

# Employee Relations

## A Course in Management

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# Employee Relations

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- I. Introduction
- II. Locating Qualified People
- III. Hiring Techniques
- IV. The Interview
- V. Orientation
- VI. Training
- VII. Motivation
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- IX. Dismissals
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### I. INTRODUCTION

A successful business is made up of individual personalities who need thoughtful treatment if they are to increase the level of company production and profits.

Employee relations is a two way street. Owning a business does not automatically make you an effective manager. There must be positive employer-employee interaction which results in quality production. How often do we stop to consider each individual in our operation — their abilities, limitations and potential?

Building a firm foundation for a prospective employee includes two basic prerequisites. First you must outline your staff requirements and second, you must create an inviting environment. These prerequisites will be discussed and analyzed in the course topic.

## **II. LOCATING QUALIFIED PEOPLE**

Projecting a positive image is essential if we are to attract top-rated new employees. We are always concerned about the image we project to our customers and public, so why not be just as interested in presenting ourselves and our operation in a positive manner to prospective employees.

If our business is to realize continued growth, we must establish priorities which will help us attain the long-range goals that must be met on the road to success. Attracting and selecting employees who will work and travel with us toward those goals should be of prime importance to all of us. There are several ways to locate qualified people. One way is to design a creative ad for the online newspaper classified section. Another way is to put the word out through your local trade association. Local wholesale houses, design schools, and community colleges offer other opportunities.

We all have a tendency to form opinions of people and situations by our first impressions. The physical condition of our operation is the first impression that an employee applicant receives of us and our business. Clean and orderly surroundings, both in the display area and workroom, should be one of our prime concerns. No one can be comfortable and produce to their maximum if they must spend excess time searching for needed materials and using valuable production time to clean the materials or an area in which to work.

A major area of concern for many employees is the issue of fair wages. It is a known fact that if you want to reduce turnover, you must compensate your staff accordingly. Therefore, offering a fair wage is a direct issue in helping to locate qualified people.

A word about benefits — paid vacations, sick leave and health insurance\*: these are all additional attractions to prospective and current employees and should be considered as heightened incentives for valued employees.

## **III. HIRING TECHNIQUES**

The completed application form is the primary tool we use to effectively evaluate the prospective employee and make our hiring decision. The information requested on the form needs to be detailed and you may want to consult your attorney in regard to having it professionally prepared, because questions that are legally acceptable are governed by federal and state labor laws. For example: you cannot discriminate on group identification, arrest record, race, age, sex, national origin, religion or disability. There may be others, so make certain you have consulted an attorney.

\*Health Insurance — Effective January 1, 2014, the Affordable Care Act will take effect. Go to [Healthcare.gov](http://Healthcare.gov) for more information.

One of the most far reaching pieces of legislation that effects the employer/employee relationship was recently passed by Congress and is entitled the Americans with Disabilities Act. Basically, the ADA protects employment discrimination against qualified individuals with disabilities. A qualified individual with a disability is an individual with a disability who meets the skill, experience, education and other job related requirements of a position held or desired and who, with or without reasonable accommodations, can perform the essential functions of the job. People who use illegal drugs are not covered by the Act and are not deemed to have a disability. Homosexuality and bisexuality are not impairments and are not therefore, disabilities. Employers cannot discriminate against people with disabilities in regard to any employment practices or terms, conditions and privileges of employment.

For additional information on ADA, see Appendix 1a (p. 15). The list is extensive so make it your business to know your rights and those of the applicant. Government approved applications are available at most office supply stores.

#### **IV. THE INTERVIEW**

The interview is the most important part of the hiring process. A personal interview and an appropriate background check are necessary if you are to adequately assess the applicants true aptitude and potential. To borrow the motto from the Boy Scouts of America, "Be Prepared." Always know what information you need to obtain in order to make a good hiring decision. Be prepared in the following areas before ever beginning the interview.

1. Allow sufficient time. Do not conduct an interview during peak business periods.
2. Talk with the applicant in a private, comfortable area where there will be no distractions.
3. Have questions well planned and be thorough.
4. Ask open-ended, job-related questions. Ask for explanations and details.
5. Outline job requirements and salary.
6. Do not use discriminatory language.
7. Do not discuss impermissible topics. These are topics the applicant volunteers that are not needed. These topics may include age, race or marital status. It is important to stop such conversation immediately.
8. Be a good listener.

Make the interview personal and you will receive a much better picture of the person talking with you. For example: if the applicant hesitates to talk about himself/herself it is a good bet that they will have difficulty talking with and selling to customers.

The following sample questions can be used to make the interview more personal and gain insight into the applicant. See appendix 2a-k, p. 17-27 for more options.

1. Tell me about yourself, your likes, dislikes, hobbies, interests.
2. Do you come from a large or small family?
3. Are you the oldest or youngest?
4. How did you secure your last job?
5. What money making project did you have before age 17?
6. What did you really like about your last job?
7. What do you consider the most important aspect of your education?
8. What type of work do you usually enjoy doing?
9. In your past work experience, what are some of the situations that you found difficult to handle?
10. Tell me about your strengths — things you are good at and feel confident about.
11. What are your weaknesses?
12. What led you to apply here?

