

Avoiding the Forbidden Zones of Interviewing

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Interviewing potential employees is like driving down a highway filled with potholes - there's danger at every curve. Sometimes interviewers try to make applicants feel comfortable by asking about their family, outside interests or background. While these types of questions are good social icebreakers, they can open up a company to possible lawsuits.

Interviewers should focus on job-related topics to keep themselves out of the forbidden zones. Provide applicants with information on the company and its culture, essential job performance requirements and any appropriate industry standards. Interviewers also should obtain job-related information from applicants, such as work experience, educational background, career objectives and attitude toward the particular position. Personal information, such as family association, religious beliefs, family traditions, living arrangements, marital status, parental status, health and union views is generally unrelated to work performance and should be avoided.

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