

## POSSIBLE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

BY JOB CRITERIA

### A. INTERPERSONAL SKILLS CRITERIA

#### 1. PREFERS TEAMWORK

Tell us how you prefer to carry out projects.

What was the most exciting project you have worked on, and what about the project was exciting to you?

When working with other people, what is most important to you?

Tell us about a project that you wished you had not gotten involved in, and why?

#### 2. FRIENDLINESS

What aspects of your last job appealed to you most?

What activities at your last job did you enjoy most?

What activities at your last job did you enjoy least?

What has been your biggest problem in working with other people?

#### 3. VERBAL SKILLS

Tell us about your most positive public speaking experience.

Tell us about your most embarrassing public speaking experience.

(Just listen for good speaking skills)

### B. PERSONALITY TRAITS

#### 1. SELF-STARTER

At your last job, when you started a new project, tell us how it generally came about.

To what extent did your boss watch over your work?

In your last job how did work get assigned to you?

What reading have you done recently that is related to your work?

Please summarize one of these pieces of reading.

#### 2. PERSISTENCE

Tell us about a long-term project that you have worked on recently.

What has been the hardest project to see through to completion and why?

How do you deal with other people's procrastination?

## POSSIBLE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS, CONT'D

### BY JOB CRITERIA

#### B. PERSONALITY TRAITS

##### 3. OPTIMISM

Tell us about the worst situation that you have ever gotten into in any job.  
What attitudes in a person make for the most effective worker?  
What kind of things get you down at work?

#### C. MOTIVATIONS

##### 1. DESIRE TO HELP PEOPLE

At the end of the day what one thing gives you the greatest sense of satisfaction?  
Describe your ideal job.  
If you could do anything in the world, and there were no limits, what would it be?  
If you were to receive an “overwhelming” gift, what would it be?

##### 2. DESIRE TO DO CREATIVE WORK

At the end of the day what one thing gives you the greatest sense of enthusiasm?  
What most inspires you?  
Describe your ideal job.  
If you could spend more time on one aspect of your job, what would it be?

#### D. MANAGEMENT/LEADERSHIP SKILLS

##### 1. PLANNING SKILLS

How do you schedule your work?  
How do you accomplish your long-term goals?  
When you arrive at work, how do you know what to do that day?  
What do you see as the importance of both program and personal performance appraisal?

##### 2. ORGANIZING SKILLS

How do you keep track of large projects that must be done?  
How do you balance life at home with life at work?  
Tell about the last deadline you missed.  
How would you handle the demands of a highly flexible schedule?

## POSSIBLE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS, CONT'D

### BY JOB CRITERIA

#### D. MANAGEMENT/LEADERSHIP SKILLS, CONT'D

##### 3. DELEGATING/CONTROL SKILLS

What is the most important thing you can do to assure quality work?

Describe your method for delegating work.

Describe the most difficult person you had to work with. How did you handle it?

What kind of hobbies do you enjoy?

What are the last three books you have read?

#### E. TECHNICAL JOB KNOWLEDGE

##### 1. RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

What is your philosophy of education?

How would you describe the ideal parish religious education program? How would you work toward achieving this ideal?

What do you feel is the most important role of the religious education leader?

What strengths do you bring to your ministry of religious education leader?

What is the most difficult thing about being a parish religious education leader? What is the most rewarding?

What do you perceive the relationship between the religious education leader and the principal, and the religious education leader and the pastor should be?

What procedure would you use to find competent volunteers (teachers, helpers, etc.)?

How would you prepare them for their positions?

What support could/would you provide for them?

What do you feel you have to offer the teachers in the school, parish religious education program, preschool program, special education program?

How can you best support the catechists and program leaders?

Of what value is continuing education for volunteers, professionals, and parishioners in general? Should all catechists be certified/ what are problems you will face?

How would you encourage the certification of your catechists?

How would you meet the needs of adults in the parish?

Have you ever worked with Small Christian Communities? What was your experience?

Have you ever worked with the RCIA? What was your experience?

What, if any, experience do you have working with persons with disabilities?

What is your feeling about mainstreaming children with disabilities into the parish religious education program?

This position requires both evening and weekend work. How do feel about this?

Do you have an Act 34 clearance from the Pennsylvania State Police (or the State from which you are coming)?

## POSSIBLE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS, CONT'D

### BY JOB CRITERIA

#### E. TECHNICAL JOB KNOWLEDGE

##### 2. THEOLOGY

Review any academic qualifications/workshop experience that would give indication of knowledge in this area. (Don't ask about "Date of Graduation")

From your perspective, what is the most important issue facing the Church today?

What is the last theological work that you have read? How would you summarize the main themes of the work?

