

Wisconsin Park & Recreation Association

Career Center Tips: Employers...Do's & Don'ts of Interviewing



Okay, you have posted your vacant position on the WPRA website, and now you have begun the task sifting through resumes and coordinating an interview schedule. While job seekers are inundated with tons of advice on interviewing do's and don'ts, park and recreation employers need some good advice too. Find out how you can conduct appropriate employment interviews to hire the right candidate with these tips from the WPRA Career Center.

Interview Do's:

- Do ask specific questions to make sure the candidate meets the job requirements, but ask open-ended questions that don't involve a simple "no" or "yes." For example, if you're interviewing for park supervisors, don't ask, "Do you know how to develop staff weekly job schedules?" (They'll answer "yes" even if they don't.) Instead, ask them to describe their experience in setting up and scheduling park employees at a week's time.
- Use competency-based and behavioral interviewing. Behavioral interviewing focuses interviewees on past performance, as that is generally a key indicator of future performance. Competency-based interviewing defines observable and specific behaviors that exemplify excellent performance in a particular work context (e.g., a specific role or group of jobs).
- Involve other staff in the selection and interviewing process to obtain objective feedback.

Interview Don'ts:

- Don't interview every applicant who applies or who just meets the minimum qualifications. Identify your top three to five, and do a short telephone screen. Following this, bring in your top three for actual interviews. If none of those seem right, then bring in more.
- Don't ask questions you are legally prohibited from asking. These include questions that (directly or indirectly) deal with race, gender, religion, marital status, age, disabilities, ethnicity, national origin, or sexual preferences. Avoiding those types of questions can save your organization thousands of dollars in an EEOC discrimination claim defense. Common Sense Rule: If it does not directly relate to the job, don't ask the question.
- Don't accidentally (or intentionally) misrepresent the job. You can scare away a good applicant by making the job seem more complex than it really is. Likewise, don't make the job simpler than it really is or you'll be interviewing candidates again when the employee quits.

Knowing these tips will confidently help you prepare for candidate interviews. Have an open position? Post your next job on www.wpraweb.org in the WPRA Career Center to get the most qualified applicants today!