



QUEEN
CITY
CERTIFIED™

Gender equity at work.

Interview Guide and Scoring Rubric

ABOUT

Queen City Certified sets the standard for gender equity in the US workplace. We help employers build gender-equitable organizations where people not only want to work, but can thrive, using data-informed best practices, collaborative learning experiences, and ongoing support. We celebrate and recognize employers that are walking the talk by certifying them as *Leaders in Gender Equity*.

The following activity is one example of the holistic, interactive approach Queen City Certified takes to help employers create intentional, equitable spaces for employees. Businesses and organizations in our program, through our guided facilitation, audit their policies, pay practices, and employee experiences to accomplish this goal. This approach leads to proven, sustainable change. If you're interested in learning more, or would like to join a cohort, please visit www.queencitycertified.com or send an email to nicole@queencitycertified.com.

"Queen City Certified really got me thinking about many different aspects of our business that I probably would not have otherwise. It was a great experience and I think it will help me be a better leader within our organization."

— QCC Alum, 2019 Fall Cohort

HOW TO USE THIS TOOL

This *Interview Guide and Scoring Rubric* template is designed to help mitigate bias in the hiring process. However, it is one tool in the proverbial toolkit. Leveraging insights from the field of behavioral science, you might also consider:

- Using gender neutral language in job postings,
- Evaluating candidate applications and resumes comparatively rather than individually,
- Ensuring you have a diverse slate of final candidates,
- Asking candidates to submit work samples, and
- Setting diversity targets

Ready to get started? Below are a few quick tips to keep in mind before, during, and after the interviewing process.

BEFORE THE INTERVIEW

- Identify a group of evaluators. Aim to include at least 20% women and 20% people of color and/or underrepresented minorities whenever possible. Diverse perspectives will help mitigate affinity bias, our unconscious preference for those who are like us.
- As a team, determine the top five to six “must haves” for the role (e.g. motivation for the work, a learning mindset, leadership capabilities, etc.). What skills, experiences, or traits are essential to the role? While you may be tempted to include “nice to haves,” don’t. A disappointing response to a “nice to have” could influence your opinion of the candidate overall. Only include competencies that are non-negotiable. Determine if all of your “must haves” are equally important. If not, how will they be weighted?
- Decide what score a candidate must achieve in order to advance in the process.
- Provide training to ensure the team is aligned. Consider hosting mock interviews. This will allow your evaluators to practice using the rubric and identify and fix any blind spots.
- Ideally, each evaluator should schedule independent interviews with each candidate to avoid groupthink.

DURING THE INTERVIEW

- Ask the same set of questions in the same order to all candidates. This will help avoid small talk that can reveal personal details about a candidate’s background, family status, etc., which can introduce bias. While it may seem awkward at times, resist the urge to deviate from the structured interview. Do not skip ahead or change the order of the questions. If the conversation begins to veer toward another topic, let the candidate know that you will revisit the topic later.
- Score each answer immediately after it is provided. Do not go back and revise scores unless the candidate shares additional examples of previous “must have” competencies. This helps prevent the halo and/or horns effect, which occurs when the rating for one competency influences the rating of another unrelated competency.
- Avoid making assumptions about a candidate’s intentions—if you hear something that raises a red flag or doesn’t sit well with you, follow up with, “Tell me more about that.”

AFTER THE INTERVIEW

- Submit all assessments to a neutral third-party, a colleague that will not be participating in the candidate selection process, before your team meets to debrief. Have the neutral third-party facilitate the discussion to ensure the voices and perspectives of all evaluators are heard and understood.
- Compare candidate answers horizontally, discussing all answers to the first “must have” before moving on to the second “must have,” and so on.
- If evaluators unanimously score a candidate below the established requirement, eliminate the candidate. If evaluators unanimously score a candidate at or above the established requirement, advance the candidate. Spend the majority of time discussing candidates with mixed reviews. Why is there a disparity in the scores? Is there missing information? Could personal bias be influencing the results?

Candidate Name:	
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MUST HAVE EXAMPLE: GROWTH MINDSET

People with a growth mindset believe that their capabilities and skills can be developed. They listen to understand and ask questions. They are self-aware and can identify what they don't know. They seek out people and learning opportunities that can help fill their gaps in knowledge.

Question	Notes	Score
Tell me about a time when you experienced failure at work.		
What work-related books, podcasts, or classes have you read, listened to, or taken recently? What did you learn from them?		
Tell me about a time when you were out of your comfort zone. How did you handle it?		
Tell me about the last time you received feedback.		