##### 3. TECHNICAL SKILLS

With which office machines are you familiar?

Describe your proficiency with each machine.

Please tell us about your computer skills. Please be specific about programs.

Describe how and where you would advertise the activities of the program.

Please tell us about your experience with budgeting and accounting.

#### F. SCENARIO QUESTIONS

##### 1. CONCERNING CONFIDENTIALITY

You are meeting with a parishioner over a routine parish matter. During the conversation the parishioner tells you that the priest in the neighboring parish is involved in an affair. She is quite upset about this. How do you respond to her? And with whom do you share this information? (you may use this or another example, however, the example is extreme on purpose. The issue is to determine if the person has well developed psychological boundaries and understands issues of confidentiality.)

##### 2. CONCERNING FLEXIBILITY

A parent comes to you and says that his daughter is involved in a soccer league. The soccer program is very important to her. As her parent he is aware that the religious education process is important - but the two conflict in time. What can you do in this situation?

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION LEADERSHIP

### HIRING A RELIGIOUS EDUCATION LEADER

#### LEGAL ISSUES TO CONSIDER WHEN INTERVIEWING

Hiring the right person is one of the most important things that a parish does because hiring the wrong person creates no end of grief. There are however, several issues that people involved in interviewing should know before beginning. Hiring can be a legal minefield - the following list will help avoid possible pitfalls.

1. The reason for using the previous "Interview Form" is to avoid one of the great pitfalls of interviewing which is to ask different questions of different people. It is easily construed as "preferential" to use different questions for different people.
2. The purpose in an interview is to find someone for a position. Questions should **all** be related to the job - not the person. **Never discuss personal issues as a part of the interview.** In an interview, **it is illegal to ask about age, religion (see b. below), race, sex, national origin or disability.** These six areas of a person's life are protected by law against any form of discrimination.

**a.** If a person shares any information related to any of these protected areas - **do not write any of the information on the interview form.** For example - if someone shares their age - do not write it down - anywhere. All paperwork will be subpoenaed for a court case. If there is no paperwork the claim of "age discrimination" cannot be refuted and the case will be lost. (Meaning - either the court will force the hiring of the person - or the payment of damages - or both.) If someone shares any information that is related to the six protected areas - say to the person immediately - "The information that you just shared is not job related." Then, without writing down what was said, make a note that the candidate disclosed information that was unrelated to the job and not this fact was publically declared in the interview. It is recommended that interview forms be kept at least through the probation period and suggested that they be kept for at least a year.

**b.** In a parish's case it is appropriate to ask about religion because the ability to both teach and share the Catholic faith is a **Bona Fide Occupational Qualification (BFOQ)**. A BFOQ indicates that a particular skill is "required" for the performance of the job and is therefore a legitimate area of discussion for a job. This same stipulation holds true for all disabilities - however - be aware that the law requires that an employer make "reasonable accommodations" to make it possible for a person with disabilities to perform a particular job. Do not automatically assume that a disability would exclude a person from performing the work of the religious education leader.

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION LEADERSHIP

### HIRING A RELIGIOUS EDUCATION LEADER

#### LEGAL ISSUES TO CONSIDER WHEN INTERVIEWING, CONT'D

3. If a resume is received that includes information such as a birthdate, marital status, number of children, etc. - blackout the information before copying and distribute the resume to the interviewing committee. At the beginning of the interview indicate that the person supplied information that was not relevant to the job on the resume and that the information was not forwarded to the members of the interviewing committee. Make a note on the Interview Form that this action was taken because the information was not job related.
4. The following questions are illegal.
  - a. What is the nature of your disability?
  - b. Does your disability cause absence due to illness?
  - c. Has your disability caused a worker's comp accident or illness?
  - d. Do you now, or have you in the past, had drug/alcohol problems?
  - e. Can you indicate the severity of your disability?
  - f. What is the year of your graduation?
  - g. Do you currently own or rent?
  - h. Have you ever been arrested?
  - i. That is an interesting name - what is your ethnic origin?
5. If at any point in the course of an interview a candidate says that they cannot perform a specific function that is "required" for the job say - "Are you then saying that you are unable to perform the position as described?" If the answer is "yes" - then end the interview immediately.
6. What is written down on the Interview Form?

**Write only what seen and heard!! Never write down a subjective evaluation!!** For example - to write down that the candidate was "embarrassed" is a subjective evaluation. (Could it be proven that the person was feeling embarrassed?) What was witnessed is that the candidate lowered their eyes, became flushed in the face and seemed to pull into themselves. Anyone in the room could have seen these things. This is what is written down. It requires diligence - but it is important.

