



Helpful tips for interviewing your Personal Assistant

What is required before considering an applicant?

A Personal Assistant must:

1. Be at least 18 years old.
2. Have a social security number.
3. Be able to perform the things you need done.
4. Be a U.S. Citizen or provide the necessary identification /information allowing them to work in the United States.

What Questions CAN NOT be asked during an interview?

You may not ask job applicants about their:

1. Age or their birth date.
2. Race, national origin, sexual orientation, native language.
3. Health, back problems, disability, fitness.
4. Marital status, whether they had children, are pregnant or are planning to get married or have children soon.

You can be held liable for violating the applicant's right to privacy, under New York State Labor Laws. It is your responsibility to know what you can not ask in an interview.

Why should I telephone screen persons applying for the job?

Before you set up a face-to-face interview with the applicant, you should screen the applicant over the phone. You will probably not want to interview all the applicants. The telephone screening will assist you in deciding whom you would like to meet in person to interview.

You should tell the applicant the hours you will need someone to work, and describe the tasks that must be performed. If lifting is required, you should explain the number of pounds that you expect the person to be able to lift.

The following are some sample questions that might help you in developing your own questions for the telephone screening:

1. Have you ever been a personal assistant or done similar work?

2. If so, where did you work, what were some of the job tasks? How long did you work at that job?
3. Will you be able to work my scheduled hours?
4. How do you feel about assisting me with my personal needs (i.e. bathing, toileting, wound care, etc.)?
5. How do you feel about housekeeping chores?
6. Are there any household chores you are not willing to do?
7. Can you cook? What dishes do you like to cook?
8. Do you have reliable transportation to get to work?
9. Are you 18 years of age or older?
10. Have you ever been convicted of a crime?
11. Are you able and willing to carry out the job requirements?

These are just a few suggestions for screening an applicant over the telephone. If you listen carefully to what the person says, you may be able to get a sense of the person's attitude. You should only select people who sound extremely good to you for a formal face-to-face interview.

Once you have completed the screening over the telephone you can go ahead and schedule the individuals that you would like to do a face-to-face interview with.

We suggest that you do not conduct the interviews in your home. It's better to find a public place (i.e. public library, restaurants, etc.). This is a way to avoid people having your home address.

In-Person Interviewing

Select the persons that you liked best from your telephone interviews. Again, find a neutral space to do your face-to-face interviewing. It's a good idea to introduce yourself and make the applicant feel comfortable.

The following are some suggestions that might be helpful when you begin the interview process:

1. Ask the applicant to complete an application form.
2. Explain what the job includes. It is very important to be specific. Review the necessary personal assistant tasks with the applicant.
3. Explain your expectations. It is important for the applicant to know that the tasks listed are required and must be completed in a timely fashion.

While responsibility is separate from skill, you'll have a more pleasant relationship if the person you hire has the same attitude about work as you do.

4. Ask the applicant why they would like the job. You may get some insight into his or her motivation.
5. Ask the applicant if they have any limitations that would prohibit them from performing any of the job tasks.

By the end of your formal interview, you should have a better sense of whether or not you are interested in hiring the applicant. Take your time and make sure you interview more than just one applicant. You may like the first applicant, but as you interview additional candidates, you may find someone else that you like even more.