

## EPLI News Update

### Interviews Are Important: No Question About It!

Good hiring decisions are obviously an important key to a successful workforce. Once you have determined the requirements for a position and then have received information from interested applicants, you can effectively prepare for a critical point in the decision-making process: the interviews.

The first step is to develop interview questions. Your questions should be prepared based on the requirements of the position and should specifically reflect important aspects of the job. In addition to the "basics," you should prepare open-ended questions that call for a detailed, thoughtful response. For example, questions that a good interviewee should be able to answer include:

- Why are you leaving your current position?
- Why did you leave your prior position(s)?
- What are your strengths and weaknesses?
- What specific skills and experiences do you have that will enable you to succeed in this position?

It is also effective to ask questions regarding specific projects, duties, or situations that are relevant to the position, such as:

- In the past, what have you done when \_\_\_\_\_ happened?
- How would you handle a situation such as \_\_\_\_\_?

As the saying goes, first impressions are important. And, at the initial interview, you will have a good opportunity to observe and make a first impression. Try to develop a good rapport with those you invite to interview by making them feel comfortable and relatively at ease.

Of course, you will want to gain a more comprehensive, meaningful perspective on each person you interview, so you should take notes for later review and analysis. You will want to keep track of specific answers to questions, work history and other important information, salary requirements, and even your impressions of each interviewee.

Make sure to note anything that does not seem consistent with the interviewee's application or resume—or your own common sense. Later, you will need to follow-up on any inconsistencies to resolve any concerns.

#### **Bottom Line:**

Even if you achieve nothing more than a "first impression," your first meeting with a potential employee really matters. In fact, it may turn out to be the most important "meeting" you ever have with each member of your team. With thoughtful preparation beforehand, and careful consideration afterwards, you can use the interview process to maximize the quality of your hiring decisions.