



Leading your Team to Conduct Effective Interviews

Hiring is one of the most critical responsibilities of any team. Yet many interviews are either too rigid, overly casual, or left to gut feelings. To equip your team for success, you need to give them two things:

- A conversational approach to interviewing that makes candidates comfortable while uncovering the depth of their experience.
- A scorecard framework that ensures fairness, consistency, and reliable decision-making.

When used together, these tools transform interviews into insightful conversations and create a repeatable way to evaluate candidates.

Why Conversational Interviews Work

The best interviews are not interrogations. They are meaningful conversations. This style is simple to adopt, even for those who don't interview often, and helps interviewers learn more about how a candidate thinks, collaborates, and grows.

Conversational interviewing benefits:

- Builds trust and puts the candidate at ease.
- Surfaces richer insights than trick or stump questions.
- Creates space for natural follow-up and exploration.
- Allows consistent scoring against role-relevant competencies.

Encourage your team to frame questions around the candidate's experiences, choices, and outcomes. This approach helps identify not just what the candidate has done, but how they think and how they might fit your culture.



Simple Questions to Foster the Best Conversations

- What did you do?
- Why did you do it?
- Who did you do it with?
- What were the expected outcomes?
- What were the actual outcomes?
- What was your personal contribution?
- What challenges did you face?
- What would you do differently next time?
- What impact did you have on the team/business/client?
- How is this relevant to the role you're interviewing for now?

Why Use Interview Scorecards

A scorecard gives interviewers a shared framework while keeping space for conversation. It prevents interviews from becoming scattershot or biased, and ensures each interviewer is at least assessing the same core areas.

How scorecards help:

- Provide structure without being a rigid script.
- Encourage fairness and consistency across interviews.
- Capture insights and notes that might otherwise get lost.
- Create a record for fair comparison after multiple interviews.

What to Include in an Interview Scorecard

Core Competencies & Skills

- Focus on what truly matters for the role.
- Encourage exploration with open-ended questions, not yes/no checklists.

Behavioral & Soft Skills

- Communication, adaptability, collaboration, and cultural fit.
- Include prompts for behaviors to watch for, but keep flexibility.

Notes Section

- A freeform area for impressions, surprises, or tangents.
- Helps capture valuable insights beyond structured categories.

Simple Rating Guidance

- Use a clear, lightweight scale (e.g., 1–5 or Needs Improvement – Excellent).
- Emphasize trends and patterns over single numbers.

Interview Scorecard

Candidate Name: _____ Role: _____
Interviewer Name: _____ Date: _____

Rating Scale:
1 = poor | 2 = Fair | 3 = Good | 4 = Very Good | 5 = Excellent

Core Competencies & Skills

Technical Expertise: ____/5
Problem-solving ability: ____/5
Role-specific knowledge: ____/5
Decision making: ____/5
Notes: _____

Behavioral & Soft Skills

Communication: ____/5
Adaptability: ____/5
Collaboration: ____/5
Cultural fit: ____/5
Notes: _____

Overall Score: ____/35
Final Notes & Impressions: _____

Coaching Tips for Managers

- **Guide, don't script:** The scorecard should support conversations, not stifle them.
- **Train on boundaries:** Make sure interviewers know what areas are off-limits (e.g., age, race, religion, sex/gender, family status, disability/medical history, citizenship, or military/veteran status).
- **Encourage independent thought:** Have each interviewer record their notes before group discussion to avoid bias.
- **Focus on patterns:** Look across multiple interviews for trends rather than zeroing in on one weak spot.
- **Iterate and improve:** Start simple, refine your scorecard as you learn what works.



Don't wing it!

By coaching your team to conduct interviews as thoughtful conversations and giving them a scorecard to guide and capture insights, you'll improve both the candidate experience and the quality of your hiring decisions.

A well-framed conversation paired with a consistent way to evaluate answers will take you further than winging it ever could.

Tell me more!

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