Interviewing: More Than a Gut Feeling — Situations for Discussion
# Table of Contents

**Interviewing: More Than a Gut Feeling — Situations for Discussion**

## Preparing for Your Session:
- Training Session Checklist for *Interviewing: More Than a Gut Feeling — Situations for Discussion* ................................................................. page 4
- Trainer’s Instructions on Using the Book *Interviewing: More Than a Gut Feeling* ................................................................. page 5
- Tips for Transferred Learning ................................................................. page 6
- Possible Session Agendas ................................................................. page 7
- Trainer’s Personalized Session Agenda ................................................................. page 9
- Invitation Letter to Participants ................................................................. page 10
- Trainer’s Instructions for the Pre-training Survey ................................................................. page 11
- Pre-training Survey for *Interviewing: More Than a Gut Feeling — Situations for Discussion* ................................................................. page 12
- Introducing the Session to Participants ................................................................. page 14

## Session Materials:
- Show Video Vignettes .................................................................................................................. page 15
- Video Case Study 1 *Perfect for the Job* .................................................................................. page 16
- Video Case Study 2 *Tell Me What You Would Like Me To Say* ........................................... page 21
- Video Case Study 3 *Yackety, Yack, Don't Talk Back* ........................................................ page 27
- Video Case Study 4 *So, How Do You Feel?* ......................................................................... page 35
- Video Case Study 5 *Open or Closed?* ................................................................................ page 39
- Video Case Study 6 *Silence Could Be Golden* ....................................................................... page 43
- Video Case Study 7 *Guilt By Question* ................................................................................ page 45
- Video Case Study 8 *Legal or Illegal?* ................................................................................ page 48
- Video Case Study 9 *Getting It Right* ................................................................................ page 56
- Post-training Survey Exercise ................................................................................................ page 63
- Session Evaluation Form ........................................................................................................ page 65

## Post-training Materials
- Overheads
### Training Session Checklist for *Interviewing: More Than a Gut Feeling — Situations for Discussion*

**Trainer’s Note:** This checklist should be used before your training session to secure all logistical items.

#### Meeting Preparations:
- [ ] Determine your training objectives.
- [ ] Measure the current status of your participants, using the pre-training survey.
- [ ] Choose different ways to train to ensure transfer of information.
- [ ] For training to be effective, try to limit class size to 20-25 people.

#### Location:
- [ ] Create a relaxed environment.
- [ ] Make sure all seats have a good view of the visuals.
- [ ] Make sure there is enough light to take notes when participants view the video *Interviewing: More Than a Gut Feeling — Situations for Discussion*.
- [ ] Provide an adequate writing surface for participants.
- [ ] Assure good acoustics.
- [ ] Assure that your room is accessible and equipped for participants with disabilities.

#### Video Equipment:
- [ ] Make sure the VCR is properly connected to the monitor.
- [ ] Test the VCR, and check monitor for proper picture, color, and volume.
- [ ] Make sure the tape is rewound and ready to play before beginning your session.
- [ ] Check all other equipment for proper operation.

#### Materials:
- [ ] *Training Leader’s Guide*
- [ ] Videotape, *Interviewing: More Than a Gut Feeling — Situations for Discussion*
- [ ] AMI How-To Book, *Interviewing: More Than a Gut Feeling*
- [ ] Overheads
- [ ] Paper and Pencils
- [ ] Additional Equipment
- [ ] Participant Worksheets
No time to call everyone together for training? No problem—American Media has made training even easier with its self-study programs. By combining the effectiveness of the video *Interviewing: More Than a Gut Feeling — Situations for Discussion* and AMI’s how-to training book *Interviewing: More Than a Gut Feeling* your employees can improve their skills through a self-guided study.

Throughout this guide, we have included several exercises from *Interviewing: More Than a Gut Feeling*. This book is part of American Media’s How-To Book Series.

Written in a user-friendly, easy-to-understand style, *Interviewing: More Than a Gut Feeling* includes interactive exercises in each chapter to help the reader process the information and put it into action—ensuring that your training makes an impact.

*Interviewing: More Than a Gut Feeling* may be used in several different ways that complement your training session. You can:

- Use the exercises we have developed for this course, incorporate other exercises from the book that you feel better meet the needs of your organization, or use a combination of both.
- Assign reading of an entire chapter of the book that covers an area you wish to emphasize in your session.
- Assign reading of the entire book and completion of assigned exercises.

Providing copies of the book to each participant allows you to continue instilling the importance of effective meeting management after your session is completed. The book is an excellent tool for continued learning and provides an easy, hands-on reference for use on the job.

Order discounted copies for all your attendees today.
Tips for Transferred Learning

Keep in mind the following tips when conducting any adult training. You may wish to review these tips and incorporate them into your session planning.

1. **Adults learn when they feel they need to.**
   Discuss ways your training will help participants improve job performance by learning more effective interviewing techniques. Look for and provide opportunities to help them utilize their new skills.

2. **Adults learn by doing.**
   Use the exercises found in this Training Leader’s Guide, or create your own to give participants an opportunity to practice skills they can take back to their jobs. Also, provide reinforcement tools, such as the desk reminder cards and copies of the how-to book Interviewing: More Than a Gut Feeling, for your participants to take back to their jobs for continued and reinforced learning.

3. **Adults learn by solving realistic problems.**
   Discuss and analyze actual on-the-job interviewing situations. Allow the trainees to solve these real-life problems by using what they have learned.

4. **Adults learn in an informal environment.**
   Design your training room to be as informal as possible. Avoid classroom-style seating. If appropriate, encourage training participants to wear casual clothing. Encourage discussion and interaction to make participants feel more comfortable.

5. **Adults learn by different training methods.**
   Vary your training methods. Combine discussions, role plays, case studies, self-evaluations, and action planning in your training session. Using a variety of methods reinforces your message about effective interviewing techniques and promotes audience involvement.

6. **Trainers learn by follow-up methods.**
   Follow-up methods are crucial when determining the success of transferred training. Feedback from your participants’ manager; follow-up surveys or training sessions; three-, six-, and nine-month skill-testing sessions; etc., can help you evaluate the information being used on the job site.
Possible Session Agendas

Two session agendas have been provided to help guide you through your Interviewing: More Than a Gut Feeling — Situations for Discussion training session. You can modify these agendas to meet the needs of your participants. A blank agenda sheet is also provided on page 9 if you wish to create your own agenda.

### Activity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Page Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introducing the Session to Participants</td>
<td>10 minutes</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Video Case Study 1: Perfect for the Job — Vignette and Discussion</td>
<td>10 minutes</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The High Cost of Turnover Discussion</td>
<td>10 minutes</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Video Case Study 2: Tell Me What You Would Like Me to Say — Vignette and Discussion</td>
<td>10 minutes</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avoiding Leading Questions Exercise</td>
<td>20 minutes</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Video Case Study 3: Yackety, Yack, Don’t Talk Back — Vignette and Discussion</td>
<td>10 minutes</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Video Case Study 4: So How Do You Feel? — Vignette &amp; Discussion</td>
<td>10 minutes</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Video Case Study 5: Open or Closed? — Vignette</td>
<td>5 minutes</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing an Open-Ended Question Exercise</td>
<td>10 minutes</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Video Case Study 6: Silence Could Be Golden — Vignette &amp; Discussion</td>
<td>10 minutes</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**15 Minute Break**

| Video Case Study 7: Guilt by Question — Vignette & Discussion | 10 minutes | 45          |
| Video Case Study 8: Legal or Illegal? — Vignette & Discussion | 10 minutes | 48          |
| Interviewing and the Law Discussion                            | 20 minutes | 50          |
| Video Case Study 9: Getting It Right — Vignette                | 5 minutes  | 56          |
| Post-training Survey Exercise                                  | 15 minutes | 63          |

These suggested times are approximate and may vary depending on the needs of your organization and the number of participants in attendance.
## 8-Hour Session

