



# What can I ask and what can't I?

**A guide to legal and compliant interview questions.**

Position descriptions help us to determine what skills and qualifications are necessary to be the most qualified individual for the job. The guiding principle when asking an applicant a question is, can you (as the interviewer) demonstrate a job-related necessity for asking the question?

The interviewer should stay focused on the job and its requirements; not any preconceived assumptions about what the applicant can or cannot do. During the interview process, it is unlawful to ask any questions directly or indirectly about a candidate's age, disability, gender, gender identity, marital status, national or ethnic origin, race, religion, sexual orientation, or veteran status.

If applicants volunteer personal information that relates to any of the protected areas you should let them know that they do not need to provide you with that information and then redirect the discussion. In most cases, the appropriate response of the interviewer is a non-committal acknowledgement before moving on to the next interview question.

## Can ask

- Are there specific times you cannot work?
- Are you legally allowed to work in the united states?
- The hours of the position are Mon-Fri from 8 to 5. Are you able to meet those requirements?
- What types of courses did you study in college?

\* There are no acceptable questions regarding gender, sexual orientation, religious affiliation, etc.

## Cannot ask

- How many children do you have and who watches them while you work?
- Where does your family originate from?
- What year did you graduate?
- Do you have a disability?
- Have you ever been arrested?
- Where do you go to church?
- Have you been vaccinated for COVID-19? -OR- What is your stance on COVID-19 vaccinations?

Lehigh University Human Resources

#WHEREPASSIONMEETSSPOSSIBILITY

