

What Not to Ask at an Interview

Throughout my business I deal with many organisations that are recruiting and many clients who are trying to be recruited. Surprisingly many organisations are asking questions to their potential employees at interviews that are leaving them well exposed for claims of discrimination.



Questions around someone's possible or assumed disability, marital status, and likely hood of having more children will land you in hot water sooner or later.

Interview questions must pertain directly to the position that is being interviewed for, the candidate's ability to carry out the duties, their work history and their knowledge of the work environment. If you are concerned about an individual's ability to carry out the tasks and they are the most successful candidate, send them for a medical; if they are medically fit and you can reasonably accommodate them, you cannot legally deny them the position.

With the new Fair Work Act 2009 comes the introduction of maternity leave, it has created some major concern for employers that are currently employing. Some employers are still asking candidates about their intention to have children or grow their family. This is highly illegal and sends a strong message to women that they are being screened based on their personal plans to have children. Continuing to ask these types of questions during interviews will end up in trouble.

As will asking women what child minding arrangements they have in place for their current children or how long it will take for them to commute to work if successful. Both of these questions are none of the organisations business and should not be asked let alone taken into consideration when making the decision on the best candidate.

Legally you cannot ask a potential candidate their age however, you can ask if they are over the age of 18. So you can see there are legal ways of asking for information you seek.

Below are lists of questions you can ask your candidates at the interview that will keep you out of the discrimination frying pan.

- Are you available to start at 8.30 am?
- What are your long-term career goals?
- Are you authorised to work in Australia?
- Are you a member of any trade or professional association that is relevant to this position/industry?
- Are you able to perform the specific duties of this position?
- Are you able to perform the crucial functions of this job with or without reasonable accommodations?
- Are there any days you are not available to work on?

This is a good reminder to review your interview questions to ensure none of them are illegal, irrelevant, and discriminative or are in breach of Equal Employment Opportunity laws. If you're unsure about your questions have them checked by Dowell Solutions [click here](#).