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Page Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introducing the Session to Participants</td>
<td>10 minutes</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Video Case Study 1: Perfect for the Job — Vignette and Discussion</td>
<td>10 minutes</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The High Cost of Turnover Discussion</td>
<td>10 minutes</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who Wins When You Choose the Right Person? Exercise</td>
<td>20 minutes</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Video Case Study 2: Tell Me What You Would Like Me to Say — Vignette and Discussion</td>
<td>10 minutes</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avoiding Leading Questions Exercise</td>
<td>20 minutes</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 2 of the Book <em>Interviewing: More Than a Gut Feeling</em></td>
<td>20 minutes</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creating an Atmosphere Conducive to a Successful Interview Discussion</td>
<td>20 minutes</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 Minute Break</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Video Case Study 3: Yackety, Yack, Don’t Talk Back — Vignette and Discussion</td>
<td>10 minutes</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gaining Behavioral Examples Discussion</td>
<td>20 minutes</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preparing for the Interview — Designing Questions Exercise</td>
<td>20 minutes</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Video Case Study 4: So, How Do You Feel? — Vignette &amp; Discussion</td>
<td>10 minutes</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gathering Behavioral Examples Exercise</td>
<td>20 minutes</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Video Case Study 5: Open or Closed? — Vignette</td>
<td>5 minutes</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open-Ended Questions vs. Closed-Ended Questions Exercise</td>
<td>15 minutes</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing an Open-Ended Question Exercise</td>
<td>10 minutes</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Hour Lunch Break</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Video Case Study 6: Silence Could Be Golden— Vignette &amp; Discussion</td>
<td>10 minutes</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Video Case Study 7: Guilt by Question — Vignette &amp; Discussion</td>
<td>10 minutes</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contrary Evidence Exercise from the Book <em>Interviewing: More Than a Gut Feeling</em></td>
<td>10 minutes</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Video Case Study 8: Legal or Illegal? — Vignette</td>
<td>10 minutes</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interviewing and the Law Discussion</td>
<td>20 minutes</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 Minute Break</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter Four of the Book <em>Interviewing: More Than a Gut Feeling</em></td>
<td>10 minutes</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is It Legal to Ask…? Exercise</td>
<td>15 minutes</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Video Case Study 9: Getting It Right — Vignette</td>
<td>5 minutes</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Role Play Exercise</td>
<td>45 minutes</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-training Survey Exercise</td>
<td>15 minutes</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These suggested times are approximate and may vary depending on the needs of your organization and the number of participants in attendance.
You may want to plan a session that is different than the agendas provided on page 7 and 8. Below is a blank agenda to assist you in outlining your session.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Invitation Letter to Participants

This letter can be sent to your participants approximately one to two weeks prior to your training session. Modify the letter to fit your specific needs.

(Today’s Date)

To: (Participant’s Name)
From: (Trainer’s Name)
Re: Interviewing: More Than a Gut Feeling — Situations for Discussion Training Session

Many people make hiring decisions based on intuition, or a “gut” feeling, about the person they’re interviewing. This can result in costly hiring decisions.

On (insert date), we will be holding a training session to learn more effective interviewing techniques. The session will be held at (insert location). During the session you will learn the techniques of behavioral-based interviewing and will learn how to:

• Prepare for an interview.
• Ask rapport-building questions.
• Ask open-ended questions.
• Allow silence.
• Control the interview.
• Seek contrary evidence.

To help us get the most out of our training session, please take the time to complete the enclosed Pre-training Survey, and return it to me by (insert date). Your honest response to these questions will help us place emphasis on critical areas.

Please mark your calendar so you can attend this very important training session.

Thanks!
1. Complete the Invitation Letter to Participants (page 10), and enclose a copy of the Pre-training Survey (page 12) with each letter.

2. Upon receiving the Pre-training Surveys prior to the session, read through them and look for potential questions, problems, or situations to highlight and discuss in your training session.

3. The Pre-training Survey can help you focus the training session on your participants' needs. You may wish to add or delete items in your training session depending on the needs of your participants. Possible answers to the Pre-training survey are provided.

4. A Post-training Survey is provided on page 64 for use after your session. Evaluating the Post-training Survey and Pre-training Survey can help you determine if the information presented was transferred to the learner.
INSTRUCTIONS:
Read each question and write or choose your answers in the space provided. Be prepared to discuss your answers at the training session. This survey is a learning exercise only and not a test.

1. What are three things you can do at the beginning of your interview to put your candidate at ease?

2. True _____ False_____
   If candidates get off the subject, you should allow them to continue because they could tell you something you may not have been able to solicit using your preplanned questions.

3. Please give an example of a leading question.

4. Is it legal to ask job candidates where they were born if you detect an accent in their voice?

5. What is the best predictor of future behavior?

6. True _____ False_____
   If an applicant cannot answer a question immediately, you should break the awkward silence by asking another question and keep the interview moving forward.

7. Define contrary evidence as it relates to interviewing.

8. Should you use open-ended or closed-ended questions in the interview?
1. What are three things you can do at the beginning of your interview to put your candidate at ease?

   Usually the most successful technique is to enter into a general conversation about the weather or something about the candidate. People feel comfortable talking about things they're familiar with, and are probably most comfortable talking about themselves.

2. True _____ False_____

   If candidates get off the subject, you should allow them to continue because they could tell you something you may not have been able to solicit using your preplanned questions.

   False. It is important for the interviewer to keep control of the interview. Unnecessary talk not relating to the job can be a waste of time.

3. Please give an example of a leading question.

   “I need someone who can handle deadlines and high stress. Do you handle these factors well?”

4. Is it legal to ask job candidates where they were born if you detect an accent in their voice?

   No. It may be viewed as discrimination if you ask candidates where they were born. You may ask if they are legally employable in the United States.

5. What is the best predictor of future behavior?

   Studies have shown that the best predictor of future behavior is past behavior. There are always exceptions to any rule, but if done correctly, information obtained about past behavior will help you determine if a candidate has exhibited the skills needed for the job.

6. True _____ False_____

   If an applicant cannot answer a question immediately, you should break the awkward silence by asking another question and keep the interview moving forward.

   False. Silence must be permitted in the interview. When the interviewee is silent, it usually means he/she is “replaying” a memory in of a past event. Once the candidate has completed replaying the memory, he/she will be ready to communicate those memories to you.

7. Define contrary evidence as it relates to interviewing.

   Contrary evidence in interviewing is when the interviewer seeks information that is contrary to his/her initial findings to determine whether those initial findings were correct.

8. Should you use open-ended or closed-ended questions in the interview?

   Although at times you will need to use both open-ended and closed-ended questions, it is better to rely on open-ended questions for gaining behavioral examples.
Introducing the Session to Participants

Time Required:
• 10 minutes

Materials Needed:
• Overhead 1

Objectives:
• To introduce participants to each other and to promote discussion on how to improve and effectively use interviewing skills.

1. Ask participants to go around the room and introduce themselves, describe their jobs, and share with other participants what interviewing problems they’ve experienced and what they’d like to learn in today’s session.

2. After all participants have finished their introductions, introduce yourself to the group. Then, describe the agenda for this training session and outline the training goals. (See below)

3. Read or paraphrase the following to the group:
   Behavioral-based interviewing teaches us that the best predictor of future behavior is past behavior. In today’s session, we will learn the skills necessary to conduct behavioral-based interviews. After today’s session, you will know how to:
   • Prepare for an interview.
   • Ask rapport-building questions.
   • Ask open-ended questions.
   • Allow silence.
   • Control the interview.
   • Seek contrary evidence.
Show Video Vignettes

Time Required:
• Each vignette will last approximately one minute. Nine vignettes are given with discussion and exercises designed for each. For your convenience, times for individual exercises are provided, but are only approximate.

Materials Needed:
• Video, Interviewing: More Than a Gut Feeling — Situations for Discussion

Trainer’s Instructions:
Show the first video vignette of Interviewing: More Than a Gut Feeling — Situations for Discussion.

Trainer’s Note:
These video vignettes have been designed to encourage an interactive discussion of the key training points in behavioral-based interviewing. Play each vignette in its entirety. Then conduct the exercises and discussion that accompany each vignette, or create your own to emphasize necessary areas of training for your participants.
INSTRUCTIONS: After viewing the vignette, conduct the discussion questions and exercises that follow.

Vignette One — Scene One

Perfect for the Job

Jack
Susan Hernandez just resigned.

Manager
You’re kidding, somebody else?

Jack
She says the job isn’t what she expected. But to tell you the truth, she didn’t work out the way I expected. I thought she was perfect when I interviewed her. Wrong again.

Manager
Well, we need to do something and fast. It’s not going to be easy to find the right person and train ‘em by year’s end. Do you have any idea what all this turnover is costing us?
Discussion Questions for Vignette One

Time Required:
• 10 minutes

Materials Needed:
• None

Objective:
• To discuss how poor interviewing skills can be costly for your organization.