Avoid "why" questions. It puts the applicant on the defensive and could result in superficial answers.

Employers should never ask the following questions. According to federal law, they are considered to be illegal. The list will seem almost impossible to commit to memory, so interviewers need to keep one thing in mind. The only questions that should be asked are those that give information about how well an applicant can perform a job. Questions that reflect negatively on age, race, national origin, sex or disability are generally unnecessary and do not reveal relevant information about job performance. Please visit the following website for information on the Americans With Disabilities Act: [www.usdoj.gov/crt/ada/adahom1/htm](http://www.usdoj.gov/crt/ada/adahom1/htm). Employers should make a list of questions to be asked during an interview and then stick to it. Advance preparation is key to avoiding problems later.

1. Have you ever been arrested? (You may ask if they have been convicted of a crime.)
2. Are you a citizen of this country? (You may ask if they are authorized to work in this country.)

3. Do you have any children? What arrangements have you made for day care? (You may tell them your business hours and ask if there is anything to prevent them from working those hours on a regular basis.)
4. Do you own a car? (You may ask if they foresee having any problems getting to and from work.)
5. How did you learn to speak a foreign language? (You may ask if they speak any foreign languages.)
6. When did you graduate from high school? (You may ask if they have a high school diploma.)
7. Other areas of questioning to avoid include disabilities, disease, unrelated professional licenses, educational background, I.Q., political preferences and community, religious or social interests. You may also be liable for a discrimination suit if you make a decision on the basis of appearance.

For a complete listing of these and other questions, contact your state's Fair Employment Practices. Additional questions to avoid may be found in the appendix. Testing a new employee in basic skills during the application process supplies important information. Give tests on specific skills or knowledge relating to and required by the job in question. Example — an applicant for a sales position could be tested on handwriting, spelling, math and memory. Ask them to read a paragraph regarding deliveries from your policy manual and then ask them to respond to five hypothetical situations to which that policy applies. This is an indicator of their ability to read, understand and remember.

Tests would vary with the different departments. You would not have the same test for sales people as you would for transportation. All of this is time consuming, but you must weigh the time spent in selecting a new employee against the wasted cost and time spent to train someone who cannot learn.

Immediately after each applicant has left your office, take time to evaluate the interview. Attach personal notes to their application. It is a good idea to standardize all interview questions. By asking the same questions of all applicants for a particular position, an employer decreases the risk of posing discriminatory or illegal questions. Some florists find it helpful to use an informal grading system to rate their applicants. Score on a 1 to 3 scale, with one being "excellent" and three, "unsatisfactory." This will then allow you to compare the qualities of all candidates accordingly and with completeness as all will be evaluated on the same basis.

## V. ORIENTATION

You have just hired a new employee. The two of you must build a positive working relationship that will benefit the company and assist you in realizing those long range goals we talked about earlier. The quality of a good supervisor is measured by the quantity and quality of the work produced by the employee. You are not building a friendship, so you should not concern yourself with whether or not your employees like you, only that there is a mutual respect and understanding between the two of you. Respect usually reflects itself in a desire to please and can be readily seen in the employees daily work.

A good manager sets standards and goals which will motivate his employees to produce top level results. If the manager/employee relationship is based on respect, the interaction of ideas between the two will result in a happy productive employee whose work goes a long way toward increasing our profits and enhancing your shop image. You need not always be in agreement as sometimes differences of opinion or ideas result in growth for both the manager and employee.

A proper orientation will provide the new employee a sense of belonging and of being important to you and your company. The main objective of the orientation is to provide the following:

1. An overview of the shop, its goals and philosophies.
2. To give the employee clear instructions of their responsibilities.
3. To provide them with an employee's manual.
4. To give them an opportunity to ask questions.
5. To have them fill out the necessary state and federal forms.

Orientation is the time to provide the employee with their copy of an employee's manual. You may want to spend some time going over the manual and answering questions the employee may have. It is a good idea to have the employee study the manual and review it from time to time. It should give them a background of your operational procedures and give them insight into what is expected from them and what they can expect from their work.

An employee's manual should include the following:

1. An introduction. This should be brief and explain about your business background as well as your goals for the business.
2. Job categories and descriptions. Some owners find it helpful to include a hierarchy of job categories followed by specific descriptions of job titles and duties. The descriptions should clarify their responsibilities. In any given retail shop, descriptions and categories may overlap, but they will provide a general outline of responsibilities that need to be covered by shop personnel.



3. A description of full and part-time employees. This should include your policies on vacation schedules, paid holidays, time off and missed days as well as benefits you may offer an employee such as product discounts. A complete description for both the full and part-time employee is needed for clarification.
4. Employee policies and procedures. This section should include the regular store hours, how and when the employee is responsible for time cards (when used), lunch periods, overtime, absences, tardiness, attire, parking for the employee, etc. Some employers find it helpful to list their policy on smoking, substance abuse, snacking and gum chewing, housekeeping, and other areas as well.
5. Shop policies. These policies include how to handle C.O.D.'s, complaints, credit cards, guarantees, gift certificates and credit card orders.
6. Sales procedures. This section should deal with how sales employee's are to greet walk-in customers, telephone customers, filling out sales order forms, etc.
7. Delivery procedures. This section should deal specifically with how you want your driver/delivery personnel to organize sales tickets and delivery routes as well as how they should load the van. This section should also cover what to do if the recipient is not home or the delivery is not accepted. Care and handling of flowers and lists of supplies needed in a delivery vehicle should also be covered here.

