



# Selecting an Animal Caretaker: Interview Questions

Much conversation has surrounded the interview process and the fact that inappropriate questioning may lead to legal action against you as an employer or even you personally. Being aware of what are proper and what are improper lines of questioning is your best tool and manner of defense. The following are inadvisable lines of questioning.

## Inadvisable Interview Areas

TOPIC	INADVISABLE LINES OF QUESTIONING
Arrest Records	Any inquiry is inadvisable.
Availability for work weekends and/or evenings	Any inquiry about religious observance.
Birthplace & Residence	Birthplace of applicant or parents; birth certificate, naturalization or baptismal certificate prior to hiring
Child Care	Inquiry into child care arrangements of only female applicants.
Citizenship	Whether applicant is a U. S. Citizen.
Conviction Records	Any inquiry about conviction, unrelated to job requirements.
Creed or Religion	Applicant's religious affiliation, church, parish or religious holidays observed.
Credit Records	Inquiries about charge accounts, bank accounts, etc.
Family Status	Marital status, number and ages of children, spouse's job.
Handicap	To ask applicant to list or describe his/her handicap(s).
Height & Weight	Any inquiry unrelated to job requirements.
Language	Applicant's mother tongue, used by applicant at home, or how applicant acquired the ability to read, write, or speak a foreign language.
Marital Status	Any inquiry is inadvisable.
Military Service	Type or condition of discharge.
Name	The original name of an applicant whose name has been legally changed or the national origin of an applicant's name.
National Origin	Applicant's lineage, ancestry, national origin, descent, parentage, or nationality of applicant, or applicant's parent or spouse.
Organizations	All clubs, social fraternities, societies, lodges or organizations to which applicant belongs.
Photographs	Photograph with application or after interview, but before hiring.
Pregnancy	Any inquiry is inadvisable.
Race or Color	Any inquiry is inadvisable.
References	Name of applicant's pastor or religious leader.
Age	Date of birth.
Sex	Any inquiry, except where it is a bona fide occupational qualification.



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It is strongly recommended that you develop a list of specific questions that you are going to ask in the interview prior to your interview and you stick to it. Remember also that you should use the same questions with all candidates applying for the same position. This planning up front can help prevent serious problems in the future. It ensures your questions are presented in an acceptable manner and also helps you to gather like information on all candidates; this allows your review process to be fair and provides you with the ability to measure “apples to apples.”

A specific area that has become important to have a planned, structured interview with specific questions is when hiring and filling of an Animal Caretaker position. Because of what this position does in your operation and the continued focus of animal treatment it is critical for you to find the right person to add to your operation.

Following is a list of questions that have been developed and approved for your use when interviewing for an Animal Caretaker. Please note that these questions pertain to the treatment of animals, livestock productions and animal handling issues. These questions will need to be augmented with other behavior-based questions around technical and performance skills for the position as you see fit.

### Approved Questions

#### Animal Abuse

- Have you ever been convicted of a crime involving animals?
- What is your definition of animal abuse?
  - Animal welfare?
  - Animal care?
- Have you ever abused an animal?
  - If so, why?
- Do you believe animal abuse should be a crime punishable by law?
- Here at (company), this is our policy on animal welfare (animal welfare policy).
  - How do you feel about this?
  - Is there anything that would prevent you from adhering to this policy?
- Have you ever witnessed someone treating an animal in a questionable manner? Share the situation and how you reacted.
- If you witnessed a coworker, even one that you considered a friend, treating an animal in a questionable manner, how would you react?

#### Livestock Production

- How do you feel about pigs in general?
  - Do you believe they have value as living beings and should be treated with respect?
- How do you feel about livestock production for the purpose of meat consumption?

#### Production Practices

- Euthanasia
  - After necessary training, this position may require you to perform humane euthanasia of sick or injured pigs in accordance with standard industry practices. Does this situation pose a problem for you if you are asked to do this within the scope of your job?



- Handling and movement
  - After necessary training, this position may require you to handle or move animals. What do you think is the most important thing to consider when handling pigs?
  - How confident are you in your ability to properly handle pigs?
  - Scenario: You are trying to load a group of pigs and the lead pig balks at the opening of the trailer. How would you react to this situation?
    - Note: this type of question should only be asked of applicants who claim to have prior pork production experience.
  - Scenario: You are moving a sow into a gestation stall and she stops short of entering. How would you react to this situation?
    - Note: this type of question should only be asked of applicants who claim to have prior pork production experience.
- What is the most effective way to move an animal?
  - Note: this type of question should only be asked of applicants who claim to have prior pork production experience.