



Household Interviewer Guidelines

The interview is a great opportunity to learn about the candidate and their fit for your position. A well-organized interview will give you insights into the candidate's personality, philosophies and experience as well as the opportunity to review the logistics of your job including schedule and salary.

Starting the interview:

Interviewing a candidate for a position in your home is quite different from interviewing a potential employee in a business setting. Many Housekeepers are a bit nervous at first and do not have a lot of experience interviewing. It is a good idea to put the candidate at ease.

Welcome and thank the candidate for coming and ask them to tell you a little bit about themselves and their experience. The majority of Housekeeper candidates will speak English as their second language and this initial welcome will give you a better sense of their communication skills and style. Tell the candidate about your position, the details of your home, the responsibilities, requirements and hours. You may want to give them a tour of your home at the beginning or even during the meeting.

The following questions are suggestions. It is best to highlight some that you think are appropriate and use them as a starting point for your conversation.

Professional experience:

How long have you been working as a Housekeeper?

Describe a typical day in your current or previous position?

What did you like most about your last position? What did you like least?

Tell me about your relationship with your last employer. Were they present in the home when you cleaned?

Why did your last position end?

Duties and responsibilities:

How did you organize your cleaning responsibilities and schedule throughout the week?

Please describe your experience with cleansers. Do you have experience with non-toxic cleansers?

What types of cleansers would you use on granite? Marble? Hardwood floors?

Have you done family laundry or ironing in your previous jobs?

Are you familiar with fabric types (i.e., cotton, linen, silk) and whether to machine wash or hand wash?

Are you comfortable with reading a "to do" list or grocery list?

Are you willing to do back-up childcare?

If asked for a reference, what would your last employer say about you?

Are you comfortable working around pets?

Is there anything about this job that you would not be willing to do?

Suggestions for interactive questioning:

Bring candidate into an area of your home and ask how they would approach the cleaning.

Describe an organizational project or show them a closet or a drawer and see if they have a sense of how to facilitate this project.

Present to the candidate a typical grocery list and see if they would be comfortable shopping for those items.

As you take them on a tour of your home ask them if they would be willing to perform certain duties, e.g., wiping down patio furniture, sweeping the deck, pet care, washing windows.



For positions including meal preparation or cooking:

Briefly describe your cooking experience.

Do you cook any specialty dishes?

Are you comfortable preparing a healthy snack for the children? What would you choose to make?

Would you be able to follow a recipe?

Are there any foods you do not feel comfortable preparing?

Personal background:

Tell me a little bit about your family background and upbringing.

What do you enjoy doing in your spare time?

Is there anything else you wish to tell me about yourself?

What are your goals for the future?

Hours, salary and benefits Note: These questions may be more appropriate during a second interview.

If relevant, ask how do you feel about working weekends? Evenings? Holidays?

- Discuss the required hours of the position and any flexibility that is needed.

- Discuss vacation, sick days and paid holidays.

Are you open to travel? If yes, what limit might there be on the duration of travel?

Discuss when you are looking to have someone start.

What length of commitment are you looking to make?

For salary, you can either present what you are planning to pay for the position or ask the candidate what hourly, weekly or monthly salary she is looking for? How frequently would you like to be paid?

- Discuss which taxes are being withheld.

- Discuss any benefits to be provided. (e.g. health insurance, car insurance, cell phone)

- Please note that under California law, you may not ask about prior salary, wage or benefits history.

Are you comfortable driving for work-related tasks?

- Discuss whose car will be used.

- If the employee's car is to be used, discuss mileage reimbursement policy and insurance coverage.

- If a car is provided for the employee's personal use, discuss frequency, cost and restrictions.

Describe your house rules and policies:

Discuss cell phone use and personal phone calls.

Discuss rooms in the home that may be off limits.

Discuss timing and policies around breaks.

Discuss lunch break policy with the candidate and whether she should bring her own food.