This list is an outline of suggested employee manual sections to make each employees job more efficient. As a shop owner or manager, you may have other sections that you wish to include.

## **VI. TRAINING**

For any concentrated training program to be effective, there must be a commitment of time and money. Those businesses that feel they do not have the dollars available to commit to such an effort are the very ones that need it the most. They fail to realize that they are not helping their employees to function in their most productive and efficient manner.

A training program is needed in any business that is not reaching its desired goals. This is easily determined by taking a close look at your employees and their performance.

There are six steps in the development of an effective training program.

1. **EVALUATE YOUR WORK ENVIRONMENT.** Performance problems occur because employees are not working to the maximum. You must identify who or what is creating the problem and the reason for the problem. Make notes about your observations. With the problem defined, you can act accordingly.
2. **SET THE TRAINING OBJECTIVE.** An objective is a measurable statement of what we hope to accomplish within a given amount of time. Objectives are usually directed toward changing

skills, knowledge, attitudes or systems. Your desired outcome is always stated in an objective. Keep objectives simple, and remember, if it is not measurable, it is not an objective (what by when).

3. **CHOOSE YOUR TRAINING STRATEGY.** In every training program, there must be a plan. List as many possible ways as you can think of on how to reach your objectives. Use in-house people or outside professionals or professional seminars. How much will this cost and can you afford the necessary time? You must be realistic, objective and honest in making your decision. If training is to be effective, it requires many elements we sometimes feel that we cannot afford — time, space, environment, money.
4. **PROGRAM PREPARATION.** Now it is time to determine your game plan — who, what, when, where and how. There are five essential steps of preparation.
  - a. Decide on the major activities to occur and the order of their importance.
  - b. Outline a schedule of activities.
  - c. List resources — people, materials, supplies.
  - d. Delegate responsibility for each activity.
  - e. Plan the specifics for each area of concern.
5. **DETERMINE CRITERIA FOR EVALUATION.** Your desired accomplishments must be determined. When should they be completed and how will you know when the goals have been met. You may need to make changes or adjustments in the program while it is in process. Be sure to monitor the program from beginning to end in terms of employees response and performance. Training is ongoing and we never reach a point where we complete the process. We must keep our eyes on the areas of need at all time.
6. **USE THE EVALUATION INFORMATION.** It will help you assess the continued needs of your employees and operation. Training is never completed as there are always new employees, new techniques and materials and a constant need for individuals to grow if our business is to expand. Periodic staff meetings are the tool by which we can continue employee training on a less extensive scale. They are also a means of employer-employee exchange of ideas and suggestions. The key to successful staff meetings is regularity of time and place. It is an opportunity for renewal and creative exchange of ideas. Let the employees know that you are listening and that the information is flowing from top to bottom in your operation.

## VII. MOTIVATION

What really motivates employees?

Praise, encouragement, responsibility and the knowledge that you appreciate them are often more important than the paycheck. The best part is, these benefits do not cost any money. They are free to you, the owner/manager.

The following is a list of the ten most effective ways in which to help motivate employees.

1. Be explicit regarding your expectations. All employees should be aware of the standards set by your operation.
2. Show concern for your employees and their work. If your interest in them is evident, they will be conscious of the quality and quantity of their own production.
3. Be helpful. Share the work load and be willing to jump in when assistance is needed.
4. Listen. Be available to give guidance when job-related problems arise.
5. Watch. Show the employees that you are observant and know what is going on at all times.
6. Know your employees. Each one has his/her capabilities and limitations. Do not expect more of an individual than he can give.
7. Levels of performance. This is sometimes known as quality control. The level of quality must not fall below set minimum standards.
8. Employee input. Be open to employee suggestions and criticism. Reward workable suggestions and praise their initiative.
9. Stimulate morale. Rewards, both tangible and intangible, are important.
10. Be consistent. Moodiness has no place in the work situation. Day to day personality variations only serve to confuse and destroy employee respect for you.

In summary, there are five key factors which stimulate employees to put forth greater effort because they are satisfied with their work situation. Those factors are achievement, recognition, the work itself, responsibility and advancement. In many cases, if you give the employee public recognition for a job well done, you will motivate greater efforts than you would if you increased his wages. Company policy, administration, supervision, salary and working conditions do not affect total productivity as much as they effect feelings about one's job.

## VIII. REVIEWS & CONSULTATION

Regardless of the size of the company, there often arises the need for employee reviews and consultations. Although consultations may be held on an as needed basis, it is a good supervisory practice to hold regularly scheduled reviews. Let us examine some of the conditions under which these situations may occur:

1. Changes in company policy.
2. Changes in work methods.
3. Changes in work assignments.
4. New distribution of work loads.
5. Performance evaluations.
6. Rewards and/or changes in salary.
7. Set new goals.
8. Grievances.
9. Occurrence of personal problems.

