

## **Group Interviews Strategy**

*by Cameron Herold*

A question and answer review of the process.

### **1) How is the group interview conducted?**

8 candidates per group - all are told in advance that it is a group interview with multiple candidates at the same time. Start off with a quick introduction on why you do a group interview and then ask them an easy question to get them chatting, like "what books or magazines do you read." Funny - but this question can eliminate 2 candidates right away when they tell you they read "Harlequin Romance or The National Enquirer." Ideally everyone was also sent your Painted Picture in advance too so they know what kind of company you are building.

### **2) Do all candidates answer the same questions?**

Yes - but rotate the order - let each of them go first, last etc. for various questions - zip & zap style - cut them off too - it throws them - and keeps it like a fun test - I cut them off a few times with "ok, thanks" and then I ask someone else to go.

### **3) Is the large group ever broken down into smaller groups during the process?**

We have done it when we a) had 4 totally poor candidates and we wanted the other 4 hot ones to know we were serious - we said - "ok that's been 3 questions, one more question - then we're going to eliminate the first round and ask 5 more questions to those of you who will keep going" and b) we do it a few times when we are hiring in remote cities like Dallas and Boston and we have to fly in and do group interviews with 16 candidates, 2nd & 3rd interviews etc. all in 36 hours and leave knowing who we are hiring.

### **4) What are the typical questions that are asked in a group setting?**

Make them up - I always ask these:

- Favorite books / magazines
- Favorite movie / why?
- Most stressful time of your life - why?
- Most complex project you ever led - explain
- What stresses you out?
- Why do you want to work here?
- Who is the best candidate in the room? Why?
- If we hired you - but wanted to hire two people - who else would you want us to hire to work with you?
- When could you start / how much do you need to make year 1 / year 3?

### **5) How do we ensure that we do not overlook a 'star' candidate?**

A resume gets them into the group. Cultural Fit & Leadership gets them into a 2nd interview – two hour 2nd interview where you grill them is where you find them, 3rd interview with a couple more people from your organization is where you test your thoughts on them

The real way you won't overlook a star is to PUSH to find 200 resumes for every 1 person you want to hire, narrow that down to 16 or so, and you'll find them.

### **6) Can some candidates be asked to leave the room early if they are a destructive force, or if they clearly don't measure up?**

Yes - you own the company, you were there first, just be polite and considerate - and tell them to not let the door hit their butt on the way out.

### **7) Have you ever had more than 3 people in a group seem like they were qualified?**

(i.e. if you just happen to get all of your stars in the same group).

Yes - which is great - because I can pick the best 2 - 3 and do big time 2 hour interviews with them.