

Red Flags in the Interviewing Process

What are the potential 'Red Flags' when interviewing? How can you spot them, and when do they become "knock-out factors"?

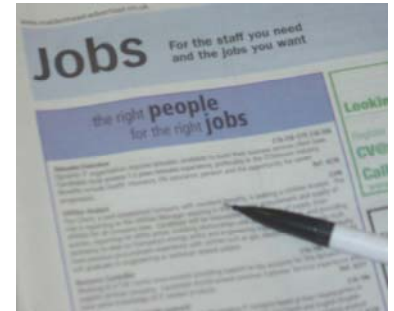
We recently had a client ask us about a candidate who showed up late for an interview. He wanted to know if this was a "knock-out factor", since he expected to see candidates on their best behaviour during what he considered the courting process.

Of course there are no hard and fast rules on these things, but when one or more red flags pop up during the hiring process, you need to be extra diligent when probing into these areas.

Remember that no candidate is perfect but, as the interviewer, you need to probe skilfully to determine whether a red flag is isolated or the tip of the iceberg.

Here are some potential red flags, listed in order of severity.

- Cannot provide supervisory references from recent employers
- Criticises former employers and colleagues
 - Offers confidential information about former employer
 - Slow to return phone calls, provide references or consider job offer
- Late for an interview and didn't mention it – or late for more than one interview
- Didn't research your company



- Would take a significant salary cut to work for you
- For leadership roles: cannot articulate the impact that they had on their previous employer
- For sales roles: cannot provide a concise statement of the benefits that their product delivers
- For junior roles: would have a significant commute to work.

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Keep the Candidate's Interest

- Respond to all candidates with suitable résumés within 24 hours. Speed counts.
- Allow for evening and weekend interviews – it reduces candidates' stress levels and helps to prevent them from making snap decisions.
- Have candidates meet all the decision-makers in one day and be ready to make an offer within 24 hours.
- Do something different/surprising in your selection process – something



that differentiates you from your competition.

- Be worth the wait by giving candidates something exciting to think about relating to the job.
- Create candidate desire by being rigorous in your selection process – play hard to get.
- Don't drop your standards or shortcut the steps in your selection process. Good candidates will respect and want to join an organisation that treats selection seriously – word will spread.

- Use The McQuaig System™ to assess candidates and focus interviews. It provides a structured, objective approach that can save time, money and mistakes.
- Most important, even in a tough market, be selective. Always remember, as tempting as it can be, don't hire the best if the best isn't good enough!
- When the vacancy is filled, advise the remaining candidates – a better fitting opening may come up later.