The meetings need not be formal sessions nor is there any need for them to destroy the "family-type" atmosphere that is found in many shops. Consultations should be used as a means by which a team effort can be established.

The three basic objectives of consultations and reviews are to give instruction, information and to gain cooperation.

Be sure that these meetings are used for the purposes of praise and reward as well as for situations that need correcting. In all of these sessions, be sure to listen to the employees views and give them your honest consideration. Thank your employee for their cooperation, courtesy, ideas, facts and opinions when necessary.

Too many owner/managers find it very difficult to talk with their employees on a constructive basis — to give performance appraisal. Most of us are very uncomfortable because we feel it is not necessary to compliment or praise our employees. However, the basic concept of complimenting or praising is indeed very worthwhile.

When evaluating an employee, you should focus in on his/her strengths not weaknesses! The object of the appraisal is to reinforce an on-going work relationship. Sometimes the employee should receive tangible rewards as a part of the meeting. This serves as proof that he is realizing

some of the goals that he is working toward. Most people need some tangible rewards in order to continue to be motivated.

The physical surroundings for a conference are also important. There should be complete privacy without the aggravation of unnecessary interruptions. Always choose a time when you both have completed your daily work responsibilities.

In disciplinary consultations, do not begin the session by telling the employee what he has done wrong. That approach always puts a person on the defensive. Also do not begin by criticizing or degrading his work. Instead, begin by asking the following questions.

1. How do I help you achieve results in your job?
2. Discuss the problem, not the person.
3. Share the blame.
4. Listen.
5. Deal with the "Why" as well as the "How".
6. Finish on a positive note.

Remember, you are criticizing the employee for the act they committed, not their personality. Avoid making a decision until all the facts are known, but reach a decision as soon as possible. Impose the discipline quietly and impersonally.

Talk through the employees performance together rather than approaching his work on the basis of what he did right and what he did wrong. The overall evaluation should be based on the original goals, standards and objectives that were initially outlined when the individual was hired.

In summary, performance consultations and reviews should always be concluded in a positive, constructive manner. They must be concerned with building strengths rather than emphasizing weaknesses. See appendix 3a-f, p. 28-33 for more suggestions.

## **IX. DISMISSALS**

The cardinal rule to remember in these situations is to always maintain the dignity of the employee who is being dismissed.

There are many legalities which affect dismissals. Develop a set of guidelines and have them checked and approved by your attorney. There are a multitude of laws covering employer-employee relations and it takes an expert to insure that management is protected in the case of a dismissal.

## **X. LEGAL ISSUES**

There are many laws requiring employers to display posters in the work place. The posters are available from various state agencies. Posters to be displayed include:

1. Workers compensation commission posters. Employers who carry Workers' Compensations Insurance are required to post these.
2. Equal Employment opportunity posters regarding age and disabilities.
3. Fair Labor Standards Act poster and Employee Polygraph Protection Act poster.
4. Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970 poster.
5. The Law in Texas poster covering The Texas Commission Human Rights. This poster is optional.

Please also remember to contact your state's Fair Employment Practices Commission on hiring techniques and to contact your lawyer regarding any other legal questions or obligations you may have.

Courtesy must be displayed in dealing with the employee as well as the customer and, when properly displayed, it will be copied.

### **COURTESY**

I am a little thing with great meaning  
I help everybody  
I unlock doors, open hearts, dispel prejudice  
I create friendship and goodwill  
Everybody loves me  
I bore no one  
I violate no law  
I cost nothing  
Many have praised me  
None have ever condemned me  
I am pleasing to those of high and low degree  
I am useful every minute of the day ----- I AM COURTESY  
— Author Unknown

## **XI. APPENDIX**

Appendix 1a

### **Americans With A Disability Act (ADA)**

The Americans with Disability Act of 1990 (ADA) makes it unlawful to discriminate in employment against a qualified individual with a disability. The ADA also outlaws discrimination against individuals with disabilities in State and local government services, public accommodations, transportation and telecommunication. This part of the law is enforced by the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and State and local civil rights enforcement agencies that work with the Commission. Go to [eeoc.gov](http://eeoc.gov) for more details.

This law was amended in 2008. The purpose of this law is to create a clear and comprehensive national mandate for the elimination discrimination and clear, enforceable standards addressing discrimination.

For more information on how the American with Disabilities Act and your responsibilities as an employer, go to [ada.gov](http://ada.gov).

## Appendix 1b

The ADA requires reasonable accommodation in three aspects of employment:

- a. To insure equal opportunity in the application process;
- b. To enable a qualified individual with a disability to perform the essential functions of a job;  
and
- c. To enable an employee with a disability to enjoy equal benefits and privileges of employment.

An example given is that a person who uses a wheelchair may need an accommodation if an employment office interview site is not acceptable. A person with a visual disability or a person who lacks manual dexterity may need assistance in filling out an application form. Employees with disabilities must have equal access to lunchrooms, employee lounges, restrooms, meeting rooms and other employer provided or sponsored services such as health programs, transportation and social events.

