Competencies of Effective Interviewers

INTERVIEWING SKILLS
PRESENTED BY DR. JAMIE AMOS
Strong interviewing skills are a vital part of the audit profession and is important for gathering audit evidence to support conclusions and to make recommendations. This is done by asking the right questions, listening to and evaluating the responses quickly and then asking appropriate follow-up questions. This session will help to aid auditors in conducting an effective interview that will yield the best results. We will dive into the different phases it takes to have an effective interview which include: preparation, credibility, physical environment, and listening skills among others.
Learning Objectives

- How to conduct interviews for different situations?
- How to formulate questions to elicit informative responses?
  - When to ask open-ended questions?
  - When to ask closed-ended questions?
- How to foster rapport with interviewees?
  - How body language affects language with interviewees?
Analyze Background Materials

- Be prepared
- Respect for auditee
- Know their name(s)
- Know their primary responsibilities
- Know objectives of department
- Write down names before you attend interview
- Take an organizational chart
Assure Preparation of the Meeting Site

- Hold a meeting in an environment that is conducive to communicating
- Remedy the situation if meeting space is distracting
Establish and Maintain Credibility

- Don’t act like you know their job better than they do
- Be stern in the fact that you know your job as an auditor
- Admit (frequently) that you don’t know the details about their job

Question?
- Can a 23-year old audit a 60-year old finance executive’s job functions
Manage Emotional and Physical Environments

- Don’t hammer an auditee with questions when you see they are upset
- Reassure the auditee that the interview is to help - not to harm
- Maintain a proper amount of space between yourself and the auditee
Demonstrate Effective Communication and Presentation Skills

- Present your best self to the auditee
  - Speak confidently
  - Enunciate
  - Set up straight
- Be charismatic (if possible)
- Set the tone
- Have an agenda, but be flexible
Demonstrate Effective Questioning Skills

Know when to ask close-ended or open-ended questions
  - Close-ended questions get close-ended answers
  - Open-ended questions encourage auditees to share

Do not try to always have a witty follow-up question
When To Ask Close-ended Questions

- Quantitative studies
- Surveys
- Data that is measured over time
- When possible answers are strictly limited
- After extensive qualitative research
When To Ask Close-ended Questions

- “YES” or “NO”
- Precise clear answers
- Eliminate surprises
- Limit theirs answers to what you think is true
- May bias people answers
- Influenced by questions
Examples of Close-Ended Questions

- Are you feeling better today?
- May I use the bathroom?
- Is the prime rib a special tonight?
- Should I date him?
- Will you please do me a favor?
- Have you already completed your homework?
When To Ask Open-ended Questions

- During exploratory interviews
- Screening questionnaire
- Conducting design research
- Initial development of a survey
When To Ask Open-ended Questions

- Open-ended questions prompt people to answer with sentences, lists, and stories, giving deeper and new insights.
- Open-ended questions are questions that allow someone to give a free-form answer.
- Allow you to find more than you anticipate.
- Share things you didn’t expect.
- Mention motivations you knew nothing about.
The “W” Effect

- What?
- When?
- Where?
- Which?
- Who?
- How?
Examples of Open-Ended Questions

- How exactly did the fight between the two of you start?
- What is your favorite memory from childhood?
- How will you help the company if you are hired to work for us?
- What do you plan to do immediately following graduation from college?
- What was your high school experience like?
- How did you and your best friend meet?
Demonstrate Effective Listening Skills

- If your mouth is moving, you aren’t listening.
- In most interviews, 90% of the words should be coming out of the auditee’s mouth.
Provide Clarification and Feedback

- Allow auditee to give feedback
- Ask auditee if they have any questions
- Build repour
- Clear any uncertainty
Record Results in a Clear Manner

- Document discussion immediately
- Don’t count on your memory for long
- Edit and tweak later
Resolve All Outstanding Issues

- Resolve them
- Report them
- Discuss them
- Include them
Evaluate Interviewer’s Performance

- Self-examination
- Learn by practice and correcting mistakes
Questions

Thank You!