



Guide to Interviewing Part 1: Essential Screening Techniques

Executive Summary Document

This document summarises a full Agency Central article. If you'd like more information, then this can be found online at:

agencycentral.co.uk/articles/2016-04/guide-to-interviewing-screening-techniques.htm

Arranged versus impromptu screening interviews

Arranged

- + Everyone can make sure they're free.
- + Candidate has time to prepare for the interview.
- Less natural feel to an impromptu interview.

Impromptu

- + Less time for the candidate to get flustered - you'll get to know the 'real them'.
- Can be problems with availability, which mean that the interview ends up being arranged anyway.

Different methods for screening interviews

Telephone

- + Generally accepted method.
- + Makes impromptu interviews easy.

Webcam

- + Can see a candidate's body language.
- Opens up more potential avenues for discrimination.
- Can be difficult for technophobic candidates to take part / not everyone has access.

Text-based chat

- + Great for finding out how well a candidate types / writes.
- + Avoids discrimination on many levels.

- Lose any audio cues - conversation will flow differently.
- How do you know you're screening the right person?

The 'live' screening interview

- + Lets you get to know candidates properly.
- Can defeat the object of a screening interview (saving time and increasing efficiency).

Questions to ask at the screening interview

Come up with one salient fact that you'd like to know about the candidate, and develop a way to find this out

Decide what the most important skill or quality for the candidate to have is. One thing that would make you really want to invite them for a further interview. Then devise a question or series of questions which will help you to find this out. Strength-based questions can help to identify passion at this stage - see our article for further details.

Consider checking whether the candidate has investigated your company at all

Ask a question such as 'what do you understand about our business?' or 'what do you think is the most important thing about what our company does?'.

Check the candidate's relevant qualifications

If any qualifications on the candidate's CV are especially important to you, then double-check these.

Why did the candidate leave their current / last role?

This can be useful to know - and also allows you to check for a positive attitude.

Clear up any 'grey areas' on the candidate's CV

This will be specific to the candidate in question, but may involve asking questions about things such as long periods where they were out of work.

Ask if the candidate has any questions

This helps to show that you are an employer who cares - as well as giving the candidate an opportunity to demonstrate their enthusiasm.

Check the candidate's notice period and restrictions on employment

Check how soon the candidate would be able to join your company, and check that any current contract does not preclude them from working for you. Also check if the candidate requires any special permits to work in your country.

Once you've made a decision on the candidate

Yes, you'd like to invite them to interview

Ask how soon they would be available to meet. It's good to have a few different dates and times cleared and ready in case they aren't available.

No, they don't seem suitable

Either tell them this directly (be careful), or let them know that you'll be in touch if they're successful / either way.