Reassignment is a type of accommodation that may be required under the ADA. If an employee whose job requires driving, loses his or her sight, reassignment to a vacant position that does not require driving would be considered a reasonable accommodation if the employee is otherwise qualified for that position with or without an accommodation. A reasonable accommodation is further defined as providing part time or modified work schedules, obtaining or modifying equipment or devices, providing qualified readers and interpreters, providing reserved parking for a person with a mobility impairment and allowing an employee to provide equipment or devices that an employer is not required to provide.

Some examples of questions that may not be asked on an application form or in job interviews are as follows:

- a. Have you ever had or been treated for any of the following conditions or diseases?  
(followed by a checklist of various conditions and diseases)
- b. Please list any conditions or diseases for which you have been treated in the past three years.
- c. Have you ever been hospitalized? If so, for what condition?
- d. Have you ever been treated for any mental condition?
- e. Is there any health related reason you may not be able to perform the job for which you are applying?
- f. Have you had a major illness in the last five years?
- g. Do you have any physical defects which preclude you from performing certain kinds of work?

One final note on ADA; setting up a brother/sister corporation or subsidiary corporation in order to try and circumvent the 15 jurisdictional requirement does not work.

Please consult an attorney or your State's Fair Employment Practices Commission for



additional information on ADA.  
Appendix 2a

**MANAGEMENT**  
**Questions for People Who Have Had Management Experience**

1. How would you describe your management philosophy and style?

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2. What would you suppose your subordinates feel are your strengths and shortcomings, from their points of view?

STRENGTHS

SHORTCOMINGS

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3. In what ways might you want to modify your approach to dealing with subordinates?

4. Would you please give me a paragraph about each subordinate, indicating title, length of employment, strengths, shortcomings, and overall performance? (Note: Ask this question for a couple of positions. Before you leave this section, be sure you have a good feel for how many people were recruited and selected, what approaches were used, how the people were trained and developed, how each worked out in the job, and for those who did not work out well, what happened with them.)

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**Questions for People Who Have Not Had Management Experience But Who Might Want To in the Future**

1. What do you suppose would be your management style and approach, and how would your managerial behaviors differ from those of other managers?

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2. What is your best guess as to what subordinates that you may have in your first managerial job will consider your strengths and shortcomings?

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## EDUCATION

So that I can get a good feel for your background — your education and work experience — let's briefly go back to your high school days and come forward chronologically, up to the present. Then we'll talk about your plans and goals for the future.

### HIGH SCHOOL

Note to Interviewer: If you are uncomfortable beginning with high school years, skip this section.

1. I see from the Application Form that you attended \_\_\_\_\_ (high school), graduating in \_\_\_\_\_ (year). Would you please expand on the Application Form information and give me a brief rundown on your high school years particularly events that might have affected later career decisions. I'd be interested in knowing about work experiences, what the school was like, the curriculum, activities, how you did in school, high and low points, and so forth.  
(Ask the following questions to obtain complete information not included in responses to the general "smorgasbord" Question.)

2. Give me a feel for what kind of school it was. (If necessary, specify large/small, rural/urban, cliquish, etc.).

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3. What was your curriculum (general, technical, or college preparatory)?

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4. What school activities did you take part in? (Note activities listed on Application Form).

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5. What sort of grades did you receive, what was your class standing and what were your study habits like? (Confirm data on Application Form.)

GPA: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ (scale) Class Standing: \_\_\_\_ out of \_\_\_\_

Study Habits \_\_\_\_\_ SAT Scores \_\_\_\_\_

6. How would you describe your social life during high school? (Accepted or rejected by peers?)

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7. Were there any class offices, awards, honors, or special achievements during your high school days? (Note that Application Form lists several that may be self-explanatory.)

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Appendix 2c

8. What were high points during your high school days? (If necessary, ask what were the most rewarding, happy, or successful occurrences during those years, both in school and out of school?)

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9. What were low points, or least enjoyable occurrences, during your high school days?

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10. Give me a feel for any jobs you held during high school—the types of jobs, whether they were during the school year or summer, hours worked, and any high or low points associated with them. (If the person did not work during the summer, ask how the summer months were spent.)

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13. (TRANSITION QUESTION) What were your career thoughts toward the end of high school? Note: Transition Questions have to do with important choices in life — what to do, when, how to go about it. The answers are often very revealing, not only about the individual at the time those choices were made, but about the person's current attitudes regarding those transition decisions and current values. So, probe very thoroughly whenever major life directions were established or altered.

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**COLLEGE (UNDERGRADUATE)**

1. Now about your undergraduate days.  
I notice that you attended \_\_\_\_\_ (name of college)  
from \_\_\_\_\_ until \_\_\_\_\_. Why was that particular school selected? (If more than one school was attended, ask this and subsequent questions about each one.)

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Would you give me the same sort of highlights about those years as you did for high school — what you did, how you did, and how you liked it (Confirm Application Form data. Ask the following questions to obtain complete information not included in answers

to the general “smorgasbord” question.)  
Appendix 2d

2. What sort of curriculum did you focus on? (Follow-up: Exactly what major(s), and why were there any changes in majors?)