Read aloud the following questions and discuss as a group.

Q. What do “gut feelings” about applicants tell us?

Q. What types of things do we look for in an interview?

Q. What defines the “perfect” job candidate for you?

Q. Do we have job descriptions for all positions? What is in them? How do you use them when preparing for an interview?
The High Cost of Turnover

Discussion

Time Required:
• 10 minutes

Materials Needed:
• Flip Chart
• High Cost of Turnover Handout

Objective:
• To understand the high cost of turnover.

1. Ask your participants the following question:

Q. What is meant by the phrase “Turnover costs money”?

This is a simple question and should be readily answered. After a brief discussion ask:

Q. What percentage of the salary of the person you’re replacing do you think it costs to replace him/her?

Answers will vary and you may want to write them on a flip chart to discuss. Once you’re comfortable with the answers, communicate to participants that experts estimate it takes close to 35 percent of an employee’s salary to replace him/her.

2. Refer participants to the handout entitled The High Cost of Turnover—35% found on the following page. Discuss each section of the handout in detail to understand fully the total cost of turnover.

There are other costs to be considered, such as litigation, unemployment, etc. The point is, bad selection costs money. To decrease the costs of poor selection, interviewers should improve their interviewing skills.
The High Cost of Turnover — 35%
Worksheet

Many interviewers fail to understand the high cost of turnover. Below is a breakdown of turnover expenses. To decrease the costs of poor selection, interviewers should improve their interviewing skills.

I. Low Productivity/ Poor Customer Service Prior to Leaving — 10%
   • Low productivity
   • Low morale
   • Poor service/quality

II. Low Productivity/ Poor Customer Service While Replacement Learns Job — 10%
   • Low productivity
   • Below-average service/quality
   • Training time

III. Cost of Hiring a Replacement — 5%
   • Interview time
   • Travel time
   • Reference checking

IV. Associated Costs — 10%
   • Low morale in department when job is being shuffled
   • Abuse of equipment
   • Frustration

NOTES: __________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________
Who Wins When You Choose the Right Person? Exercise

Time Required:
• 20 minutes

Materials Needed:
• Flip Chart

Objective:
• To emphasize that everyone wins when you choose the right person.

Many interviewers fail to realize that the organization isn’t the only winner when the right person is hired. Many people are affected by your choice and “win” when you choose the right person for a job.

1. Ask your participants:

**Q. Who benefits when the right person is chosen?**

Five common answers you might receive and place on a flip chart are:
- The organization
- New employees
- Managers
- Current employees
- Customers

2. Divide your participants into groups of three or four. Assign each group one area — the organization, the new employee, a current employee, or a customer. Have each group compile a list of ways that its particular area benefits when the right person is chosen.

3. After you have given the groups five minutes to work on their lists, ask each group to select a spokesperson to report and explain its responses. List findings under each heading on a flip chart. Some common responses include:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organization</th>
<th>New Employee</th>
<th>Managers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Improved productivity</td>
<td>Job satisfaction</td>
<td>Less turnover</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Save money because of fewer mistakes</td>
<td>Self-esteem</td>
<td>Training readiness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eliminate discrimination</td>
<td>Rewarded for performance</td>
<td>Higher morale</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reduce personnel problems</td>
<td>Job stability</td>
<td>Higher productivity</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Current Employees</th>
<th>Customers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Qualified coworker</td>
<td>Better service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improved productivity</td>
<td>Higher quality product</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More job stability</td>
<td>Consistency of representative</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Hiring decisions affect much more than just the manager and his/her department. It is critical that interviewers do a good job in the selection process so that the organization, new employees, current employees, and customers all benefit.
INSTRUCTIONS: After viewing the vignettes, conduct the discussion questions and exercises that follow.

Vignette Two — Scene One
Tell Me What You Would Like Me To Say

Jack
Tell me, Lisa, what would be your perfect job? What kinds of things make you happy in your work?

Lisa
Good question. Well for one, I like working with people. I find new ideas and input stimulating, and I like coming up with a concept and working with others to build on it. Being a part of new ideas and implementing them is a strength.

Jack
Good. I need someone who can work well with others. Good. But I also need someone who can handle stress and deadlines. How are you with those?

Lisa
Great. I think deadlines are motivating, and I work best under stress.

Jack
Excellent. Good to hear. We have a few people here that are very dedicated but can be a little, let’s say, challenging to work with. Is that a problem?

Lisa
Not at all. I like challenges

Jack
Perfect.
Discussion Questions for Vignette 2

Time Required:
• 10 minutes

Materials Needed:
• None

Objective:
• To discuss how leading questions can steer the applicant and result in misleading answers.

Trainer’s Instructions:

Read aloud the following questions and discuss as a group.

Q. What have you learned about the job candidate?

Q. What does the candidate know about the position?

Q. What could the interviewer do to get more job-related information?

Q. How has the interviewer led the applicant?

Q. How could the interviewer rephrase his statements and questions to avoid leading Lisa?

Q. How do you decide what questions to ask in the interviews you conduct?
Avoiding Leading Questions
Exercise

Time Required:
• 20 minutes

Materials Needed:
• Avoiding Leading Questions Worksheet

Objective:
• To learn how to avoid asking leading questions in an interview.

1. Break participants up into groups of four.

2. Distribute copies of the Avoiding Leading Questions Worksheet

3. Ask each group to rewrite the questions shown so they do not lead the candidate.

4. Give each group time to complete the exercise and then read through the exercise as a group. Ask a spokesperson from each group to read its rewrite of the questions as you proceed through the worksheet.

5. Discuss all answers and rewrites as a group.
Avoiding Leading Questions Worksheet

INSTRUCTIONS: As a group, read through the following leading questions and discuss ways to rephrase them. Rewrite the questions so they do not lead the candidate. Appoint someone to present your answers to the large group.

1. I need someone who can work well with others. Are you a “people-person”?
   ______________________________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________________________

2. This is a stressful position with constant deadlines. How are you with those?
   ______________________________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________________________

3. We have some people here who are difficult to work with. Do you mind working with challenging personalities.
   ______________________________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________________________

4. The department you would be working in has been lacking in leadership. Do you feel you are a good leader of your coworkers?
   ______________________________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________________________

5. The position you are applying for has been receiving a lot of extra work lately. How do you feel about working overtime?
   ______________________________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________________________
Chapter 2 of the Book *Interviewing: More Than a Gut Feeling* by Richard S. Deems, Ph.D.

**Trainer’s Instructions:**

**Time Required:**
- 20 minutes

**Materials Needed:**
- Copy of the book *Interviewing: More Than a Gut Feeling* for each participant

**Objective:**
- To help participants identify needed technical and performance job skills


2. After all participants are done, ask for volunteers to share the job description statements created for technical and performance skills for the Take a Moment exercise on page 19.

3. Discuss responses as a group.

**Read or Paraphrase:**

These are great examples. By preparing a job description and understanding the skills needed for a job, you will be better prepared to create appropriate interview questions.
Creating an Atmosphere Conducive to a Successful Interview Discussion

Time Required:
• 20 minutes

Materials Needed:
• Flip Chart

Objective:
• To discuss how atmosphere can effect an interview.

An important part of the interview process is building a rapport with the candidate. By building rapport and creating a relaxed, yet professional atmosphere, an interviewer has taken an important step to assure a successful interview. The following discussion will allow us to explore this topic and determine ways to make candidates feel more comfortable.

1. Ask your participants questions regarding the subject of rapport building in the interview process. Common questions that will get your discussion going are:
   • Why is it that people come into the interview nervous?
   • Why is it important to get them to relax?
   • What are some ways that you can get them to relax?

2. Once your participants have started discussing the subject, explain how they can make the candidate relax by doing things with their physical environment. Ask your session participants what they can do to the physical surroundings of an interview to make the candidates feel more comfortable. Possible answers include:
   • Don’t sit directly across the desk from the candidate.
   • Make arrangements for a private area for the interview.
   • Smile and shake the candidate’s hand as he or she comes in.
   • Keep your body language relaxed and open.

3. Next, explain that you would like to take five minutes as a group to come up with rapport-building questions or comments. As each item is communicated, have someone list it on a flip chart. Answers may include:
   • Can I get you anything to drink this morning?
   • Did you find our building all right? It can be tricky.
   • Have you visited this city before?
   • How are your hotel accommodations? Do you need anything?

