

vetting for civility



Transforming the work environment, achieving and sustaining organizational excellence, emphasizing civility and respect, and creating positive workplaces are formidable attractors to recruit and retain the best and brightest employees. We aspire to be part of a vibrant, healthy work environment where we are viewed as partners, valued as assets, and generously rewarded for our individual and collective contributions to the success of the organization (Clark, Sattler, & Barbosa-Leiker, 2016). We want to be affiliated with an organization on the rise—one that encourages free expression of diverse ideas so that all voices are heard and appreciated. We want to engage in work we enjoy, to reach our full potential, and to be part of a high-performing team.

Similarly, an important goal for all organizations is to avoid hiring uncivil employees in the first place and to stress civility and collegiality during the interview process. Group interviews can be especially helpful when interviewing applicants so that many perspectives are considered in the hiring decision. Whether you are a potential employer or employee, it is vital to ask relevant and important questions about the workplace culture during the interview process. Sample questions for both interviewees and interviewers are listed on the reverse side of this sheet.

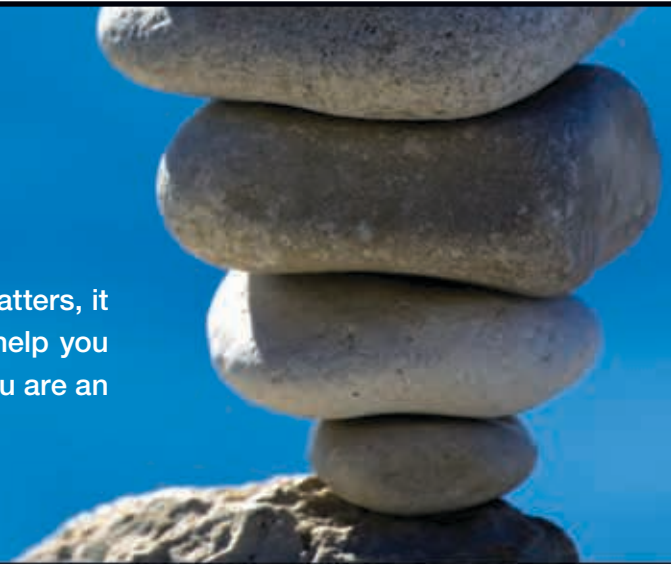


Sigma Theta Tau International
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If you believe, as we do, that a positive work culture matters, it is essential to proactively ask key questions that will help you make well-informed, responsible decisions, whether you are an interviewer or an interviewee.



Questions for Interviewers to Ask of Potential Employees:

1. If we asked your former coworkers (students, supervisors) to describe your strengths/areas for improvement regarding collaboration and teamwork, what would they say? Give examples.
2. In what areas do you have the least amount of patience with coworkers (students, supervisors)? How do you express your impatience? Give examples.
3. What are your most significant contributions to promoting teamwork and collegiality among coworkers?
4. Describe a challenging situation or conflict you've experienced with a coworker (student, supervisor). How did you handle the situation? What was the outcome?
5. How do you see yourself contributing to the mission and values of the organization?
6. What feedback have you received about the style and impact of your interactions with coworkers (students, supervisors)? What insight have you gained from this feedback? What changes in your behaviors (if any) have you made as a result of this feedback?
7. Describe a high pressure situation you handled at work. What happened, who was involved, and how did you address the situation?

Questions for Interviewees to Ask Potential Employers:

1. How does your organization live out its organizational vision, mission, and values? Give specific examples.
2. How would you describe the level of trust and quality of communication between leaders and other members of the organization? How does the leader's leadership style influence the workplace culture?
3. What policies has your organization established to address incivility and a negative work environment? How does the organization reward civility and professionalism?
4. Tell me about the organization's strategic approach to developing and sustaining a positive work culture.
5. Would you recommend this organization to your best friend or a family member as a good place to work?
6. If this organization could be summed up in one or two words, what would they be?
7. All things considered, is this is a great place to work?

References

- Cipriano, R. E. (2011). *Facilitating a collegial department in higher education: Strategies for success*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Clark, C. M., Barbosa-Leiker, C., Gill, L., & Nguyen, D. T. (2015). Revision and psychometric testing of the Incivility in Nursing Education (INE) survey: Introducing the INE-R. *Journal of Nursing Education*, 54(6), 306–315. doi: 10.3928/01484834-20150515-01