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3. What sort of campus activities did you get involved in? (Follow-up: What was your level of involvement-passive, leadership, or what?)

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4. I see that you earned a \_\_\_\_\_ (GPA). How would you describe your study habits during college? (Look for clues as to amount of effort expended.)

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5. Please give me a feel for any work experiences you had during college — the type of jobs, whether they were during the school years or summers, hours per week worked, and any high or low points (If not active in campus activities, and there were no work experiences, determine how spare time during the school year and how summer months were spent.)

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6. What were high points during your undergraduate days?

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7. What were low points, or least enjoyable occurrences, during your undergraduate days?

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8. TRANSITION QUESTION) I see from your Application Form that following college you \_\_\_\_\_ (attended graduate school, got a job at X company, or whatever) What were your career thoughts toward the end of college? What were the options considered? (Use separate pad of paper for graduate school; use a Work History Form for military).

### **WORK HISTORY**

Now I would like you to tell me about your work history. There are a lot of things I would like to know about each position. Let me tell you what these things are now, so I won't have to interrupt you. We already have some of this information from your Application Form and previous discussions. Of course, I need to know the employer, dates of employment, your titles, and salary history. I would also be interested in knowing what your expectations were for each job, whether they were met, what major challenges you faced, how they were handled, and what were the most and least enjoyable aspects of each job. I also want to know what you feel were your greatest accomplishments and significant mistakes or disappointments, what each supervisor was like and what you would guess each supervisor really felt were your strengths and weaker points. Finally, I would like to know the circumstances under which you left each position.

Note: If the person worked for a single employer and had, say, three jobs with that employer, consider each one of those a separate position, and complete a Work History Form on it.

Following is suggested wording for information requested on the Work History Form:

1. What was the name of the employer, location, and dates of employment? (Get a "feel" for the organization by asking about volume sales, number of employees, products or services, and profitability.)
2. What was your job title?
3. What were the starting and final levels of compensation?
4. What were your expectations of the job?
5. What were your responsibilities and accountabilities?
6. What results were achieved in terms of successes and accomplishments?
7. We all make mistakes-what would you say were mistakes, or failures experienced in this job?
8. All jobs seem to have their pluses and minuses; what were the most enjoyable or rewarding aspects of this job?
9. What were the least enjoyable aspects of the job?
10. To what extent did luck — that is, fortunate or unfortunate circumstances beyond your control — enter into your record of performance?
11. What circumstances contributed to your leaving? (Always probe for other reasons.)
12. What was your supervisor's name and title? Where is that person now? May I contact him/her?
13. What is/was it like working for (him/her) and what were (his/her) strengths and shortcomings as a supervisor, from your point of view?
14. What is your best guess as to what (supervisor's name) honestly felt were/are your strengths, weaker points, and overall performance?

Note: When it is learned what the "next job" was, a useful question is, "Would you please tell me what you did, how you did, and how you liked it?"

### WORK HISTORY FORM 1

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
Employer Starting dates (mo./yr.) Final (mo./yr.)  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Location Type of business  
Description\_\_\_\_\_
2. Title\_\_\_\_\_
3. Salary (Starting)\_\_\_\_\_ Final\_\_\_\_\_
4. Expectations\_\_\_\_\_
5. Responsibilities/Accountabilities\_\_\_\_\_
6. Successes/Accomplishments\_\_\_\_\_
7. Failures/Mistakes\_\_\_\_\_
8. Most Enjoyable\_\_\_\_\_
9. Least Enjoyable\_\_\_\_\_
10. Luck\_\_\_\_\_
11. Reasons for Leaving\_\_\_\_\_

### SUPERVISOR

12. Supervisor's name\_\_\_\_\_ Title\_\_\_\_\_
- Where now\_\_\_\_\_ Permission to contact?\_\_\_\_\_
13. Appraisal of Supervisor
- His/Her Strengths\_\_\_\_\_ Permission to contact?\_\_\_\_\_
- His/Her Shortcomings\_\_\_\_\_
14. Best guess as to what he/she really felt at that time were your:
- Strengths\_\_\_\_\_
- Weaker Points\_\_\_\_\_

Overall Performance \_\_\_\_\_  
Appendix 2g

### WORK HISTORY FORM 2

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
Employer \_\_\_\_\_ Starting dates (mo./yr.) \_\_\_\_\_ Final (mo./yr.) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Location \_\_\_\_\_ Type of business \_\_\_\_\_  
Description \_\_\_\_\_
2. Title \_\_\_\_\_
3. Salary (Starting) \_\_\_\_\_ Final \_\_\_\_\_
4. Expectations \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. Responsibilities/Accountabilities \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. Successes/Accomplishments \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
7. Failures/Mistakes \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
8. Most Enjoyable \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
9. Least Enjoyable \_\_\_\_\_
10. Luck \_\_\_\_\_
11. Reasons for Leaving \_\_\_\_\_

### SUPERVISOR

12. Supervisor's name \_\_\_\_\_ Title \_\_\_\_\_  
Where now \_\_\_\_\_ Permission to contact? \_\_\_\_\_
13. Appraisal of Supervisor  
His/Her Strengths \_\_\_\_\_ Permission to contact? \_\_\_\_\_  
His/Her Shortcomings \_\_\_\_\_
14. Best guess as to what he/she really felt at that time were your:  
Strengths \_\_\_\_\_  
Weaker Points \_\_\_\_\_

### WORK HABITS

1. How would you describe your work habits? (Fill-in with the following questions in order to complete this section.)

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2. Describe a typical week. From the time you get up Monday morning until Sunday evening.

