Interviewing with Younger Hiring Managers

A presentation from the
Bill and Susan Lhota Office of Alumni Career Management
The Ohio State University Alumni Association
go.osu.edu/alumnicareermanagement
Your Career Management Team

Marilyn Bury Rice, Director
Kioshana LaCount Burrell, Career Consultant
Ankit Shah, Career Consultant
Career Management

- Programs/Resources
  - Web resources, job board, webinars, programs, career fairs, individual career advising (in-person and remotely). Visit: go.osu.edu/alumnicareermanagement for more info.

- Career Changes
  - Launching
  - Transition
  - Underemployment
  - Unemployment
  - Encore Career

- A Lifelong Process
  - Assessment
  - Exploration/Research
  - Personal Branding
  - Networking/Job Search
  - Professional Development
Today’s Agenda

• Recognizing the changing face of management

• Defining unconscious bias

• Interview strategies to mitigate bias

• Handling discrimination in the job search

Q&A
The Changing Face of Management

Today’s workforce is increasingly diverse, particularly with respect to age. There are currently five generations in the workplace, working together to make companies thrive.

A few facts about today’s workplace:

- Millennials currently make up the largest segment of the workforce, at 50%
- The average age of first time corporate managers is 30
- The average age of managers being trained for leadership roles is 38

*Millennial = a person born between 1981 and 1995

Source: Dynamic Signal
**Unconscious Bias**

Unconscious biases are stereotypes that individuals form about certain groups of people that are outside of their conscious awareness.

Examples of unconscious bias:

- Resumes with Anglo-sounding names receiving more callbacks than those with more diverse names, regardless of qualifications
- Assigning the Gen-Y employee to a tech-focused assignment, while looking over the Boomer staff member
- Assuming candidates involved in prestigious sounding activities (ex: polo, debate) are more successful than less-prestigious activities (ex: basketball, bowling)
- Hiring (or not hiring) a candidate because they “remind you of someone”
Mitigating Bias in the Interview

- Focus on the present – how can your skills help the employer now (vs. talking about the past)
- Address unspoken biases head on
- Make lemonade from tough questions
- Know your technology
- Look the part
Leave Your (Own) Ageism at the Door

Interviewing with hiring managers 10+ years younger than you can be frightening, but it doesn’t need to be.

When conversing with your interviewer, be careful not to talk to them like they are kids or comment on their age.

Remember that your goal is to come off as seasoned and accomplished, and avoid seeming out of touch or like an older “know-it-all”.
Don’t mention the age gap during the interview

Instead, focus on dispelling any hesitations they may have about you without actually mentioning it.

Common Misconceptions about Older Workers:

1. – “Older workers are low energy”
Dispel this by showing energy and enthusiasm throughout your interview and other interactions with the employer

2. – “Older workers are set in their ways”
Speak to industry trends that interest you, and make reference to innovative or creative ideas you have implemented in your work in the past

3. – “Older workers are not up to speed on current technology”
Reference thought leaders that you follow on social media and email, and their thoughts/theories on relevant subjects
Ask Questions and Listen

Be thoughtful with the questions that you ask during your interview, listen, and take notes on the answers you receive.

Younger bosses want to know that you hear their vision and that you can support them in carrying it out – not constantly want to do things your way.
Focus on the Present (and Recent Past)

Your interview should focus on positions and work experience from the last 7-10 years that are relevant to the role you are currently interviewing for.

Doing this will:

• Portray you as someone who is well-qualified, but not over-qualified
• Help them understand how you work today
• Help them see that you understand the requirements of working in today’s world

Focus on the Present (and Recent Past)
Refresh (or Learn) Necessary Skills

Be sure you are up on basic technology – or risk falling behind more tech-savvy candidates.

• Casually mention programs you are familiar with when answering interview questions

• Demonstrate that you have stayed current with trends and technology related to your field

Free Classes to Improve Your Tech Skills:

GCFLearnFree
Coursera
edX
Udacity
Google Developers Training
UpSkill
MIT Open Courseware
Don’t be afraid to brag about yourself – especially when talking about how collaborative and flexible you are!

Show off examples of innovation and creativity – especially on team projects and ventures.
Improving Your Odds of Landing

• Minimize personal details in your answers to interview questions
• Master the technological skills required or desired
• Look for opportunities to connect with employers outside of the online application
• Seek out employers who have a stated interest in building a diverse workforce
How to Handle (Potentially) Discriminatory Questions

• Assume positive intent – try to decode the question and determine what the interviewer really wants to know

• Keep the focus on the job – answer all questions with a response that relates to the position you’re applying for

• Play offense – engage your interviewer in conversation surrounding the job, and be sure to highlight your strengths at every turn

• End on a strong, positive note

*If you feel you have experienced illegal questioning or faced discrimination, you may explore legal options through the EEOC
PROTECTED CLASSES

EEOC Protected Classes (Federal)

- Sex
- Age
- Disability
- Genetic information
- National origin
- Pregnancy
- Race/color
- Religion
(Potentially) Uncomfortable Questions

• Do you have any commitments that might prevent you from working your assigned shift?
• Do you have reliable transportation?
• How long did you stay at your last role?
• What is your current/expected salary?
• What does your name mean? Are you known by any other names?
• Do you have a high school diploma or degree (as required for the job)?
• Can you perform all of the functions described as part of this job?
• Are you legally eligible to work in the United States?

Illegal Questions

• Do you rent or own your home?
• What year were you born?
• When did you graduate high school?
• Are you a US citizen? Where were you born?
• Do you have a bank account?
• Do you have a disability?
• Have you ever sued an employer or filed for workers compensation?
• How are you related to the people you live with?
• Are you married/do you have children?
• Do you own a car?
• What is your height/weight?
Questions?

To access our online resources, visit: u.osu.edu/alumnicareermanagement (Coach’s Corner blog & podcast) go.osu.edu/alumnicareermanagement (office website)