

Best Practice Interview Skills

Companion
Workbook

Welcome!

Using this workbook

This workbook is designed to be used during the course to help you to capture content; it is also designed as a point of reference for you to refer to after the end of the programme.

This companion workbook closely follows the course.

You will find all the relevant slides have a dedicated page many with space for you to add your own notes alongside. All the hand-outs are incorporated into the workbook along with a resources section at the end.

Why Interview Skills Matter at Thalia



Recruitment and selection play a pivotally important role in shaping Thalia's effectiveness and performance.

It is estimated that the difference in value between a good member of staff and an average member of staff is between 40% and 70% of the salary (Schmidt et al (1980)). Employing the best person for the job will ensure that Thalia benefits materially, and in performance terms. It is vital that all those who are responsible for recruitment understand the need for professionalism, fairness, and ethical behaviour. In the space below make some notes on why you believe that recruiters and panel members should attend this training.

Overall Aims



The purpose of this course is to:

- Make sure we have a consistent approach to interviewing
- Improve the diversity of our workforce.
- Minimise legal risk associated with interviews.
- Deliver a positive candidate experience.
- Improve the confidence of recruiting managers and panel members.
- Reduce attrition.
- Embed the requirements of initiatives we support into the interview process.

Objectives

By the end of this training, you will be able to:

- Confidently conduct an interview
- Describe external initiatives we have adopted and how to comply with them.
- Know and understand relevant legislation
- Attract, appoint, and retain the best candidates
- Mitigate the inherent bias's that we all have
- Know and understand relevant Thalia policies
- Ask questions that will dig deep whilst putting a candidate at ease.

What is the purpose of a job interview?

This may initially seem like a simple question but it is important to look at the interview from the perspective of both the employer and the candidates perspective.

In the table below record what an interview should achieve from both perspectives .

Thalia Initiatives

In this space we are going to look at two initiatives that we have signed up to. Use the space below to record any thoughts you have about this and how each initiative might have an impact on the interview process



Unconscious Bias

Unconscious biases are often based on mistaken, inaccurate, or incomplete information. These biases can have a significant impact on workplaces, shaping who gets recruited, hired, and promoted. Having an unconscious bias doesn't make you a bad person—it just means you're human.

Use the space below to make some notes following the viewing of **What does my headscarf mean to you? | Yassmin Abdel-Magied**

How does this relate to you?

How does this relate to how you conduct interviews?

What can we do to reduce Unconscious Bias at Thalia?

Reasonable Adjustments in Action

A good interview should assess the skills for the job. It should not put a candidate at a disadvantage because of any impairment. If it can be changed so that being disabled does not put you at a disadvantage, then this is a reasonable adjustment. Employers must provide reasonable adjustments under the Equality Act 2010.

Use the space below to record your understanding of what Reasonable adjustment is:

In the space below suggest some reasonable adjustment examples for each disability:

Visually Impaired/Blind

Wheelchair user

Autistic

Someone who is deaf

Interview Legality: What You Must Know

A job interview should be an open discussion but there are some legalities around the process that you should be aware of before you begin.

Every interview is different depending on the job's responsibilities, but most interviews will contain similar types of questions or patterns of questioning.

So, whilst the purpose of the interview is for you to determine if your candidate is right for the vacancy, there are laws to protect the interviewee from being asked illegal questions that could possibly lead to discrimination.

Whether you are seeking to clarify a person's work history, skills or ability to perform specific job requirements, the focus should only be on how much you need to know to make sure this person can do the job.

Test your knowledge

Complete the quiz below to check your knowledge.

1. Can you ask an interviewee if they're married?
2. Can you ask an interviewee how old they are?
3. Can you ask an interviewee where they currently live?
4. Can you ask an interviewee if they have any criminal convictions?
5. Can you ask an interviewee question about their health or a disability?
6. Can you ask an interviewee how many sickness days they took in their last job?
7. Can you ask an interviewee what they like to do outside of work?
8. Can you ask an interviewee what football team they support?
9. Can you ask an interviewee about their alcohol consumption or recreational drug use?
10. Can you ask an interviewee to do an impression of a dinosaur?

Protected Characteristics

The Equality Act was introduced in the UK to eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equal opportunities and promote good relations between people. All workplaces must comply with the Act and must be seen to be actively promoting equality and diversity amongst employees. More specifically, the Act offers protection to people with one or more of nine specific 'protected characteristics'. This means that you cannot discriminate against a person based on any of these traits. The Equal Pay Act of 1970 has largely been replaced by the Equality Act.

There are 9 protected characteristics – complete the diagram below by labelling each of the 9 characteristics.