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3. How many hours have you worked per week. During the past year on the average?

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4. How would you describe the pace at which you work — fast, slow, moderate, or if it varies, under what circumstances?

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5. How do you typically handle yourself under stress and pressure? What sort of things irritate you the most or get you down and how do you handle such pressure? How many times have you "lost your cool" on the job, during the past year?

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6. What is it that motivates you?

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7. How well organized are you, what do you do to be organized, and how do you feel you ought to be a little better organized?

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8. How would you describe your decision making style, and how does it vary according to different decision situations? (Follow-up: Do people generally consider you particularly fast or thorough and cautious as a decision maker ... intuitive or impeccably logical, involving many people in decisions or few?)

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9. How would you describe your planning and budgeting skills?

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**TECHNICAL SKILLS**

Develop a line of questions to determine level of technical skills of the individual, as appropriate (accounting, human resource, marketing, or whatever).

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**FINAL SELF-ANALYSIS QUESTIONS**

1. How would peers who know you well describe you?

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2. How would you describe your mood swings — how high are the highs, how low are the lows — how long are the intervals between highs and lows?

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3. Next reread each person specification and if there are doubts about your assessment of the candidate, read the specification, ask for a self-rating (on a scale of excellent, good, only fair, or poor), and request elaboration/specifics to explain and justify the self rating.

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**WRAP-UP QUESTION**

1. Are there any questions I have not asked regarding your abilities, goals, strengths, or shortcomings which I should have asked in order to get to know you or your potentials for compatibility and success in the position we are discussing?

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**PLANS AND GOALS FOR THE FUTURE**

- 1. Let's discuss what you are looking for in your next job. What is important to you and what do you wish to avoid? (Note "plans for the future" section of Application Form.)

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- 2. What are other job possibilities, and how do you feel about each one?

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- 3. What about five or ten years down the road; where do you hope to be by then in your career? (Possible follow up: Any wild ideas for jobs that might be fun to consider?)

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- 4. What do you view as advantages or possible disadvantages of joining us?

Advantages \_\_\_\_\_

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Disadvantages \_\_\_\_\_

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### SELF APPRAISAL

1. I would like you to give me a thorough self-appraisal. Beginning with what you consider your strengths, assets, things you like about yourself, and things you do well. (Usually it is worthwhile to ask follow-up questions, and to urge the person to continue. For example, you might say such things as "Good". "Keep going ", "oh", nod and ask supplemental questions such as:

"What other strengths come to mind?"

"What are some other things you do well?"

"What are some problems do you seem to handle best?"

Obtain a list of strengths and then go back and ask the person to elaborate on what was meant by each strength listed — “conscientious”, “hard working”, or whatever.

2. OK. Let's look at the other side of the ledger for a moment. What would you say are shortcomings, weaker points, or areas in which you hope to improve? Be generous in your use of the pregnant pause here. Urge the person to list more shortcomings by saying such things as, "What else comes to mind?", "Keep going, you are doing fine", or just smile and nod your head and wait. When the person has run out of shortcomings, you might ask supplemental questions such as:

"What personal characteristics do you have that sometimes interfere with the way you work?"

"What three things could you do that would most improve your overall effectiveness in the future?"

Obtain as long a list of negatives as you can with minimal interruptions on your part, and then request clarification, if you interrupt the individual for clarification of one, there might be so much time spent on that one negative that the individual will be very hesitant to acknowledge another one.

### SELF APPRAISAL

STRENGTHS

WEAKER POINTS

### PERFORMANCE FACTORS

Using the following definitions as a guide, circle the appropriate rating and provide supportive comment. (Consider only those factors that apply to this position.)

#### Rating Levels

1. Exceeds all expected standards.
2. Meets all expected standards and may excel in one or more areas.
3. Meets most expected standards and may excel in one or more areas but needs improvement in some aspects of the position.
4. Meets some of the expected standards but needs Improvement in some significant aspects of the position.
5. Does not meet the requirements of the position.

**KNOWLEDGE OF WORK** — Demonstrated knowledge of requirements, methods, techniques and skills involved in doing the job, and in applying these to increase productivity.

\_\_\_\_1 \_\_\_\_2 \_\_\_\_3 \_\_\_\_4 \_\_\_\_5

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

**QUALITY AND QUANTITY OF WORK** — Ability to meet deadlines and insure accuracy and thoroughness of the finished product. Effectiveness in using the time available to get the job done. Steadfast pursuit of job objectives.

\_\_\_\_1 \_\_\_\_2 \_\_\_\_3 \_\_\_\_4 \_\_\_\_5

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

**JUDGMENT/DECISION MAKING** — Ability to think through a problem, secure facts, identify and evaluate alternative solutions and select the most appropriate course of action. Soundness of conclusions, decisions and actions.

