

## 7 Interview Questions That Determine Emotional Intelligence

By Carolyn Sun; March 8, 2016

Determining who you hire for a job plays a big part in forming your company's culture and ensuring its future success. Selecting informative interview questions can be a key factor in finding the right employees -- as well as weeding out the ones that won't fit. A candidate's answers can be telling.

While different companies embody various values and cultures, success in the workplace is strongly influenced by a person's emotional intelligence, a quality that should be a non-negotiable when vetting job candidates, says Mariah DeLeon, vice-president of people at workplace ratings and review site Glassdoor.

Here are seven interview questions that can draw revealing answers from the job candidates you interview -- and get you on your way to finding employees with stellar emotional intelligence.

**1. Who inspires you and why?** The job candidate's answer often gives the interviewer a peek into who the interviewee models him or herself after. The response can also highlight the sorts of behavioral patterns the interviewee respects, says Craig Cincotta, chief of staff and vice-president of communications at online home improvement marketplace Porch, where he's heavily involved in team expansion and hiring.

**2. If you were starting a company tomorrow, what would be its top three values?** Every good relationship starts with trust and aligned values. Insight into a person's priorities -- as well as honesty and integrity -- can emerge in the candidate's answer, explains Robert Alvarez, the CFO of ecommerce platform Bigcommerce.

**3. If business priorities change, describe how you would help your team understand and carry out the shifted goals?** Shifting priorities happen in every company, and every job, so look for candidates who are flexible and possess the skills to help carry out change. Hire employees who are self-aware, motivated and display empathy advises DeLeon. "These skills will help employees better work in teams."

**4. Did you build lasting friendships while working at another job?** It takes a while for people to build relationships -- and being able to do so is a sign of solid emotional intelligence, Alvarez says. "[A lasting friendship] tells you that relationships and caring about people are important to the person."

**5. What skill or expertise do you feel like you're still missing?** Curiosity and the desire to learn are vital signs that a prospective employee wants to get better at something. "People who struggle with this question are the people who think they already know it all," warns Alvarez. "These are the people you want to steer away from."

**6. Can you teach me something, as if I've never heard of it before? (It can be anything: A skill, a lesson or a puzzle.)** A job candidate's answer to this question can reveal several qualities:

- Whether the person is willing to take the time to think before speaking.
- If the candidate has the technical ability to explain something to a person who is less knowledgeable in the subject.
- Whether the candidate asks empathetic questions to the person being taught, such as, "Is this making sense?"

**7. What are the top three factors you would attribute to your success?** The answer to this question can determine whether a person is selfless or selfish, Alvarez says. "When people talk about their own success, listen to whether someone talks about 'me-me-me' or 'I-I-I.' Or whether they talk about 'the team,' 'we' or 'us.'"

"Look for a team player who brings something positive to the company," Cincotta shares. "Someone can be the smartest person in the room, but if they are not someone you enjoy working with -- because they are more concerned with their own success over that of the company -- they won't be a fit."

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