



CROSS-CULTURAL INTERVIEW TOOLKIT

FOR MANAGERS

Since interviews tend to be very stressful for all involved, it may be helpful to consider the following:

- Has the panel discussed how it can create the conditions in which applicants will be able to perform well? This can be achieved by talking to IENs already on staff about their interview experiences. Even if you do not hire the person being interviewed you want them to leave with a good impression of your organization.
- Ask specific questions to elicit information about the applicant's values. Particular skills and knowledge can be taught, but it is important to explore a candidate's values for their fit to the position and the team much more difficult for people to change their values
- Be open to digging for further information, re-phrasing questions and using examples if these strategies are needed to help you better assess the applicant's knowledge and skills
- Rephrase an interview questions if you get a short or inappropriate answer
- "Tell me more about..." or "How did you ...? questions
- Demonstrate curiosity about new approaches, perspectives and strengths that the candidate may offer
- Think about how you can achieve a better balance to ensure that transferrable experience is valued, the benefit of additional languages and cultural knowledge is recognized and the impact of systemic barriers is acknowledge
- There is sometimes the tendency to reward insiders (such as educational and cultural insiders) in the interview processes; think about whether you want more of the same, or if you want more diversity in perspective, knowledge, connections and experience.

Examples of how to rephrase interview questions are provided below:

Question or statement	Possible issue with this question	How the interviewer might rephrase the question
Tell me about yourself.	IEN might not be aware of the information interviewer is looking for (I.e. work experience, education and aspirations.) IENs might include their personal information (i.e. marital status, # of children, date landed in Canada, settlement information, religion, etc.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Can you tell me something about your previous education and work experience? ✓ Can you tell me about any nursing education or training that you recently completed?
What are your major weaknesses?	Responding to this question may lead to a loss of face.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Are there any work-related skills that you want to improve or have improved in the past? If so, what is it and what did you do to improve this skill? ✓ What do you find most difficult to do at work?
Why should we hire you?	This is a hard question for many people from cultures where it is considered impolite to talk about themselves in flattering terms.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Tell me why I should hire you for this position and not one of the other candidates ✓ What skills or experience can you bring to this position that other candidates cannot?
Where do you see yourself five years from now?	Question is vague and may prompt individuals to share information not related to work.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ What are your future professional plans? ✓ What are your nursing career goals? ✓ How would you like to grow as a nurse in the next five years? ✓ What is your plan in broadening your nursing competency in the next five years?
Do you have any questions?	<p>Most individuals will not ask questions at the end of the interview.</p> <p>Some IENs may find it rude to ask questions to an interviewer.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Do you have any further questions regarding the position or our facility? ✓ Do you need any clarifications regarding the position?
Can you tell me about your greatest strength?	Some people find it uncomfortable to 'praise' themselves for cultural reasons.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Can you tell me about your best quality as a nurse? ✓ How would you describe yourself as a nurse? ✓ What do you do best at work?
Why did you apply for this job?	Phrase the question in a way that encourages the applicant to talk about their career goals.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ What interests you about this job? ✓ What led to your interest in nursing? ✓ Why do you want to work here?
Are you a team player?	Being a team player is not a familiar concept in some cultures. Be prepared to rephrase the question. This question needs a strong introduction to set the context for the candidate.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ We value people that can work well with other people... ✓ Can you give me some examples of when you worked as part of an inter-professional team?
What qualifications do you have that will help you to be successful in this position?	Some candidates may struggle with this as it is unacceptable to boast. Also individuals from other cultures may over-exaggerate abilities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ How will your experience and education help you to be successful in this position? ✓ What personal qualities or experience will help you to be successful in this position? ✓ What special qualities do you have that will make you successful in this job?

Tell me about your most recent work experience.	Newcomers may not have had work experience in Canada. It is important to identify what an employer is looking for when asking this question and to find another way to show the competency required.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Can you tell me about some other jobs that you have had in Canada? ✓ What have you learned from other jobs in Canada that will help you with this position? ✓ Tell me about your work in (oncology) outside of Canada?
Tell me about a time when you had to go above and beyond the call of duty.	Idiomatic language may be a problem for some applicants. Be prepared to rephrase the question.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Can you tell me about when you worked extra hard to get a job done? ✓ Can you give me an example of how you have shown dedication in a previous position?
What do you know about our mission and vision?	It might be a problem if the applicant is not familiar with the word "mission".	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Tell me what you know about our company and our objectives?
How have you kept your skills current?	The applicant may have been in a bridging program, getting settled in Canada or unemployed. However, he or she may have volunteered with an organization, completed some professional development workshops or found another way of staying current in nursing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ How would you keep updated about changes in the nursing profession? ✓ As a volunteer or during your clinical placement what skills did you learn that may help you with this position?
Tell me about a time you had a disagreement with your manager, what did you do to resolve it?"	In many cultures managers are respected and cannot be criticized. Also many are uncomfortable when it appears that they might be providing negative comments about others.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Eventually everyone has a workplace misunderstanding, tell me about a time you were able to resolve a workplace misunderstanding.
Tell me about your worst experience during a clinical rotation?	This scenario may mean a loss of face to the applicant. You may need to break this question into parts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Can you tell me about when something went wrong at work? How did you solve the problem?
What is your management style? What style of management do you prefer?	In many cultures, managers are respected and cannot be criticized. The informal management style of many Canadians is very difficult for newcomers to understand.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Can you tell me how you like to manage a team? ✓ What kind of manager works best with you? ✓ What qualities should a successful manager have? ✓ Can you tell me about someone who is a good supervisor?
What are your salary expectations?	Applicant might not be familiar with the appropriate salary scale and might provide an unrealistic figure. Also he/she may be from a culture where discussing money is not the norm and considered rude.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ The salary range for this position is between (\$50,000 - \$60,000) depending on experience, does this match your expectations?

REFERENCES

Internationally Educated Social Work Professionals Bridging Program, The Chang School, Ryerson University, 2014.

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