

# Must we interview men for our receptionist job?

**Q. We advertised for a front-desk receptionist opening and got 44 applications. Three were from men, all qualified. We've always had a female in that job and would like to keep it that way. We plan to interview five finalists. Must we include one of the men to avoid sex discrimination charges?**  
— *D.G., Pennsylvania*

**A.** You don't say how many qualified applicants you received overall, but ideally, you will interview all of those who are qualified, and make a decision without respect to gender.

I can't tell whether there is something about your business that would make the receptionist's gender relevant to the company's success, but it sounds like you don't have a particular reason other than this is how you've operated before. If so, your desire to hire a female for any particular role therefore qualifies as unlawful discrimination. Interviewing one male you have no intention of hiring will do little to insulate you from potential liability.

My best advice is to try to keep an open mind. Just as women now succeed in positions once dominated by men, you may find that one of the male candidates in fact is the best fit for your organization.