Protected Characteristics

Under the Equality Act 2010, every single candidate has the right to not be discriminated against, harassed, or victimised because of their:

- Protected characteristics.
- Perceived protected characteristics; or
- Association with someone who has a protected characteristic.

Look at the examples below and consider which of the protected characteristics they may relate to if any:
Use the space to record your thoughts on each scenario.

From:

Sent: 24 October 2022 13:49

To: McRae, Lisa <Lisa.McRae@amey.co.uk>

Subject: Todays candidate

Hi Lisa,

It was nice to meet Fred today he had a lot of relevant experience to bring to the role, he also answered all my questions accurately. My main concern was his age, he is 63 so shortly retiring the role is very physical which I'm not sure would be an issue.

Interviewer asks a female candidate whom it is known has a young family how she plans to manage childcare around the role

A recruiting manager rejects a candidate on the basis that because they have red hair and fair skin and the role requires them to be outdoors they maybe at risk of sunburn.

An interviewer asks the candidate 'what is your relationship status?

During the informal coffee with a group of candidates for a role one of the panel members asks, 'When do you hope to retire?'

The interviewer asks a candidate 'Have you ever suffered a workplace Injury?'

Creating a Positive, Inclusive Interview Experience

If you've never conducted a job interview, think about the interviews you've experienced from the applicant's side of the table.

- What worked and what didn't?
- Did anything make you feel uncomfortable?

Putting yourself into the applicant's seat can help you become a more empathetic interviewer.

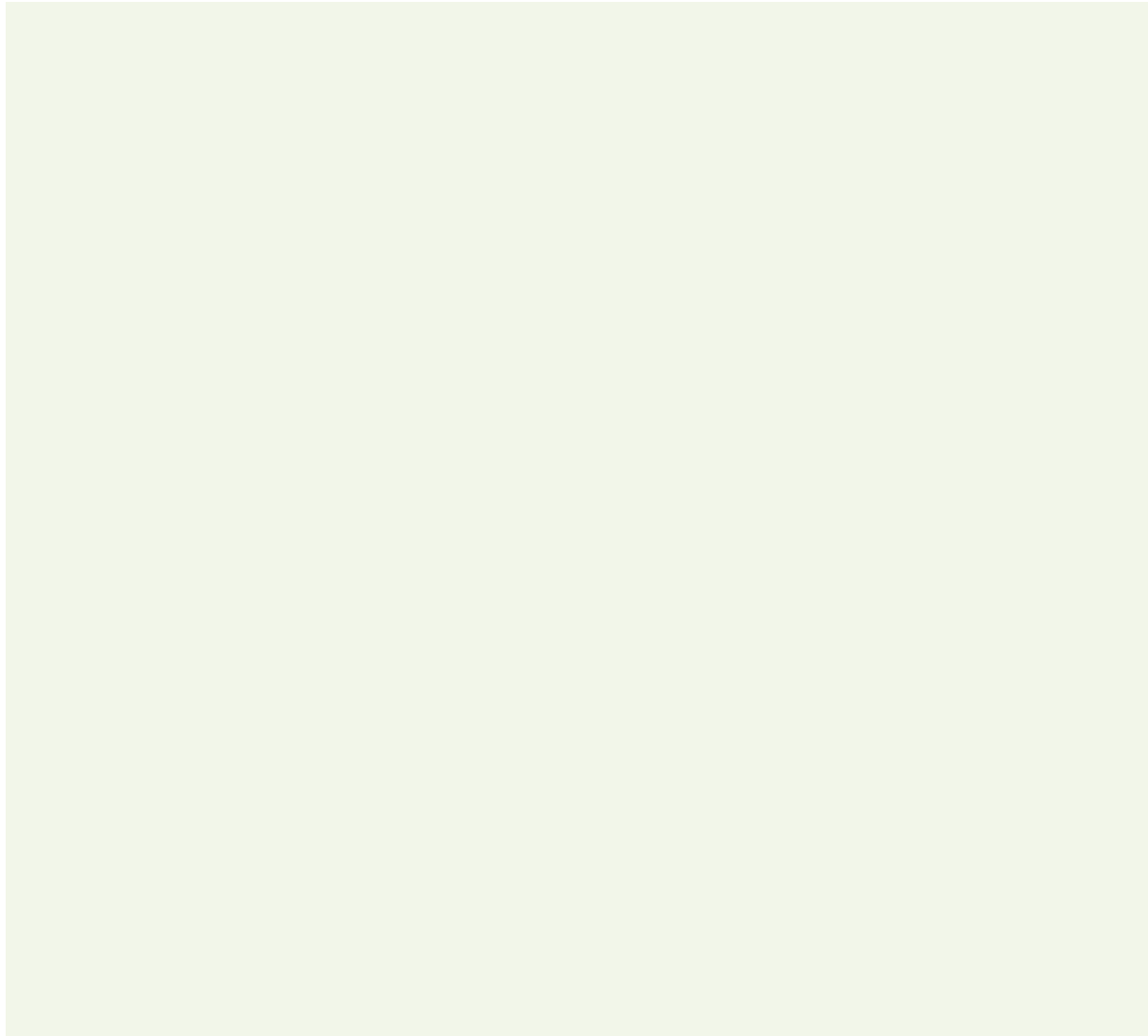
In the space below make a list of features that make up a good interview