4. Conclude by explaining that you will have the flip chart notes typed and sent to them with their session follow-up materials so they can use the information in their future interviews.
Video Case Study 3
Yackety, Yack, Don’t Talk Back

INSTRUCTIONS: After viewing the vignettes, conduct the discussion questions and exercises that follow.

Vignette Three — Scene One
Yackety, Yack, Don’t Talk Back

Jack
(Fade In)...the company? Oh, this is a great place to work. Let me take some time to tell you about us. We offer all kinds of benefits and really value our employees.

I think you would find it a challenging but fun place to work. Now I do have some questions for you but first let me tell you about some of the kinds of things you can expect.

Dissolve

The other day we had the company picnic and all the managers had to go up against the sales people in a volleyball game. We lost, but hey, the sun was in our eyes.

Lisa
What type of opportunities are there? Do many people get promo . . .

Jack
You bet. This is the kinda place where if you work hard, there are all kinds of opportunities. I, myself, was promoted from a sales person to a manager. You see lots of that around here. I started almost five years ago. Things were different then, I’ll tell you. We were much smaller and our product line was not nearly as broad as it is now.
Lisa
I was wondering about your product. Can . . .

Jack
Speaking of product, did you know we carry the premium brand on the market? It costs a bit more than our competitors, but if you can sell features, you can sell our product.

Lisa
(Sits back to just listen)

Jack
R&D has really pitched in with some great new stuff. It seems like every few months they are giving us a new product to sell. The customers just eat it up . . .
Discussion Questions for Vignette 3

Time Required:
- 10 minutes

Materials Needed:
- Overhead 2
- Copies of Vignette 3

Objective:
- To discuss ways to avoid monopolizing the interview.

1. Have participants break into groups of three or four.
2. Display Overhead 2 and ask each group to discuss the questions on the overhead.
3. After 10 minutes, ask a spokesperson from each group to present its comments to the large group.

Q. How can you keep from monopolizing the conversation when interviewing an applicant?

Q. What do you do to be an effective listener rather than a talker in an interview?

Q. Of the previous conversation between Jack and Lisa, what points made by Jack can be “salvaged”? (You may need to distribute copies of Vignette 3 for this discussion question.)
Gaining Behavioral Examples
Discussion

Time Required:
• 20 minutes

Materials Needed:
• Gaining Behavioral Examples Exercise

Objective:
• To discuss the necessity of gaining behavioral examples.

Behavioral examples are statements by job candidates describing actual events that have happened in their lives. Remember, past behavior is the best indicator of future performance. During the interview, it is up to you, the interviewer, to gain as many behavioral examples as possible to use in evaluating a candidate’s ability to do a specific job.

When an interviewee is thinking about a behavioral example, he or she will break eye contact with the interviewer. After an example comes to mind, the interviewee will resume eye contact and begin to describe the picture in his or her mind.

You need to help the interviewee remember and give behavioral examples. In many cases, the job candidate will have difficulty thinking of specific life-history events relating to specific questions. When this occurs, you need to tolerate silence, smile, and be encouraging in order to “help” the interviewee remember as much as possible.

Most behavioral examples are characterized by specific reference to names, dates, times, numbers, and locations. For example, an interview response that would meet these criteria is detailed as follows:

Question: “What is your strong point?”

Answer: “I feel my strong point is that I’m a very determined, hardworking individual.

Question: “Can you give me an example of how you have proven yourself determined and hardworking?”

Answer: “Yes. Last October when I was with ABC Corporation, we were facing the most pressured, demanding time of the year when a flu epidemic struck the office. Well, out of seven people in the office, five were sick, leaving myself and one secretary to get all of the work done. For two weeks, I put in 12-hour days to meet all of our customer’s needs.”
It is important to gain as many behavioral examples as possible. One research study (Green, Wetzel, Somerville, 1983), has found that between eight and 21 behavioral examples can be obtained in a typical interview.

It is also possible that a single behavioral example will provide evidence of a negative behavior. But be careful not to make any rush judgments. Discuss any area in doubt and try to gain contrary evidence. It’s important to get a clear and balanced picture of each candidate.

After reading and discussing the information given here, distribute copies of the Gaining Behavioral Examples Exercise. This exercise is not intended as an evaluation tool, but is merely to help participants recall the information they have just learned and commit it to memory.

**Gaining Behavioral Examples Exercise — Trainer’s Copy**

**Instructions:** Answer the following questions based on the information you just learned.

1. What are behavioral examples?
   *Behavioral examples are statements by job candidates describing actual events that have happened in their lives.*

2. What is the best indicator of future performance?
   *Past behavior.*

3. How many behavioral examples can be obtained in a typical interview?
   *Between 8 and 21.*

4. What body language might a candidate exhibit while thinking of a behavioral example?
   *Break eye contact with the interviewer to recall a memory.*

5. Most behavioral examples will contain what type of information?
   *Specific reference to names, dates, times, numbers, and locations.*

6. What should you do if you think a candidate’s example illustrates negative behavior?
   *Follow up with another question to gather more information.*
Gaining Behavioral Examples
Exercise

Instructions: Answer the following questions based on the information you just learned.

1. What are behavioral examples? ____________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________________

2. What is the best indicator of future performance?______________________
   ___________________________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________________

3. How many behavioral examples can be obtained in a typical interview?
   ___________________________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________________

4. What body language might a candidate exhibit while thinking of a behavioral example? ______________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________________

5. Most behavioral examples will contain what type of information?
   ___________________________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________________

6. What should you do if you think a candidate’s example illustrates negative behavior? ________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________________
Preparing for the Interview — Designing Questions Exercise

Time Required:
- 20 minutes

Materials Needed:
- A typical job description for a familiar position in your organization.

Objective:
- To assist participants in creating behavioral-based interviewing questions.

An important part of the interview process is designing questions for the open position. By using a job description and designing behavioral-based interview questions, the interviewer will be working toward his or her goal of conducting a structured, legal interview. The following exercise will help your participants practice the skill of designing behavioral-based interview questions based on a job description.

1. Ask participants why it is important to prepare for the interview. Answers may include:
   - To ensure that questions center around the position available.
   - To ensure that you feel comfortable before the candidate arrives.
   - To provide consistency and validity to the interview.

2. Have participants pair up with a partner and pass out copies of the job description to each pair.

3. Instruct your participants to read the job description carefully. Then, ask them to use the description to develop seven to ten behavioral-based interview questions. Remind them that at this point they are each working individually. (Allow 10 minutes.)

4. Instruct participants to join with their partners and compare the questions they’ve each developed. (Allow two to three minutes.)
5. When all groups are done, ask participants questions about the exercise. You may wish to ask the following:

Q. What were the differences between the questions you developed and those of your partner?

Q. Was it difficult to develop the questions?

Q. How do you develop behavioral-based interview questions?

Q. How have you changed the types of questions you ask?
INSTRUCTIONS: After viewing the vignettes, conduct the discussion questions and exercises that follow.

Vignette Four
So, How Do You Feel?

Jack
How do you feel about working with spreadsheets?

Lisa
Good. I like working with numbers.

Jack
Great. OK, what do you think about working independently? Is working alone a problem for you?

Lisa
Not at all. It keeps me focused on the job at hand.

Jack
I’m like that too. Ahh . . . what hours do you think you could work? Are long hours a problem?

Lisa
I’ll be happy to work whenever you need me. Long hours don’t scare me.

Jack
OK. How do you feel about working with what can sometimes be angry or difficult customers?

Lisa
I’m really good with people. I think I could help smooth over any situation with a customer who might be upset.

Jack
That’s good to hear.
Discussion Questions for Vignette 4

Time Required:
• 10 minutes

Materials Needed:
• None

Objective:
• To learn how to avoid asking questions about how the candidates feel or think and instead focus on behavioral-based interviewing questions.

Trainer’s Instructions:
Read aloud the following questions and discuss as a group.

Q. What have you learned about the candidate from this vignette?

Q. What would you like to know about the candidate?

Q. What questions would you have asked if you were the interviewer?
Gathering Behavioral Examples

Exercise

Time Required:
• 20 minutes

Materials Needed:
• Gathering Behavioral Examples Worksheet

Objective:
• To learn how to gather behavioral examples in an interview

Interviewers can gain behavioral examples by asking for specific examples of past performance. This exercise provides an opportunity to practice this skill. Please refer to your Gathering Behavioral Examples Worksheet.

