What Every Interviewer Should Know

	QUESTIONS	ANSWERS
1	What are the goals when conducting interviews?	There are 3 basic goals: 1. Create a two-way conversation using the interview tools provided to gain the most accurate and useful information about the job candidate so *you can* make an informed selection decision. 2. Provide accurate and appropriate information to the candidate about the position and the working conditions. 3. Reinforce a positive image of the organization.
2	What do I need to do to prepare for the interview?	Review the position requirements, interview questions, resume, and any other information you have available on the candidate prior to conducting the interview. You don't want to be reading through this information for the first time when you sit down for the interview. If applicable, you also want to determine who else will be interviewing the candidate (s) and provide them with this information as well.
3	How do I get the interview started and make the candidate feel comfortable?	1. Set the tone. Be prompt and welcoming. Introduce yourself and title clearly. Make sure you address the candidate by name. 2. Initiate a relaxed flow of conversation. Draw the candidate into a little small talk, weather, where they are from, and so forth. 3. Explain the interview process to them. You might say something like, "Before we begin, let me give you some information about what we are going to be doing in the next hour... 4. Kick-off the interview proper by asking a general question that they would expect, and for which they likely have an answer. This can put them at ease and get them started talking. For instance, ask them how they came to be interested in this position.

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4 What are the benefits of using multiple raters or interviewers to assess a candidate (s)?	Using multiple interviewers gives you a more reliable and accurate assessment of the candidate by: 1. Reducing bias interviewers might bring into the ratings (see question #6). 2. Confirming the conclusions you may have drawn about a candidate. For example, if another interviewer disagrees with your evaluation and conclusion, make sure you discuss and review your assessment together. You may realize that you have obtained very different information. 3. Allowing interviewers to do more in-depth assessments in a particular area by dividing up the interview questions amongst the interviewers. This also avoids the interviewee hearing the same questions over and over.
5 If I am using multiple raters or interviewers to assess a candidate (s), what do I need to know?	First, make sure all interviewers have information about the position and candidate prior to the interview. Once interviews have commenced, interviewers should *not* discuss individual candidates until all candidates have been interviewed. Premature discussion has the potential to introduce bias, particularly by placing emphasis on some selection criteria over others. Lastly, once all interviews have finished, compare independent ratings, discuss discrepancies, and seek consensus.
6 What are some common errors to watch out for when I am evaluating and rating candidates?	It is very common for some of us, or all of us, to commit some of these rating errors when conducting interviews. However, the more we become aware of these, the less likely we are to commit these errors. Here are the six most common errors: • Halo Error • Contrast Effect • First Impression Error • Blind-Spot Error • High Potential effect • Dramatic-Incident Effect
7 What do you mean by Halo Error?	Halo errors occurs when a candidate is strong in one area and the interviewer then perceives them as strong in other areas even though their answers to the questions are relatively weak. For instance, just because they are proficient in computer programming doesn't mean they excel in web development if they have limited experience or training.

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8	What do you mean by Contrast Effect?	Check to see if you are making contrast errors especially if you are talking with multiple candidates in a single day. Are you evaluating each candidate individually, or are your ratings affected by candidates who have been evaluated before or after the current candidate? For example, if an average candidate follows a poor candidate, the average candidate's evaluation may be inflated.
9	What is a First Impression Error?	First Impression Error occurs when the candidate is evaluated during the first minutes of the interview. Such evaluation is based on first impression behavior such as a handshake, smile, eye contact, appearance, friendliness, and so forth. First impression error becomes a problem when you place too much emphasis on these behaviors when carrying out the interview. Concentrate on asking the structured questions and probes, and on documenting the candidate's answers. By consciously delaying judgment until all the data is in, it will be easier to remain objective.
10	What is a Blind Spot Error?	Blind-Spot Errors occurs when the interviewer may not see, or under-rates, certain deficits because maybe they actually hold these same weaknesses. For example, if you do not like doing paperwork, you may be inclined to ignore this deficit in a candidate even if very detailed paperwork is a major component of the job.
11	What is the High Potential Effect?	The High Potential Effect occurs when the interviewer makes a judgment based on the candidate's credentials rather than their performance, experience or behavior. A college degree from a particular school doesn't mean that they can automatically perform the job well.
12	What is the Dramatic-Incident Effect?	The Dramatic-Incident Effect is an error that occurs when the interviewer focuses on a negative aspect of the interview. This negative comment, answer, situation, etc. then clouds all the other good work the candidate may have done. Here too, sticking to the interview guide and doing good documentation will allow you to come back and more accurately evaluate the total package after you have seen more candidates.

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13	How do I get the best information from an interview?	• Use the Interview Guide available in ThinkWise. The guide provides good questions and key probes that are based on the competencies needed to perform the job well. • Pay attention to non-verbal behavior. Look to see if there is consistency between the verbal and non-verbal information being shared. • Learn to determine good information from ""fizz."" The difference? Good information is specific and based on actual behaviors the candidate has engaged in rather than information that just ""sounds"" good. • Make sure you are giving the candidate amble air time. The more you talk, the less you will learn about the candidate. Use the 80/20 rule. The candidate should do 80 % of the talking while you should be speaking 20%.
14	What are some questions I should NOT ask during the interview?	It is easier to remember which questions you can and cannot ask if you simply remember that anything that is not related to whether the candidate can do the job should not be asked, because it would be unlawful — and foolish — to base your hiring decision on it. See our *Interview Question Guidelines* for more specific details on what you can and cannot ask during an interview.
15	How do I wrap up and close the interview?	First, ask if they have any other questions. Don't be too quick to move on, give them the opportunity to think about any questions they may have. Second, ask them if there is anything they would like to add that is relevant to the position. For example, you can ask "Is there any job relevant information you would like to share that I have not given you a chance to talk about yet?" Third, review the next steps in the hiring process with them with a clear and honest timetable. Be friendly but don't give false encouragement or go into details for a rejection. Do not offer the job at this time. Inform them that you will be in contact with them and the time frame they should expect to hear from you. Thank them for their interest.