

# The Search Committee Interview Process for Private Clubs



The interview process in a private club environment is sometimes intimidating, frustrating and unproductive. One reputable study of newly hired club managers who failed within the first year at their respective clubs concludes: **"Ninety-five percent of the time the failure occurs because the evaluation of the candidate was faulty."**

The following suggestions and sample questions will assist the search committee in selecting the appropriate candidate and avoiding the high failure rate too many clubs experience. It is helpful to remember through the interview process that there is no "superman or superwoman" who will have all the right answers or be experienced in every area of club management. However, there are three very important qualities the committee should always look for in a capable candidate:

- 1. Competence:** How capably has the candidate performed in his/her previous management positions? Has there been a progressive career path with increasing responsibilities?
- 2. Integrity:** The applicant will have demonstrated consistent ethical behavior in his/her professional career. All of the other critical values emanate from the candidate's honesty.
- 3. Compatibility:** Will the candidate be a "good fit" for the club? How appropriate is their management style to the club's needs?

## The Interview

The candidate should be welcomed by the selection committee Chairperson and, after being introduced to all of the committee members, he/she should be comfortably seated next to the committee Chairperson. Water should be readily available and the candidate may be offered other beverages. Thank him/her for coming and ask if there were any problems with directions, accommodations and so forth.

Remember that most candidates will initially exhibit some nervousness, but with a confident and competent candidate that should dissipate during the interview.

Explain the interview process so the candidate understands how the questions will be asked and approximately how long the session will take. Also explain to the candidate that he/she may take a break, if necessary, during the questioning to use the restroom facilities.

The Chairperson should indicate to the candidate their sense of interest in him/her and congratulate him/her for making it to the final selection process after dozens of other candidates had been considered. The Chairperson may discuss how this search process has been a very thorough one because of the desire to select a qualified and appropriate candidate for the club.

### **Transition**

An easy and natural transition from the "small talk" to the actual interview can occur when the Chairperson begins the session by asking the candidate to discuss his/her current position and describe a typical day at his/her present club.

### **Search Director Conducts Interviews**

#### **In Closing**

The following question is highly optional but gives the candidate one last opportunity to convince the committee he/she is the right choice.

What do you want us to know that would make it obvious that you are the right candidate for this position?

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The Search Director should conclude by thanking the candidate for taking the time to attend the interview and assure him/her that the committee will keep his/her resume in confidence. They would indicate to the candidate the approximate time frame when they might expect to hear of the committee's decision.

The Search Director escorts the candidate to the door and asks him/her if they need any assistance returning home and to please submit receipts for any expenses incurred in attending the interview.