

Northern Arizona University
Office of Affirmative Action and Equal Opportunity
FACULTY SEARCH GUIDE

Inappropriate Interview Questions

The following types of questions are suspect and can potentially create legal liability for the University, and should **not** be asked.

1. You have a distinctive accent. What is your cultural background?
2. This department presently consists entirely of men. How do you see yourself fitting in within that environment?
3. You have had a distinguished career. What makes this job opportunity attractive to you? [Note: without the introductory remark, the question would be entirely appropriate. The introductory remark may cause a candidate to feel that age is a negative factor in the selection process.]
4. From your credentials, we were expecting someone much older. How old are you?
5. Will your physical or mental impairment allow you to do this job? [Note: this question assumes that the candidate has either an obvious physical impairment or has disclosed either a physical or mental impairment. Under the ADA you are prohibiting from asking questions that might reasonably elicit disability-related information. However, you are not required to ignore the obvious or ignore information a candidate has chosen to share with you. You should ensure that all questions focus on the candidate's ability to perform the essential functions of the position, with or without reasonable accommodation, rather than on the candidate's disability.]
6. Do you have children? How old are they? Do they attend school? [These questions are not related to the needs of the position. Especially when asked of women, these questions may suggest some question on the part of the hiring unit as to whether the candidate can put in the time necessary for the position if he or she has young children.]