



FP Weekly Checklist: The Best “Green Flag” Questions to Ask Applicants During Job Interviews

Insights

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Each week, FP Weekly members receive a practical and cutting-edge checklist of issues to consider, action steps to take, and goals to accomplish to ensure you remain on the top of your game when it comes to workplace relations and employment law compliance. This week we provide you a checklist of “green flag” questions – which are the opposite of “red flag” questions that scare away prospects. You should consider incorporating these green flag questions into your applicant job interviews. (And we’ll also point out a few red flag questions you’ll want to avoid.)

What are “Green Flag” Questions?

We’re all-too familiar with “red flag” warnings we pick up on during job interviews. For example, an applicant who asks vague questions or can’t organize their thoughts when asking you for more details about the job presents serious red flags. But did you ever stop to think that your applicants are also looking for red flag questions that **you** might be posing – especially given how competitive the job market is these days?

One way to use the job interview as an additional selling opportunity is to make sure your hiring managers are asking green-flag questions. These questions provide not-so-subtle hints that yours is a great organization to work for. That their ideas will be valued and they will have opportunities to be challenged and to grow. That you care about their personal and mental well-being as well as their output and performance. That you will invest time and resources to help them better their career.

Weekly Checklist: Green-Flag Interview Questions

_____ My first and most important question: can you tell me how to pronounce your name?
(*shows that you care about them as an individual and aren’t presuming something about them and their identity*)

_____ [for virtual interviews] Before we begin, are there any pets or family members who might pop up in the background that you’d like to introduce? (*sets them at ease and humanizes the situation*)

_____ Do you need anything from us to make this a positive interview experience? (*not only are you showing you take their feelings into account, this could also help identify accommodations that could be necessary to the process*)

_____ What's a personal achievement you're proud of? (*demonstrates that you care about their life outside of the workplace*)

_____ What is your experience with [insert specific skillset]? And by the way, it's not a problem if you have limited experience, we can train you up. We just want to get a sense for where you are. (*allows candidate to feel comfortable with the process and not to stress out if they don't have those skills*)

_____ You've obviously done your homework on us before you applied for this job. What do you think we could do better as an organization? (*lets them know you are open to criticism and are always striving to better your operations, regardless of where the feedback comes from*)

_____ Are there other people in the organization you'd like to talk to before you make a decision? (*provides an authentic opportunity for them to gather information from multiple sources, letting them know you aren't afraid about them uncovering dirt on your company*)

_____ I think you'd be a wonderful addition to our team and a great asset for our organization. What more do you need to hear from us in order to make your decision? (*shows that you recognize they have choices and that you have a sincere passion for them to choose your company*)

_____ Before you leave, can we give you a tour of our operations? (*lets the location speak for itself, provides a sense for the true environment they'd be working in*)

Bonus: A Few Red-Flag Questions to Avoid

_____ We have a fast-paced environment, how does that sound to you? (*conveys a stressful workplace that could quickly burn out employees*)

_____ Do you consider yourself to be a self-starter? (*gives off the vibe that applicant will not receive adequate training and support*)

_____ How do you feel about working in a family-like environment? (*can hint at a dysfunctional organization, perhaps rife with conflicts and quarrels*)

_____ Are you willing to wear many hats? (*could give off the impression that your company is disorganized and there aren't clear boundaries for the role*)

_____ At our company, we work hard but we play hard. How does that sound to you? (*major red flag that could convey your company expects workers to push themselves to the limits, and some managers may not respect workers' well-being*)

Conclusion

We will continue to provide weekly checklists to assist employers in their workplace law compliance, so make sure you are subscribed to Fisher Phillips' Insight system to keep up with the most up-to-date information. Please contact your Fisher Phillips attorney, the author of this Insight, or any attorney in our Corporate Compliance and Governance Group if you have any questions.

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Terri R. Stewart
Regional Managing Partner
404.240.4247
Email

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