

Tips for Success

- **Prepare:** Review the job duties and responsibilities, in addition to the candidate's application materials prior to the interview.
- **Budget your time:** Consider the time available to conduct the interview relative to the number of questions you want to evaluate.
- **Stay neutral:** Listen attentively but avoid small talk and approving responses. Stick to the structure of the interview and establish an appropriately formal tone.
- **Take notes:** Stay engaged with what the candidate is saying but don't forget to record your observations during the course of the interview. Key facts and bullet points will keep recollections fresh.
- **Be consistent:** Ask the same questions in the same sequence for each candidate. Ask questions that are relevant to the knowledge, skills, abilities and experience required for the position. Ask follow up questions to probe, general, vague or incomplete answers. Make sure you have enough information regarding the candidate's skills and experience.
- **Evaluate carefully:** Be careful of rushing judgement. As you progress from the initial questions through the various follow-ups, your assessment of the candidate's responses may shift positively or negatively. Stay objective and be aware of potential biases that may influence your perceptions during the interview.
- **Avoid questions about...** race, national origin, gender, age, status as a veteran, sexual orientation, pregnancy or marital status, handicap or disability, military discharge, religion, arrest records.
- **80/20 Rule:** The 80/20 rule is a good principle to apply when interviewing. The candidate should be doing about 80% of the talking, leave you with 20% of the time to frame questions, probe for more information and insight, and where appropriate, promote the position so it is attractive to the candidate.
- **Explain the interview process:** Interviews can be quite intimidating for candidates. They may feel nervous at the prospect of being interviewed. You can minimize some of these nerves by "setting the stage" for the candidate. Ask warm-up questions to establish rapport and set the context for the interview.

Extension Agent Interview Questions

Select from the following list of questions in conducting interviews with extension agent applicants.

1. Why did you apply for this position?
2. As you reviewed the responsibilities for this position, what most appealed to you?
3. What experiences have you had that make you a strong applicant for this position?
4. What professional accomplishment are you the most pleased about?
5. What would your current supervisor tell us are your strengths?
6. What would your current supervisor tell us you might do to strengthen your performance?
7. Tell us about a time you oversaw a team and needed to get them focused on common goals.
8. Tell us about a time when you built strong relationships where none previously existed.
9. Describe an experience you have had working with various generations or diverse groups toward a common goal.
10. Tell us about a time when you had to communicate the same information to different audiences and had to vary your style for each.
11. When you were in a leadership position, tell me how you organized your workload, set objectives, and checked in with people.
12. Describe a time when you empowered others.
13. How would you describe your ideal workday?
14. Describe a project/assignment where the outcomes or process was unclear.
15. Give us an example of your typical problem-solving approach.
16. Tell us about a time that you led the planning for an event or activity. Describe the steps involved and what you did.
17. Give us an example of a project you managed where setting milestones and measuring progress were critical.
18. Can you describe a previous work experience that helped shape your current career objectives?
19. Describe your volunteer management philosophy.
20. If hired for this position, what do you see yourself doing in the first six months?
21. Describe a time you were involved in a conflict. What were the steps taken to resolve the conflict?
22. Describe your system of monitoring progress or keeping track of your various responsibilities.
23. Describe a goal you set for yourself and how you went about meeting that goal.
24. Explain how you would introduce innovative programming into this position.
25. What motivates you to accomplish career and personal goals?
26. How do you define work ethic?
27. What about this job most excites you and what most concerns you?
28. What do you think is the biggest challenge facing K-State Research and Extension in this community?