a candidate are: 1) Would I hire the candidate to work on my team now? 2) Do I think the candidate could someday rise to the organization's upper management? 3) If I hire the candidate now, what skills and aptitudes would he or she have to develop in order to be able to achieve that goal?

Periodic personnel evaluations in a tendency organization

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EVALUATION INTERVIEWS ARE PERIODIC OPPORTUNITIES FOR ORGANIZATIONS TO OFFER FEEDBACK TO THEIR COLLABORATORS REGARDING THEIR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND THEIR ATTITUDES.

These conversations are "moments of truth" that promote a motivational organizational culture that inspires values and commitments that are key to the development of the institution's DNA:

Furthermore, it's a unique opportunity to let employees know how much the organization really cares about them. That's why a proper evaluation is in a certain sense a "right" that the employees have and an "obligation" on the part of management.

Before the conversation: preparation

1. The evaluation interview requires preparation time.

It is a unique opportunity to remember the **job profile** and underline the attitudinal aspects that are most sensitive to the institutional aims. This helps reinforce goals, promote reflection and motivate action – as well as correct any errors – in the service of strengthening the institutional culture and carrying out its mission.

2. Our collaborators are entitled to a clear idea about the performance that is expected of them, also in terms of the institution's values and identity.

Therefore, the interview feedback time should not use the mission statement to chastise behavior that the institution has not dared spell out. That would lead to mistrust and suspicion of hidden agendas, double standards, and employer capriciousness.



During the conversation: listening and clarity

1. The evaluator should make every effort to listen in order to understand the employee's difficulties and agree upon a set of goals for that person.
2. In this type of interview, the emotional connection with the other person is as important as the information that is communicated. How people feel when being evaluated affects their motivation and their commitment to their evaluators' proposals. In a tendency organization, it is incumbent upon evaluators to make sure that the conversation unfolds in an atmosphere of getting to know one another, being empathetic, positive and clear.
3. When there are facets that should be corrected or improved, it is important to be extremely clear. When appropriate to the circumstances, the goals established can be accompanied by a written document. Furthermore, when important things are in play that demand employing or avoiding certain attitudes, it is important to make certain that the message is unequivocal, and sends no mixed or confusing signals to the employee. For example, if congratulations are in order, they should be clearly differentiated from the demands or goals proposed, giving the praise and the corrections their due importance.
4. The follow up interview is a good moment to clear up doubts or prejudices that the worker may have with respect to the mission statement, especially about any interpretations of how the mission statement might be related to changes in his or her personal life and their job consequences.



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