



Appendix E. Questions to Avoid

Do not ask questions which are not relevant to the candidate’s ability to perform the job. If the candidate volunteers personal or irrelevant information, immediately indicate to the individual that the information is not relevant to the ability to perform the job and will not be considered in the hiring decision. Then, continue with your next prepared question related to the position. Below is a list of inappropriate questions that should never be asked during an interview, along with the appropriate questions to ask instead.

Topic	Examples of Inappropriate Questions	Examples of Appropriate Questions
NAME	What is your maiden name? Have you ever legally changed your name? What does your name mean?	Are there other names under which you have worked that should be used to verify your academic credentials or prior work references?
AGE	How old are you? How many years before you plan to retire?	Are you 18 years of age or older?
BIRTHPLACE	Where were you born? Where were your parents born?	Are you eligible to work in the United States?
CITIZENSHIP	Do you hold citizenship in any country other than the United States?	Are you eligible to work in the United States?
PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS	How tall are you? How much do you weigh? What color are your eyes or hair? What is your race?	Can you perform the essential functions of the job with or without reasonable accommodation?
HEALTH /DISABILITY	What is your medical history? Do you have any disabilities? What are your disabilities? How will your disabilities affect your performance? Have you ever filed a Workers' Compensation claim against a former employer?	Can you perform the essential functions of this job with or without reasonable accommodation?
MARITAL STATUS	Are you married, single, divorced, separated, widowed? Are you living with anyone?	No appropriate questions with regard to marital status.
FAMILY	Where does your spouse work? Are you the primary wage-earner for your family? Do you have children? What are your child care arrangements?	No appropriate questions with regard to family.



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RELATIVES	What are the names of your closest relatives or friends?	Are you related to anyone employed by this University, or to a member of the University Board of Directors?
NATIONAL ORIGIN	What is your lineage, ancestry, national origin, descent, parentage, nationality, or the nationality of your parents or spouse?	Are you eligible to work in the United States?
RELIGION	What is your religious affiliation? What holidays do you observe?	Are you available to work on the days/shifts expected of this position?
LANGUAGE	What is your native language? What language do you speak at home?	What is your fluency level in the language(s) required to effectively perform this job?
FINANCIAL STATUS	How is your credit history? Have you ever declared bankruptcy? Have your wages ever been garnished?	Questions regarding financial status are usually not job related so should generally be considered inappropriate.
MILITARY SERVICE	Was your discharge honorable or dishonorable? Why did you serve with a foreign military?	What training or experience that you gained in your military service is relevant to this job?
ORGANIZATIONS	Are you a member of any social clubs, fraternities, sororities, lodges, teams, or religious organizations?	Are you a member of any professional, trade, or service associations that are directly related to this job?
SUBSTANCE ABUSE	Do you have a history of alcohol or drug addiction? What medications are you currently taking?	Do you currently use any illegal substances or any legal substances illegally?
SALARY LEVEL	What is the lowest salary you will accept?	Are you interested in the position at the level it is budgeted?
REFERENCES	What is the name of your pastor or religious leader?	What is the name of an individual who would serve as an employment reference?