Competency-Based Interviewing

At Thalia we suggest that managers conduct Competency based interviews.

Competency-based interviews use questions which aim to find out how you have used specific skills in your previous experience and how you approach problems, tasks, and challenges. Also called behavioural or situational questions. There is a comprehensive guide that can support you in structuring your questions that you can find on the Intranet you can also find a link to this in the resources section at the back of this workbook.

Use the space below to record some key pointers for writing interview questions



Answering questions

The panel members must be prepared to answer questions from candidates. You and the other members on the panel should be able to answer yes to each of these questions before the interview day.

1	Can I talk about the company's strategy, value, mission, and structure?	
2	Can I answer questions about perks and benefits?	
3	Do I know what the job description involves?	

Candidates should be encouraged to ask questions, and much can be gleaned from the type of questions that a candidate asks. In the space below record some thoughts about

Mock Interviews

Each of the mock interviews will be of approx. 20 mins duration

You will be provided with a script for a job role: Your task is to:

- Choose suitable questions from the question bank – this is at the end of the Competency Interview guide.
- Coordinate who is going to ask which questions.
- Craft a suitable opening question.
- Ask some probing type questions to get more information from your candidate.

Please write factual notes as you go that you would be happy for the candidates to see if needed.
Score the candidates responses on a 1 - 5 scoring rating as in the guide.
Remember to put your candidate at ease.

Review

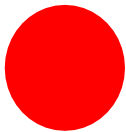
Looking back at the content covered consider things that you will STOP/START or CONTINUE doing.

A start stop continue retrospective is a simple and effective way for you to reflect and decide on what things you should change as you move forward.

Start – activities are those things you will begin doing.

Stop – looks at things that you may have been doing but now feel are not the best approach.

Continue – identifies things that you already do and need to be part of your core activities.



STOP



CONTINUE



START

BEST PRACTICE INTERVIEW SKILLS



Feedback :

Please take a few moments to tell us what you thought of this course. We take feedback very seriously and you will be helping us to tailor training to make it better for others,

Resources

Here you can find links to additional resources related to the content of this training.



Ban The Box - Business in the Community's (BITC) Ban the Box campaign calls on employers to create fair opportunities for ex-offenders to compete for jobs. They can do this by removing the criminal convictions tick box from application forms and asking about offences later in the recruitment process. Ban the Box employers publicly commit to fairly assessing criminal convictions, judging candidates first and foremost on the basis of their skills and suitability for a role, rather than their past mistakes. Download a fact sheet [here](#)



Disability Confident is creating a movement of change, encouraging employers to think differently about disability and take action to improve how they recruit, retain and develop disabled people. To learn more about this click [here](#)

Reasonable Adjustments - Reasonable adjustments are changes an employer makes to remove or reduce a disadvantage related to someone's disability. More guidance can be accessed [here](#) from ACAS. [This helpful guide](#) gives advice on reasonable adjustments that can be made for someone with autism. [The Business Disability Forum](#) has several Toolkits designed to help you make the recruitment process inclusive and accessible.

Unconscious Bias - When most people think of bias, they think of a negative action taken deliberately. But there are unconscious or implicit biases that can affect your behavior or decisions without you realising it. This blog post takes a look at some of the different types of UB and ways to mitigate them. [11 Harmful Types of Unconscious Bias and How to Interrupt Them](#) (Blog Post)

Notetaking This article gives some additional guidance [How to take notes during an employee interview](#)

[Thalia Competency interview guide](#) this useful guide gives helpful guidance and has templates to support you with conducting effective interviews.

How to Provide a positive user experience

In a competitive job market, candidates hold all of the cards. Candidate experience can make or break your hiring process. These ten tips can help you create a candidate experience that's memorable for the right reasons.

[This guide gives some useful tips](#)

Access to work

There are 16 million disabled people in the UK. 23% of people of working age are disabled. But only 50% of them are in work. Disabled people face barriers in the workplace. If you're a manager, you might be unsure about how to support people. But there is information available to help you. It also means you can meet your legal responsibilities as an employer.