1. Ask each participant to complete the worksheet, allowing about ten minutes.
2. Discuss each question as a group.

Gathering Behavioral Examples Worksheet — Trainer’s Copy

Instructions: Below are five questions that may be asked of applicants, and beneath each question is an insufficient answer. Write the next question you would ask to obtain further information.

1. Q: What are your strengths?
   A: I think I’m a very hard-working person.
   Your next question:
   Possible answer: Tell me of a time when you exhibited your work ethic.

2. Q: Give me an example of when you had to show good leadership.
   A: I had to show real leadership when I worked in customer service.
   Your next question:
   Possible answer: Give me an example of a time when you had to provide leadership in your customer service role.

3. Q: What things in your job give you a sense of accomplishment?
   A: I like working with customers to solve their problems.
   Your next question:
   Possible answer: Describe a time when you had a particularly difficult situation with a customer that you were able to solve.

4. Q: Describe for me your most recent group effort.
   A: I recently served on a committee to schedule our company’s move to a new building.
   Your next question:
   Possible answer: What were your responsibilities and how did you go about completing them?

5. Q: Give me an example of a time when you were able to communicate successfully with another person, even when that individual may not have personally liked you.
   A: It’s well known that sales and manufacturing don’t always see eye to eye. Last week I had to communicate to the sales manager that his products were not going to be ready to ship.
   Your next question:
   How did you handle communicating this bad news?
Gathering Behavioral Examples Worksheet

Instructions: Below are five questions that may be asked of applicants, and beneath each question is an insufficient answer. Write the next question you would ask to obtain further information.

1. Q: What are your strengths?
   A: I think I’m a very hard-working person.

   Your next question:
   ____________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________

2. Q: Give me an example of when you had to show good leadership.
   A: I had to show real leadership when I worked in customer service.

   Your next question:
   ____________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________

3. Q: What things in your job give you a sense of accomplishment?
   A: I like working with customers to solve their problems.

   Your next question:
   ____________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________

4. Q: Describe for me your most recent group effort.
   A: I recently served on a committee to schedule our company’s move to a new building.

   Your next question:
   ____________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________

5. Q: Give me an example of a time when you were able to communicate successfully with another person, even when that individual may not have personally liked you.
   A: It’s well known that sales and manufacturing don’t always see eye to eye. Last week I had to communicate to the sales manager that his products were not going to be ready to ship.

   Your next question:
   ____________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________
INSTRUCTIONS: After viewing the vignettes, conduct the discussion questions and exercises that follow.

Vignette Five
*Open or Closed?*

Montage

Jack
Have you ever used a computer for that?

Jack
What did you do when your manager made changes at the last minute?

Jack
What did you do when you were passed over for a promotion?

Jack
How did you learn to access the Internet?

Jack
From what college did you graduate?

Jack
Why do you like engineering?

Jack
How many years did it take you to become proficient?

Jack
Which do you find most interesting — working in an office or out in the field?

Jack
What did you like about your last position?

Jack
What kind of boss do you like to work for? One who lets you do your own thing? Or one who offers supervision?
Open-Ended Questions vs. Closed-Ended Questions Exercise — Trainer’s Copy

Time Required:
• 15 minutes

Materials Needed:
• Open-Ended vs. Closed-Ended Questions Worksheet

Objective:
• To practice recognizing open-ended questions vs. closed-ended questions.

One key to gaining behavioral examples is using open-ended questions. In the vignette we just saw, there were many examples of both open-ended and closed-ended questions. Were you able to tell the difference?

1. Refer participants to their Open-Ended Questions vs. Closed-Ended Questions Worksheet.

2. Allowing participants five to eight minutes to complete the questions and discuss each question as a group.

Open-Ended vs. Closed-Ended Questions Worksheet — Trainer’s Copy
Instructions: Identify each statement below with an “O” for open-ended question or a “C” for a closed-ended question.

1. C Have you ever used a computer for that?
2. O What did you do when your manager made changes at the last minute?
3. O What did you do when you were passed over for a promotion?
4. O How did you learn to access the Internet?
5. C From what college did you graduate?
6. O Why do you like engineering?
7. C How many years did it take to become proficient?
8. C Which do you find the most interesting—working in the office, or out in the field?
9. O What did you like about your last position?
10. C What kind of boss do you like to work for? One who lets you do your own thing? Or one who offers supervision?
Open-Ended Questions vs. Closed-Ended Questions Worksheet

Instructions: Identify each statement below with an “O” for open-ended question or a “C” for a closed-ended question.

1. _____ Have you ever used a computer for that?

2. _____ What did you do when your manager made changes at the last minute?

3. _____ What did you do when you were passed over for a promotion?

4. _____ How did you learn to access the Internet?

5. _____ When did you graduate from college?

6. _____ Why do you like engineering?

7. _____ How many years did it take to become proficient?

8. _____ Which do you find the most interesting—working in the office or out in the field?

9. _____ What did you like about your last position?

10. _____ What kind of boss do you like to work for? One who lets you do your own thing? Or one who offers supervision?
Writing an Open-Ended Question Exercise

Time Required:
• 10 minutes

Materials Needed:
• Paper and pen

Objective:
• To practice writing open-ended questions.

Asking open-ended questions is an important way to get the candidate to talk about his or her skills, experience, and opinions. It is essential that you have open-ended questions prepared for each interview you do.

1. Ask each participant to think about an interview he or she will be conducting in the near future.

2. Instruct participants to develop at least three open-ended questions specifically for that interview.

3. After about five to seven minutes, ask for volunteers to read their questions aloud and discuss as a group.
INSTRUCTIONS: After viewing the vignettes, conduct the discussion questions and exercises that follow.

Vignette Six—Scene One
*Silence Could Be Golden*

**Jack**
Give me an example, if you will, of a time when working with financial details was difficult for you. How did you handle it?

**Lisa**
(Lisa looks as if she’s really thinking hard.) I’m trying . . . but I’m really good with detailed work, so I can’t think of anything.

*Short Silence*

**Jack**
It’s OK. That’s a tough one. Could you tell me about a time when you worked well with financial details.

**Lisa**
Sure. On my last job, keeping track of the fluctuation in inventory . . .
Discussion Questions for Vignette 6

Time Required:
• 10 minutes

Materials Needed:
• None

Objective:
• To discuss how to allow silence in an interview.

Read aloud the following questions and discuss as a group.

Q. Why is silence during an interview awkward — for the applicant as well as the interviewer?

Q. What can you do to ensure there is silence if needed? In other words, what can you do to make sure you don’t interrupt, fidget, do other work, make annoying sounds, etc., during a silent period?
**INSTRUCTIONS:** After viewing the vignettes, conduct the discussion questions and exercises that follow.

---

**Vignette Seven**  
_Guilt by Question_

**Jack**
Tell me about a time when you had to work with someone you did not get along with personally. How did you handle it?

**Lisa**
Well, in my last job, I worked with a woman who was a little difficult. She thought she was in charge of everything. She was always telling the rest of us what to do. So I handled it by pointing out that she wasn’t my boss and any suggestions she had could be directed at her. That helped.

**Jack**
I see. Tell me about another time you were faced with a person you didn’t like personally. How did you deal with them?

**Lisa**
Well, let me think. There was this guy. I could never understand what he was talking about. He was . . . you know . . . kinda slow. So I pointed out . . . (dissolve)

**Jack**
That’s interesting. Tell me about a time when you had to deal with a conflict?

**Lisa**
Seems like conflict is just part of the job. I’ve found you don’t have to like someone to work with them. Now, I don’t mean to be rude or anything. But sometimes you have to let the other guy know . . .

**Jack**
OK, you’ve given me a few examples of conflict, so how about a couple more.
Discussion Questions for Vignette 7

Time Required:
• 10 minutes

Materials Needed:
• None

Objective:
• To discuss how to search for contrary evidence.

Read aloud the following questions and discuss as a group.

Q. What is contrary evidence? Why is it important?

Q. How do you ensure you get both “Sides” of the applicant’s skills, traits, values, behaviors, etc.?

Q. What should Jack have said or asked after Lisa’s first response?

Q. If Jack continued questioning as he did above, should Lisa be proactive and provide contrary evidence on her own?

Q. How would she go about it? What would she say?
Contrary Evidence Exercise from
Interviewing: More Than a Gut Feeling

Time Required:
• 10 minutes

Materials Needed:
• Copy of the book Interviewing: More Than a Gut Feeling for each participant

Objective:
• To assist participants in seeking contrary evidence


2. As a large group, discuss the questions found in the next exercise, Discussion Questions for Vignette 7.
Vignette Eight
Legal or Illegal?

