

Enough is enough: How many interviews are too many?

Before you make a job offer, how many interviews do you run job candidates through?

And, more important, why?

Some employers schedule multiple interviews due mostly to tradition and habit, which can waste managers' time, alienate top candidates and unnecessarily lengthen the hiring process. Use these guidelines to create a strategy for streamlining the interview process:

Limit the number of interviews to three in most cases, or four at the maximum. Some companies have candidates crawl through five or even 10 interviews. That's well beyond the point of diminishing returns.

Schedule all interviews in one day if the candidate will meet with several managers. Top candidates are usually already employed. Some applicants may drop out of the running or decide to accept other offers if you drag out the process.

Collaborate beforehand to decide the questions and topics each person will cover. Interviewers who cover the same topics should approach them with different questions. Repeating the same questions can cause "candidate fatigue" and create the impression management isn't organized.

Implement an online system—accessible to HR, managers and executives—to schedule and track candidate interviews.

Don't use multiple interviews out of habit, but because they are necessary. For example, multiple interviews may be perfectly appropriate for jobs that cut across various departments.

The eyes have it: Top body language blunders

Top 5 body language mistakes that hiring managers say would make them less likely to hire a job candidate:

1. Failure to make eye contact 67%
2. Lack of smile 38%
3. Fidgeting too much 33%
4. Bad posture 33%
5. Handshake too weak 26%
6. Crossing arms over chest 21%
7. Playing with hair/touching face 21%
8. Using too many hand gestures 9%

Source: CareerBuilder.com survey, 2010