\_\_\_\_1 \_\_\_\_2 \_\_\_\_3 \_\_\_\_4 \_\_\_\_5

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

**INITIATIVE** — Ability to act independently, taking appropriate action as situations arise without waiting for direction or specific instructions. Voluntary starting projects and attempting non-routine jobs and tasks.

\_\_\_\_1 \_\_\_\_2 \_\_\_\_3 \_\_\_\_4 \_\_\_\_5

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

**COMMUNICATIONS** (written and oral) — Ability to describe problems and/or situations in a lucid and concise manner. Effectiveness in keeping subordinates, associates, superiors and others informed. General effectiveness in interchanging ideas and information with others.

\_\_\_\_1 \_\_\_\_2 \_\_\_\_3 \_\_\_\_4 \_\_\_\_5

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

Appendix 3b

**PROFIT AND COST SENSITIVITY** — Ability to seek out, generate and implement profit making or cost saving ideas utilizing the most economical path. Minimizing controllable costs; conservation of resources and contributing the innovations toward cost reduction.

\_\_\_\_1 \_\_\_\_2 \_\_\_\_3 \_\_\_\_4 \_\_\_\_5

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

**PLANNING EFFECTIVENESS** — Ability to anticipate needs, forecast conditions, set goals and standards, and plan and schedule work so as to make the most effective use of personnel, material and equipment.

\_\_\_\_1 \_\_\_\_2 \_\_\_\_3 \_\_\_\_4 \_\_\_\_5

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

**DELEGATING** — Ability to assign responsibility and/or authority to the right employee for the right task and establish appropriate controls. Willingness to let subordinates take on added responsibility, following up to insure desired results.

\_\_\_\_1 \_\_\_\_2 \_\_\_\_3 \_\_\_\_4 \_\_\_\_5

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

**DEVELOPING PEOPLE** — Ability to select, train and motivate subordinates to grow in their capacity to handle increasingly difficult work and greater responsibility.

\_\_\_\_1 \_\_\_\_2 \_\_\_\_3 \_\_\_\_4 \_\_\_\_5

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

**SAFETY CONSCIOUSNESS** — Use of good safety practices and awareness of own personal safety and safety of others.

\_\_\_\_1 \_\_\_\_2 \_\_\_\_3 \_\_\_\_4 \_\_\_\_5

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

**PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS APPLICABLE TO THIS POSITION** — Interpersonal skills, attitude, neatness, personal habits, clothing, grooming, appearance, etc.

\_\_\_\_1 \_\_\_\_2 \_\_\_\_3 \_\_\_\_4 \_\_\_\_5

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

**OVERALL EVALUATION**

Consider all aspects of performance

\_\_\_\_1 \_\_\_\_2 \_\_\_\_3 \_\_\_\_4 \_\_\_\_5

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

Appendix 3c

Comments continued: \_\_\_\_\_

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SUMMARIZE GREATEST STRENGTHS:

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SUMMARIZE PRINCIPAL JOB AREAS WHERE IMPROVEMENT IS NEEDED:

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DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

PREPARED BY: \_\_\_\_\_

EMPLOYEE SIGNATURE \_\_\_\_\_  
Appendix 3d

**PERFORMANCE EVALUATION**

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

POSITION \_\_\_\_\_ PERIOD COVERED \_\_\_\_\_

LOCATION \_\_\_\_\_ EMPLOYMENT DATE \_\_\_\_\_

What results were expected of this position (Duties, Goals, Projects, Etc.)

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Were these results achieved? Comments.

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Appendix 3e

**SUMMARY**

**RATING SCALE: 4 = Excellent, 3 = Good, 2 = Only Fair, 1 = Poor, 0 = Very Poor**

<b>Person Specification</b>	<b>Base Rating</b>	<b>Your Rating</b>	<b>Comments</b>
1. Judgment			
2. Analytical Ability			
3. Creativity			
4. Pragmatism			
5. Intellectual Flexibility			
6. Oral Communications			
7. Written Communications			
8. Education (or Equivalent)			
9. Experience			
10. Initiative, a "Doer"			
11. Self Objectivity			
12. Perseverance			
13. Independence			
14. Standards of Performance			
15. "Track Record"			
16. Emotional Stability			
17. Organization/Planning			
18. First Impression			
19. Liability			
20. Assertiveness			



\* This is the minimally acceptable rating, for the person to be hired or promoted.  
 Appendix 3f

<b>Person Specification</b>	<b>Base Rating</b>	<b>Your Rating</b>	<b>Comments</b>
21. Team Player			
22. Enthusiasm			
23. Empathy/Listening			
24. Motivation/Drive			
25. Health			
26. Ambition			
27. Compatibility of Interests			

**FOR MANAGERS**

28. Leadership			
29. Recruitment			
30. Training			
31. Goal Setting			
32. Delegation			
33. Monitoring Performance			
34. Performance Feedback			
35. Removing Non Performers			
36. Team Development			

**ADDITIONAL PERSON SPECIFICATIONS**

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