Montage

Jack (on the phone)
Is it Ms. or Mrs. Stevens?

Jack
Do you own or rent your home?

Jack
Who lives with you?

Jack
That’s an interesting accent. Where are you from?

Jack
Are you over 18?

Jack
What languages do you speak or write fluently?

Jack
How many children do you have?

Jack
We work a lot of evening hours, will that be a problem?

Jack
I notice you’re wearing a brace. Is it permanent?
Discussion Questions for Vignette 8

Time Required:
• 10 minutes

Materials Needed:
• Copies of Vignette 8

Objective:
• To discuss legal and illegal interviewing questions.

Read aloud the following questions and discuss as a group.

Q. What makes each of these questions legal or illegal? Why? (You may wish to distribute copies of Vignette 8 for this discussion question.)

Q. What questions have you asked or heard asked that are appropriate and legal? Why are they?

Q. Can you think of any additional illegal questions?
Interviewing and the Law Discussion

Time Required:
• 20 minutes

Materials Needed:
• Interviewing and the Law Exercise
• Overhead 3, 4 and 5

Objective:
• To discuss the importance of conducting a legal interview.

This section deals with legal compliance in interviewing. It may be worthwhile to ask a representative from your human resources department or your legal department to present the information below.

Many people who complete an interviewing course express serious concerns over the legality of their selection interviews. These concerns are legitimate and should be openly addressed. In fact, the vast majority of interviews reflect some opportunity for legal action because of:

• Lack of preparation
• Absence of a relationship between the interview questions and the job requirements
• Failure to use a structured interview plan designed to get job-related information

Federal guidelines concerning the evaluation of selection instruments indicate that the interview is regarded as being a test and will be evaluated in a courtroom in the same manner that any test would be evaluated.

• RELIABLE

Because the interview is a test, it is important for it to have the positive qualities associated with a good test. The first of these characteristics is reliability. To ensure a reliable interview, it is essential that you use a structured process. That means having a series of preplanned interview questions tied to specific job requirements.

You must also gain meaningful information about the person’s ability to do the job. Using a structured interview and gaining behavioral examples is quite different from relying on your gut feeling. In fact, reliance on your gut feelings will probably create an unreliable interview and could create legal problems.
Interviewing and the Law Discussion

Cont.

• VALID

When conducting an interview, you must also make sure it is valid. Validity means that the interview measures an applicant’s skills for a specific job. Or, the interview generates information that will predict job performance. An interview can be considered valid if it:

• Is based on a job analysis

• Contains questions that provide evidence about important job-related skills

• Systematically relates interview information to a specific job

Even the well-planned interview can be legally questioned. Consequently, each interviewer must attempt to conduct a reliable and valid interview and communicate effectively the skills required for the job.

Interviewing and the Law Exercise — Trainer’s Copy

Instructions: Answer the following questions based on the information you just learned.

1. Name one of the mistakes an interviewer might commit that could lead to an illegal interview? (three possible answers)
   • Lack of preparation
   • Absence of a relationship between the interview questions and the job requirements
   • Failure to use a structured interview plan designed to get job-related information

2. How does the law regard an interview in the courtroom?
   In the court of law, the selection interview is regarded as a test.

3. To be reliable an interview must be structured.

4. How can an interviewer prepare a structured interview?
   Preplan interview questions using a job description.

5. How is an interview defined as valid?
   The interview measures an applicant’s skills for a specific job.

6. To be valid, an interview must have the following characteristic (name one of three possible answers):
   • Is based on a job analysis
   • Contains questions that provide evidence about important job skills
   • Systematically relates interview information to a specific job
Interviewing and the Law Exercise

**Instructions:** Answer the following questions based on the information you just learned.

1. Name one of the mistakes an interviewer might commit that could lead to an illegal interview? (three possible answers)

   __________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________

2. How does the law regard an interview in the courtroom?

   __________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________

3. To be reliable an interview must be ____________?

4. How can an interviewer prepare a structured interview?

   __________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________

5. How is an interview defined as valid?

   __________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________

6. To be valid, an interview must have the following characteristic (name one of three possible answers):

   __________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________
Chapter Four of the Book
More Than a Gut Feeling

Time Required:
• 10 minutes

Materials Needed:
• Copy of the book Interviewing: More Than a Gut Feeling for each participant

Objective:
• To assist participants in creating legally fair and effective interview questions.

1. Have participants turn to page 38 of the book Interviewing: More Than a Gut Feeling and read through page 42.

2. When all participants are done reading, conduct the Chapter 4 Review beginning on page 43.
Is It Legal To Ask…? Exercise

Time Required:
• 15 minutes

Materials Needed:
• Is It Legal to Ask . . . ? Worksheet

Objective:
• To determine if participants know the difference between a legal and an illegal question.

Inexperienced interviewers often feel apprehensive concerning the subject of what questions they can legally ask in the interview. This exercise asks you to determine whether the question can be legally asked in the interview.

1. Refer participants to their Is It Legal to Ask . . . ? worksheet.

2. After allowing 10 minutes for participants to complete the worksheet, discuss each question as a group.

**Is It Legal to Ask . . . ? Worksheet — Trainer’s Copy**

Instructions: Place an “L” before the questions you feel can legally be asked in the interview, and an “I” before those you believe are illegal to ask in the interview.

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>1. How old are you?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>2. This job requires that you work extra hours. Do you have children with whom this would cause a problem?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L</td>
<td>3. If hired, can you provide proof that you are 18 years of age?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>4. Of what country are you a citizen?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L</td>
<td>5. Are you prevented from becoming legally employed because of visa or immigration status?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>6. What is your marital status?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>7. Are you disabled?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L</td>
<td>8. Are you capable of performing the necessary assignments of this job in a safe manner?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L</td>
<td>9. What languages do you read, speak, or write fluently?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>10. Have you ever been arrested?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Is It Legal To Ask...? Exercise**

**Cont.**

**Instructions:** Place an “L” before the questions you feel can legally be asked in the interview, and an “I” before those you believe are illegal to ask in the interview.

1. _____ How old are you?

2. _____ This job requires that you work extra hours. Do you have children with whom this would cause a problem?

3. _____ If hired, can you provide proof that you are 18 years of age?

4. _____ Of what country are you a citizen?

5. _____ Are you prevented from becoming legally employed because of visa or immigration status?

6. _____ What is your marital status?

7. _____ Are you disabled?

8. _____ Are you capable of performing the necessary assignments of this job in a safe manner?

9. _____ What languages do you read, speak, or write fluently?

10. _____ Have you ever been arrested?
INSTRUCTIONS: After viewing the vignettes, conduct the discussion questions and exercises that follow.

Vignette Nine
Getting It Right

Jack
So, it’s nice to meet you in person. Did you find us OK?

CG: Build rapport.

Lisa
No problem. You give great directions. I really like this part of town.

Jack
Me too. I grew up around here and plan on staying. Have you seen much of the new business park?

Dissolve

Jack
I’ve taken some time to review your resume and I’ve put together some questions that relate to the job you’re interviewing for. So let’s jump right in.

Lisa
Before we get started, could you tell me a little bit more about the job and the company? I’d like to know what kind of a person you are looking for.

CG: Let the applicant do the talking.

Jack
Good question. Let’s talk more about that at the end of our meeting. Right now I’d like to hear more about you and your background. OK?

Lisa
OK
Video Case Study 9
Cont.

CG: Use behavior-based questions.

Jack
Tell me about a time when you worked with a team to solve a problem.

Dissolve

Jack
Tell me about a time when you were faced with a stressful situation at work. How did you handle it?

Dissolve

Jack
Give me an example of a job you worked on that you are really proud of.

Dissolve

CG: Use open-ended questions.

Jack
Realizing that no one’s perfect, describe a mistake that you made at your last job and how you corrected it.

Dissolve

Jack
Give me an example of a time when you had to provide leadership.

Dissolve

Jack
Tell me about a time when you had to deal with an angry customer. How did you handle it?

End of Montage
Video Case Study 9
Cont.

CG: Let the applicant do the talking.

Lisa
Well, just last week one of our customers called in just furious about a late order. At first I just gave him some time to vent steam. He had every right to be angry. Then I got all the facts about the problem and gave him some options for fixing it, apologizing for the delay, of course.

CG: Seek contrary evidence.

