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Assessing, Developing & Documenting Soft Skills

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WORKPLACE SUCCESS SKILLS INTERVIEW GUIDE

for

Sample Applicant

SS#: 123-45-6789

Date Printed:

Interviewer's Name:_____

Summary comments/recommendations from interview:

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

ORGANIZATIONALLY SPECIFIC QUESTIONS

In the space below, list any additional interview questions to be asked. These should include any questions needed to clarify information from the participant's resume/application, as well as questions specific to the position/organization. (Use the back of this page or insert additional pages if necessary.)

SUGGESTIONS FOR CONDUCTING THE INTERVIEW

Before the session begins...

☐   Take the steps necessary to ensure that the session will not be interrupted. The participant should receive your undivided attention.

☐   Review the participant's application/resume to identify any background information that needs to be explored or clarified. List questions for these items, as well as any additional questions you intend to ask, on the sheet titled "ORGANIZATIONALLY SPECIFIC QUESTIONS."

Starting the session...

- Attempt to establish rapport and put the participant at ease.
- Explain the general purpose and format of the interview.
- Ask for and respond to any questions the participant may have.

Conducting the interview...

- Ask the interview questions and take notes on the participant's responses.

Closing the session...

- Indicate that all interview questions have been covered.
- Explain any relevant follow-up activities.
- Ask for and respond to any questions the participant may have.
- Thank the participant and close the session.

After the session...

- Evaluate the Organizationally Specific Questions and the AccuVision interview questions (including the oral and interpersonal areas). The following rating scale can be used for making these evaluations.

    3 - More than acceptable

    2 - Acceptable

    1 - Less than acceptable

- Summarize the results of the interview in the space provided on the cover page.

GENERAL QUESTIONS

QUESTION 1:   One of the most important aspects of working with others is the ability to solve problems as a group or team. This usually involves the gathering, interpreting, and exchanging of information with co-workers; generating several alternative solutions or possible courses of action; and selecting the best choice or answer. What do you see as the positive and negative aspects of this type of "team" approach to problem solving?

NOTES:

SAMPLE EFFECTIVE BEHAVIORS:

1. Noting that teams can generate a significantly greater quantity and variety of solutions than any single individual.

2. Understanding that the "give and take" of open discussion where opposing viewpoints and ideas are challenged and considered moves the group toward better alternatives and solutions than what could be produced by a single individual.

3. Recognizing that each team member enters into the team problem solving situation with unique viewpoints and perspectives to contribute (due to differing backgrounds and job experiences).

4. Stating that team member concerns and opinions can be addressed, resulting in greater commitment to chosen solution; members are more dedicated to performing actions in support of final decision.

5. Suggesting that a good experience in a group problem solving situation can generate enthusiasm and motivation toward eventual action in support of decision and positive feelings about individual contribution to the group.

SAMPLE INEFFECTIVE BEHAVIORS:

1. Failing to generate any positive or negative aspects of team problem solving.

RATING FOR RESPONSE:_____

GENERAL QUESTIONS

QUESTION 2:   Assume that your team has just fallen short of several production goals and the morale of your team is at an all time low. It seems every single one of your fellow team members is bickering and arguing over insignificant details and wasting a lot of time complaining. Although your team supervisor hasn't said anything directly to your team, rumor has it that the team may be reorganized. You think this rumor may be fueling the problems, but no one seems willing to openly discuss the morale problem or the hearsay. Assuming that there is a possibility that the rumors are true, what recommendations would you make to your teammates in order to help improve the situation?

NOTES:

SAMPLE EFFECTIVE BEHAVIORS:

1. Suggesting that rumors be acknowledge and discussed openly with the team supervisor.

2. Recognizing that in order for the team to survive, they must cooperate and stop quarreling; expending energy on in-team fighting is pointless and harmful.

3. Recommending that the team be made to feel in control of their destiny (i.e., possible reorganization) through improved performance.