Rate the answer to each question using the following rubric:

WEAK (1)	DEVELOPING (2)	STRONG (3)	EXCEPTIONAL (4)
Unable to acknowledge failures/mistakes Blames others for past failures/mistakes Unaware of what they don't know Lacks the desire to keep learning	Can identify areas of development, but sees those areas as fixed (for example, "I'm not good at...") Does not embrace new challenges Shows some evidence of engaging in ongoing learning opportunities, but not consistently	Acknowledges role in past failures/mistakes Embraces new challenges when needed Understands what they don't know Expresses a desire to learn and grow in certain situations Seeks help	Actively listens to others/seek out different points of view Articulates what they've learned from past failures/mistakes Demonstrates how they've changed their behavior as a result Seeks out new challenges and learning opportunities Acknowledges their own limitations

Candidate Name:	
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INTRODUCTION

Thank the candidate for their interest in the role. Introduce yourself, including your role and how it relates to the open position, as well as your relevant experience. Set expectations for how the conversation will flow. Keep in mind, the candidate will also be interviewing you to see if the role and organization are a good fit. You may wish to share why their resume or application stood out to you. Check in with the candidate. Do they have any questions before you get started?

MUST HAVE #1

Define this “must have.” What does this skill, experience, or trait look like in practice?

<i>Question</i>	<i>Notes</i>	<i>Score</i>
Question 1		
Question 2		
Question 3		

Rate the answer to each question using the following rubric:

WEAK (1)	DEVELOPING (2)	STRONG (3)	EXCEPTIONAL (4)
Define what “weak” means within the context of this “must have.”	Define what “developing” means within the context of this “must have.”	Define what “strong” means within the context of this “must have.”	Define what “exceptional” means within the context of this “must have.”

Must Have #1 Rating:

Insert the average score for this “must have.” For example, if the scores of the questions above are 2, 3, and 4, the rating for this “must have” would be 3.

Notes / Rating Rationale:

Why did you score each question the way you did? Defend your decision here.

Candidate Name:	
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MUST HAVE #2

Define this “must have.” What does this skill, experience, or trait look like in practice?

Question	Notes	Score
Question 1		
Question 2		
Question 3		

Rate the answer to each question using the following rubric:

WEAK (1)	DEVELOPING (2)	STRONG (3)	EXCEPTIONAL (4)
Define what “weak” means within the context of this “must have.”	Define what “developing” means within the context of this “must have.”	Define what “strong” means within the context of this “must have.”	Define what “exceptional” means within the context of this “must have.”

Must Have #2 Rating:

Insert the average score for this “must have.” For example, if the scores of the questions above are 2, 3, and 4, the rating for this “must have” would be 3.

Notes / Rating Rationale:

Why did you score each question the way you did? Defend your decision here.

Candidate Name:	
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MUST HAVE #3

Define this “must have.” What does this skill, experience, or trait look like in practice?

Question	Notes	Score
Question 1		
Question 2		
Question 3		

Rate the answer to each question using the following rubric:

WEAK (1)	DEVELOPING (2)	STRONG (3)	EXCEPTIONAL (4)
Define what “weak” means within the context of this “must have.”	Define what “developing” means within the context of this “must have.”	Define what “strong” means within the context of this “must have.”	Define what “exceptional” means within the context of this “must have.”

Must Have #3 Rating:

Insert the average score for this “must have.” For example, if the scores of the questions above are 2, 3, and 4, the rating for this “must have” would be 3.

Notes / Rating Rationale:

Why did you score each question the way you did? Defend your decision here.

Candidate Name:	
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MUST HAVE #4

Define this “must have.” What does this skill, experience, or trait look like in practice?

<i>Question</i>	<i>Notes</i>	<i>Score</i>
Question 1		
Question 2		
Question 3		

Rate the answer to each question using the following rubric:

WEAK (1)	DEVELOPING (2)	STRONG (3)	EXCEPTIONAL (4)
Define what “weak” means within the context of this “must have.”	Define what “developing” means within the context of this “must have.”	Define what “strong” means within the context of this “must have.”	Define what “exceptional” means within the context of this “must have.”

Must Have #4 Rating:

Insert the average score for this “must have.” For example, if the scores of the questions above are 2, 3, and 4, the rating for this “must have” would be 3.

Notes / Rating Rationale:

Why did you score each question the way you did? Defend your decision here.

Candidate Name:	
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MUST HAVE #5

Define this “must have.” What does this skill, experience, or trait look like in practice?

Question	Notes	Score
Question 1		
Question 2		
Question 3		

Rate the answer to each question using the following rubric:

WEAK (1)	DEVELOPING (2)	STRONG (3)	EXCEPTIONAL (4)
Define what “weak” means within the context of this “must have.”	Define what “developing” means within the context of this “must have.”	Define what “strong” means within the context of this “must have.”	Define what “exceptional” means within the context of this “must have.”

Must Have #5 Rating:

Insert the average score for this “must have.” For example, if the scores of the questions above are 2, 3, and 4, the rating for this “must have” would be 3.

Notes / Rating Rationale:

Why did you score each question the way you did? Defend your decision here.

OVERALL RECOMMENDATION

Candidate Name:	
Date/Time:	
Evaluator Name:	
Evaluator Role:	
Job Title/Open Position:	

Final Candidate Score:

Add the “must have” ratings and divide by the total number of “must have” categories (in this template, we have included five).

Does this rating feel accurate to you? Why or why not?

If not, please explain using examples and language from the rubric.

Do you recommend this candidate advance in the hiring process?

Please explain.