Jack
That’s really positive in terms of handling an angry customer. Now I’d like you to think of a time when you didn’t handle a customer’s problem well. Tell me what happened.

Lisa
Well, luckily it doesn’t happen often but occasionally customers . . .

Dissolve

Jack
Tell me about an error you made at your last job. What was the mistake and how did you handle it?

Lisa
(Looks like she is really trying to come up with something). I really can’t think of anything off hand. I’m not sure . . . no, that’s not a good example

CG: Allow for silence.

Jack
Take your time. We’re not in a rush.

(Silent Pause)

Lisa
I remember one. About two months ago I ordered . . . (fade out)

Dissolve
CG: Keep it legal.

Jack
Now that you have had a chance to review the essential functions of the job, is there any reason you would not be able to perform the duties listed?

Lisa
(Looking at job description) I sure don’t think so.

Jack
Sometimes we need to work after normal hours. Will that be a problem for you?

Lisa
Not if I have a couple of hours notice.

Jack
That’s fine. Lisa, I really appreciate your answering my questions with specific examples. I think I have a good picture of your background. Now you mentioned having some questions for me?

Lisa
Yes, what would a typical day be like?

Fade to Black
Role-Play Exercise

Time Required:
• 30-45 minutes

Materials Needed:
• Copies of the Observer’s Guide for all participants
• You may wish to have each participant come to training with a job description prepared to use in this exercise.

Objective:
• To practice interviewing in a controlled environment.

1. Explain that participants will now have the opportunity to practice conducting an interview.

2. Ask them to break into groups of three. Explain that during the role-playing exercise, one person will act as the interviewer, one will be the interviewee, and the third person will be an observer. Each person will have the opportunity to practice each role. Remind participants that the purpose of the exercise is to offer an opportunity to practice their skills.

3. Ask participants to create or use a job description from their work environment. Remind participants that they should use job descriptions to:
   A. Become familiar with the job responsibilities.
   B. Develop job-related questions.

4. Have participants individually create 10 behavioral-based interview questions based on their job description.

5. Give all participants a copy of the Observer’s Guide. Explain that the guide is to be filled in as they observe. Following the exercise, they will be asked to provide feedback to the interviewer.

6. Have the interviewers start the interview by acting as if the candidate has just entered the room for the interview. Ask the interviewees to respond as if they were being interviewed.

7. After the first person has completed his/her interview, ask the observers to give feedback to the interviewer.

Trainer’s Instructions:
Role-Play Exercise

Cont.

8. Have participants switch roles and complete the role plays until each individual has been allowed to practice.

9. You may wish to conclude the role playing by asking the following questions:

**Q.** As an interviewer, did you feel that using behavioral-based interviewing questions is better than closed-ended questions?

**Q.** Did you have enough time to prepare? How important is preparation?

**Q.** Did you allow silence in your interviews? How did it feel?
Observer’s Guide

Instructions: As an observer, your role is to record your observations of the other participants during the role play. After the role play, be prepared to discuss your observations with the interviewer.

1. Was the interviewer prepared?

2. Did the interviewer have a list of questions prepared?

3. Were the interviewer’s questions based upon the job in question?

4. Did the interviewer use rapport-building questions or comments to make the interviewee feel at ease?

5. Did the interviewer probe for behavioral examples?

6. Did the interviewer seek contrary evidence?

7. How did the interviewer handle awkward moments of silence?

8. In what areas could the interviewer improve?

9. List examples of good questions asked by the interviewer.
   A.
   B.

10. List any questions that may need to be rephrased.
    A.
    B.
Post-training Survey
Exercise

Time Required:
• 15 minutes

Materials Needed:
• One copy of the Post-training Survey Worksheet for each participant

This worksheet is designed to evaluate the effectiveness of this training session. Your responses will be confidential and in no way will this survey be used to penalize you.

1. Distribute the Post-training Survey Worksheet and give participants time to complete it. Discuss each question. Possible answers are provided below.

1. Usually the most successful technique is to enter into a general conversation about the weather or something about the candidate. People feel comfortable talking about things they’re familiar with, and are probably most comfortable talking about themselves.

2. It is important for the interviewer to keep control of the interview. Using a written outline with prepared questions will help you keep on track. If a candidate begins talking about something other than the subject matter, politely but firmly tell her or him that you have a limited time for the interview and need to get through several questions in order to make a fair and final decision on the job.

3. “I need someone who can handle deadlines and high stress. Do you handle these factors well?”

4. Studies have shown that the best predictor of future behavior is past behavior. There are always exceptions to any rule, but if done correctly, information obtained about past behavior will help you determine if a candidate has exhibited the skills needed for the job.

5. No. It may be viewed as discrimination if you ask someone where he or she was born. You may ask if they are legally employable in the United States.

6. Contrary evidence in interviewing is when the interviewer seeks information that is contrary to his/her initial findings to determine whether those initial findings were correct.

7. Although at times you will need to use both open-ended and closed-ended questions, it is better to rely on open-ended questions for gaining behavioral examples.

8. Behavioral examples are statements by job candidates describing actual events that have happened in their lives.

9. • Lack of preparation
   • Absence of a relationship between the interview questions and the job requirements
   • Failure to use a structured interview plan designed to get job-related information

10. In the court of law, the selection interview is regarded as a test.
INSTRUCTIONS: The questions listed below highlight key points from your Interviewing: More Than a Gut Feeling — Situations for Discussion training session. Consider the questions, and write your answers in the space provided.

1. List ways that you plan on putting job candidates at ease.

2. How can you help a job candidate who gets off track and keeps talking?

3. Please give an example of a leading question.

4. Is it legal to ask job candidates where they were born if you detect an accent in their voice?

5. What is the best predictor of future behavior and why?

6. Define contrary evidence as it relates to interviewing.

7. Should you use open-ended or closed-ended questions in the interview?

8. What are behavioral examples?

9. Name one of the mistakes an interviewer might commit that could lead to an illegal interview? (three possible answers)

10. How does the law regard an interview in the courtroom?
Session Evaluation Form—
More Than a Gut Feeling Vignettes

INSTRUCTIONS:
Please circle the number that best describes your evaluation of the training session.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Uncertain</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>This training program concentrates on the importance of developing behavioral-based interviewing techniques.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This training program helped me understand the importance of behavioral-based interviewing.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>As a result of this program, I am more confident in MY ability to interview effectively.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The objectives of the program were clearly presented.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opportunities to ask questions and discuss issues were sufficient.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The session was well organized.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The best part of this program was: ____________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________

This program could be improved by: ____________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________

Additional comments _________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________

I would recommend this session to others. (Circle one.) Yes No
POST-TRAINING MATERIALS
The letter below should be personalized and sent to each participant one to two weeks after your training session. By following up in this manner, your participants will have the opportunity to review and utilize what they learned in their work environment.

(Today’s Date)

To: (Participant’s Name)
From: (Trainer’s Name)
Re: More Than a Gut Feeling Vignettes Training Session

Earlier this month you attended a training session in which we talked about the importance of behavioral-based interviewing. During the training session you learned how to:

• Prepare for an interview.
• Ask rapport-building questions.
• Ask open-ended questions.
• Allow silence.
• Control the interview.
• Seek contrary evidence.

We are including with this letter follow-up materials from the training session that you can use in your workplace. (Four Considerations in Making the Offer; Common Interview Questions Handout; A Pre-employment Questions Guide; Interviewing and the Law; Americans with Disabilities Act; Just for Laughs) These materials will provide regular reviews of the information you have learned and will help you implement these skills into your daily work.

If you would like to continue your own self-study on the topic of interviewing, you are welcome to contact me or (name/department) for use of the More Than a Gut Feeling II video and the Interviewing: More Than a Gut Feeling self-study book, and other materials we have collected on behavioral-based interviewing.

Our hope is that you have been able to put the ideas you learned to work within your area. If you have any questions, please contact me at extension (###).
Four Considerations in Making the Offer

Although from the outside, extending an offer to the candidate may seem to be an easy part of the interviewing process, it’s still an area where you need to make sure you’re handling things correctly. Consider the focus areas below when making an offer of employment.

**Timing**
- Be sure of your decision.
- Make the offer at the earliest point possible.

**Selling the job to the reluctant candidate**
- Don’t oversell.
- Don’t make promises you can’t keep.

**Giving a candidate time to consider the offer**
- Give the candidate enough time.
- Don’t expect an immediate reply.

**Confirming arrangements**
- Verbal offers should be confirmed in writing.
- Letter should include the following:
  A. The position
  B. Rate of pay
  C. Starting date
  D. Office hours
  E. A name and address to call with any questions prior to starting
  F. When and where to report on the first day
Typically, a wide variety of questions can be used to gain information about a candidate’s job skills. Use these questions as guides to help you develop questions that target specific job skill requirements.

