

## GUIDE TO EFFECTIVE QUESTIONING

1. Ensure that your questions are directly related to the position's selection criteria.
2. Ask candidate to identify past behaviour that relates specifically to the job requirements.
3. Ask several questions relating to the most important requirements of the job.
4. Avoid asking leading questions so that the answer you would like to receive is obvious to the applicant.
5. Avoid theoretical questions. They only produce theoretical answers, not examples of behaviour. Ask about things accomplished or actual experience.
6. Probe until you are clear about what the participant actually did.
7. Find out the `why' of a candidate's actions. Be sure you fully understand the context of the situation being described before judging the behaviour.
8. Vary the construction and phrasing of questions so that they are not repetitious.
9. Avoid closed ended questions requiring a `yes' or `no' answer.
10. Make use of contrasts and comparisons.
11. Ask candidate to clarify technical or trade jargon.
12. Do not ask multiple choice questions.
13. Do not ask questions contravening Human Rights Legislation.

## PROBING

The most important responsibility of the interviewer is to direct and control the interview to focus on critical information. Probing involves asking several questions on a particular topic in order to elicit more detailed answers.

To probe for more information, frame questions:

“Could you be more specific on what you did when ...?”

“What do you think caused ...?”

“How do you think this could ... ?”

“Tell me more about ...?”

### Example 1:

Interviewer: “Everyone loses their patience sometimes. Tell me about the the last time that happened for you?”

Interviewee: “Hmmm... I can't think of a time when that has happened. I am usually pretty easy going.”

Interviewer: “Even though you may be easy going, there are always times when someone really tries our patience. Can you think back to a time when your easy going nature was very challenged by a difficult situation and you found yourself losing your cool.”

### Example 2:

Interviewer: “I realize that it is a bit tough to come up with examples but could you think of a recent time when you used those social skills?”

Interviewee: “Well I don't really know. It is just second nature for me. I use those skills on my children and with my colleagues all the time.”

Interviewer: “Well if you use them all the time, you must have used them yesterday. Take a moment to recall yesterday and see if you can identify a time when your social strengths helped resolve a difficult issue?”