4. Emphasizing the need to provide morale boosting statements, empathy, and mutual support.

SAMPLE INEFFECTIVE BEHAVIORS:

1. Not recognizing the need to end the internal fighting.

2. Failing to suggest discussing hearsay with supervisor to reduce power of ambiguous rumors.

3. Not recognizing the need to put the team in control of the future through increased productivity.

4. Failing to suggest the importance of positive statements and supportiveness.

RATING FOR RESPONSE:_____

QUESTION: Assume that the following situation occurs. While out shopping, you notice that the product your team is responsible for shipping is being packaged incorrectly. The printing on the package is off. You are surprised that none of your distributors has complained about the quality of the product. Though you don't work in packaging, and aren't personally responsible for the problem, you realized that bringing it to your supervisor's attention will result in the product being recalled from hundreds of stores. This will cost the company a lot of money. Furthermore, even after the problem is corrected, it will look bad that incorrectly packaged products were allowed to be shipped in the first place. What do you think you should do about this situation and why?

NOTES:

SAMPLE EFFECTIVE BEHAVIORS:

1. Indicating that the problem needed to be addressed immediately.

2. Recognizing that "own" responsibility to uphold quality of product goes beyond individual job functions and/or departments. Employee is part of "larger" team (corporation/organization).

3. Recognizing that quality of product at all stages is reflection on "own" performance.

4. Demonstrating a willingness to accept responsibility for defective product even if not directly responsible for original packaging error.

SAMPLE INEFFECTIVE BEHAVIORS:

1. Suggesting that the quality problem should be fixed in the future, but problems with current merchandise should be kept quiet to avoid recalls.

2. Failing to recognize that quality is a responsibility of all employees regardless of team membership or stage of product development.

RATING FOR RESPONSE:_____

QUESTION: Assume that your team supervisor has just tacked up an interoffice memo on the bulletin board. The memo is from another department in the plant. Your team is responsible for providing partially completed products to this department so that they can finish them and prepare them for delivery. The memo states that the rate in defective products that they have been receiving in the last month is unacceptable. You and your teammates know that the increased defect rate is due to an unexpected workload increase last month. Your team wasn't prepared to handle the demand and, as a result, everyone was working too fast and several errors were made. What actions should your team take to deal with this situation?

NOTES:

SAMPLE EFFECTIVE BEHAVIORS:

1. Planning to discuss quality issue with the other department and assure them that the situation would not occur again.

2. Demonstrating a willingness to pursue the cause of the errors with the team and generate potential solutions for handling similar situations in the future.

3. Recognizing the need to accept responsibility for defective work (no excuses for poor quality).

4. Recognizing the need for team commitment to quality.

SAMPLE INEFFECTIVE BEHAVIORS:

1. Failing to immediately address quality issue (didn't suggest gathering more data or team problem solving).

2. Failing to suggest confronting quality issue with the other department.

3. Blaming external situation for poor quality.

RATING FOR RESPONSE:_____

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

No questions are asked for this area. Rather, the participant is evaluated based on behaviors observed during the overall interview session.

NOTES:

SAMPLE EFFECTIVE BEHAVIORS:

1.   Expressed comments in a concise manner.

2.   Enunciated clearly.

3.   Spoke in a fluid manner.

4.   Looked at interviewer when speaking.

5.   Used gestures to emphasize points.

6.   Expressed ideas in an easy to understand manner.

7.   Used proper grammar.

8.   Used voice inflection to emphasize points.

SAMPLE INEFFECTIVE BEHAVIORS:

1.   Rambled on or was overly wordy.

2.   Had slurred speech.

3.   Was overly hesitant or choppy when speaking.

4.   Failed to maintain eye contact when speaking.

5.   Expressed ideas in a manner that was difficult to follow and/or understand.

6.   Made grammatical errors.

7.   Spoke in a monotone and/or failed to use gestures.

RATING FOR RESPONSE:_____

INTERPERSONAL

No questions are asked for this area. Rather, the participant is evaluated based on behaviors observed during the overall interview session.

NOTES:

SAMPLE EFFECTIVE BEHAVIORS:

1.   At the start of the session, offered a polite and enthusiastic greeting.

2.   As appropriate, used amenities such as "please" and "thank you."

3.   Maintained a polite, courteous, and enthusiastic demeanor during the session.

4.   Actively listened to the interviewer's comments (e.g., maintained eye contact while listening, nodding while listening, etc.).

5.   At the close of the session, expressed appreciation for the interviewer's time and consideration.

SAMPLE INEFFECTIVE BEHAVIORS:

1.   Asked questions in an abrupt or curt manner.

2.   Displayed little enthusiasm or politeness.

RATING FOR RESPONSE:_____