1. Describe a time when you were faced with problems or stresses at work that tested your coping skills. What did you do?

2. Give an example of a time when you could not participate in a discussion or could not finish a task because you did not have enough information.

3. Give an example of a time when you had to be relatively quick in coming to a decision.

4. Tell me about a time when you had to use your spoken communication skills in order to get a point across that was important to you.

5. Can you tell me about a job experience in which you had to speak up and tell other people what you thought or felt?

6. Give me an example of when you felt you were able to build motivation in your coworkers or subordinates.

7. Tell me about a specific occasion when you conformed to a policy even though you did not agree with it.

8. Describe a situation in which you felt it necessary to be very attentive and vigilant to your environment.

9. Give me an example of a time when you used your fact-finding skills to gain information needed to solve a problem; then tell me how you analyzed the information and came to a decision.

10. Give me an example of an important goal you had to set, and tell me about your progress in reaching that goal.

11. Describe the most significant written document, report, or presentation that you’ve completed.

12. Give me an example of a time when you had to go above and beyond the call of duty in order to get a job done.
13. Give me an example of a time when you were able to communicate successfully with another person, even when that individual may not have personally liked you.

14. Describe a situation in which you were able to read another person effectively and guide your actions by your understanding of his/her individual needs or values.

15. What did you do in your last job in order to be effective with your organization and planning? Be specific.

16. Describe the most creative work-related project you have completed.

17. Describe a time when you felt it was necessary to modify or change your actions in order to respond to the needs of another person.

18. Give me an example of a time when you had to analyze another person or situation carefully in order to be effective in guiding your action or decision.

19. What did you do in your last job to contribute toward a teamwork environment? Be specific.

20. Give me an example of a problem you faced on the job, and tell me how you solved it.

21. Describe a situation in which you were able to positively influence the actions of others in a desired direction.

22. Tell me about a situation in the past year in which you had to deal with a very upset customer or coworker.

23. Describe a situation in which others within your organization depended on you.

24. Describe your most recent group effort.

25. Describe the worst customer or coworker you have ever had and tell me how you dealt with him or her.
The following chart helps interviewers distinguish legal from illegal inquiries when seeking information during the interview process. Any question not job related may be unlawful if the information obtained is used in a discriminatory manner.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SUBJECT</th>
<th>DO NOT ASK</th>
<th>YOU MAY ASK</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sex</td>
<td>Are you male or female?</td>
<td>None.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>What are the names and relationships of persons living with you?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residence</td>
<td>Do you own or rent? Give the names and relationships of persons residing with you.</td>
<td>What is your present address?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Race/Color</td>
<td>What is your race? What color is your hair, eyes, or skin?</td>
<td>None.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>What is your date of birth?</td>
<td>If hired, can you provide proof that you are at least 18 years of age?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>How old are you?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Origin</td>
<td>What is your ancestry, national origin, descent ancestry, parentage, or nationality?</td>
<td>What languages do you speak or write fluently? (Do not ask unless strictly job related.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>What is your native language?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>What is the nationality of your parents or spouse?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marital or Family Status</td>
<td>What is your marital status?</td>
<td>None. (An employer may ask if candidates have any commitments or responsibilities that might prevent them from meeting attendance requirements, or if they anticipate lengthy work absences. Make sure you ask this question of all applicants.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>What is your spouse’s name?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>What was your maiden name?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>How many children do you have?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Are you pregnant?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Do you plan to have children?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>What day-care provisions have you made for your children?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Pre-employment Questions Guide

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Answer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Arrests and Convictions</strong></td>
<td>Have you ever been arrested? Have you ever been charged with any crime? Have you been convicted of any crime?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(If the application form asks for information on convictions, the employer should indicate that a conviction itself does not constitute an automatic bar to employment and will be considered as it relates to fitness to perform the job in question.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Religion</strong></td>
<td>What is your religious affiliation or denomination? What church do you belong to? What is the name of your pastor, minister, or rabbi? What religious holidays do you observe?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>None. (If you wish to know if an applicant is available to work Saturday or Sunday shifts, ask, “Are you available to work on Saturdays or Sundays if needed?” Make sure you ask this question of all applicants.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Disabilities</strong></td>
<td>Are you disabled? Are you capable of performing the essential functions of this position, with or without reasonable accommodation?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Citizenship</strong></td>
<td>Of what country are you a citizen? Are you or other members of your family naturalized citizens? If so, when did you or they become a U.S. citizen? Attach a copy of your naturalization papers to your application form.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Interviewing and the Law

There are many important legal guidelines to follow when preparing for an interview. Even the well-planned interview can be legally questioned. Consequently, it is very important for each interviewer to attempt to conduct a reliable and valid interview, and to communicate effectively the skills required for the job. Follow these guidelines to protect you and your organization.

Opportunities for Legal Action in the Interview

• Lack of preparation
• Questions unrelated to the position
• Lack of structure

Is Your Interview Valid?

• Is it based on a thorough job analysis?
• Do questions probe for job-related skills?
• Is the interview information related to job requirements?

Question Guidelines: Questions should not be asked about:

• Sex
• Race
• Color
• Religion
• National Origin
• Disability
• Age
Americans with Disabilities Act

On July 26, 1990, President Bush signed into law the Americans with Disabilities Act. This act is recognized across the U.S. as the most sweeping civil rights legislation since the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Organizations with 15 or more employees must comply with this legislation.

The intent of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is to prevent discrimination against qualified people with disabilities in employment, public services, transportation, public accommodations, and telecommunication services.

Adoption of the ADA means:

- Organizations and their managers can no longer screen out individuals with disabilities in the hiring process, nor can they discriminate in any area of employment, including compensation, promotions, benefits, or firing.

- Organizations will no longer be able to conduct pre-employment medical screening, with the exception of drug screening, or make pre-employment inquiries into the nature of an applicant’s disability.

- Organizations must be aware of physical barriers in their work environment, as well as provide up-to-date, relevant job descriptions to their workers.
The following are actual experiences from prospective employee interviews as reported by vice presidents and personnel directors of the one hundred largest corporations in America.

- A job applicant challenged the interviewer to arm wrestle.
- Interviewee wore a Walkman, explaining that she could listen to the interviewer and the music at the same time.
- Candidate announced she hadn’t had lunch and proceeded to eat a hamburger and french fries in the interviewer’s office.
- Candidate said he never finished high school because he was kidnapped and kept in a closet in Mexico.
- Balding candidate excused himself and returned to the office a few minutes later wearing a hair piece.
- Applicant refused to sit down and insisted on being interviewed standing up.

The employers were also asked to list the “most unusual” questions that have been asked by job candidates. Here are some of the responses.

- “What is it that you people do at this company?”
- “Why aren’t you in a more interesting business?”
- “What are the zodiac signs of all the board members?”
- “Why do you want references?”
- “Do I have to dress for the next interview?”
- “Would it be a problem if I’m angry most of the time?”

The following unusual statements are those made by candidates during the interview process.

- I feel uneasy indoors.
- I think Lincoln was greater than Washington.
- If the pay was right, I’d travel with the carnival.
- I would have been more successful if nobody would have snitched on me.
OVERHEADS
Seek contrary evidence.

Control the interview.

Allow silence.

Ask open-ended questions.

Ask rapport-building questions.

Prepare for an interview.

Training Session Objectives
Of the previous conversation between Jack and Lisa, what points made by Jack can be salvaged?

Rather than a talker in an interview?

What do you do to be an effective listener?

How can you keep from monopolizing the conversation when interviewing an applicant?

Discussion Questions for Vidette 3
Factors That Could Lead to an Illegal Interview

- Failure to use a structured interview plan
- Absence of a relationship between the interview questions and the job requirements
- Lack of preparation for legal action because of:
  - The vast majority of interviews reflect some
designed to get job-related information
Factors That Will Make an Interview Reliable

- Use a structured process.
- Have a series of preplanned interview questions tied to specific job requirements.
- Gain meaningful information about the person's ability to do the job.
to a specific job.

Systematically relates interview information about important job-related skills.

Contains questions that provide evidence.

Is based on a job analysis.

Factors That Will Make an Interview Valid