

# Interviewing Skills Contents

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## **DEALING WITH DIFFICULT CANDIDATES** – manual page.22

Interviewers tend to prefer candidates who are easy to interview and make the interviewer feel efficient and likeable. However, it is dangerous to assume that the difficult candidate is likely to be unsuitable or vice versa. It is wiser for the interviewer to suspend judgement and to employ the appropriate techniques to help the candidate present him/herself accurately. The key is to attempt to diagnose the candidate's behaviour correctly and then adopt the appropriate tactics.

### **Very Nervous Candidate**

Tense, awkward, aggressive or over-formal behaviour. The interviewer adopts a relaxed manner and posture: introduces humour if possible; concentrates on the candidate's interests and safe easy topics; chats about common interests or acquaintances until the candidate is more at ease. There may be some specific reason for the candidate's state of agitation – e.g. a bad journey etc. The interviewer needs to find out whether this behaviour is part of a recurring pattern of nervous behaviour or not.

### **Candidates Who Talk Too Little**

The interviewer should resist the temptation to compensate by talking. He/she should ask easy, open ended questions, be prepared to wait for answers, use silence, give encouraging responses to replies and follow up with "tell me more about" questions. It will help if the interviewer can determine the candidate's particular interests. Again, the interviewer needs to consider the significance of the behaviour when assessing the candidate.

### **Candidates Who Talk Too Much (90%)**

This may, or may not be a form of nervousness. Control can be achieved by more specific questions, and firm but smooth interruptions. Use the candidate's name to make them stop talking. More formality may be appropriate.

### **Over Confident Candidates**

The candidate overstates his/her achievements. This may be due to insecurity. The interviewer should resist the temptation to deflate, but do probe for precise details, giving credit where due and look for reasons for this behaviour.

### **Over Smooth Presentation**

This highly polished but impersonal presentation can appear false. The interviewer should remain courteous, probing for facts and trying to assess the reason for the candidate's behaviour.