

Hey, nice car! Is that what you like to do when you're not working?

Your job applicant pulls up in a souped-up car. You ask if he or she likes to fix up cars in their spare time. Did you know that asking this may technically be illegal? Their hobbies are not relevant to the hiring decision and knowing them may provide you with knowledge that may unfairly sway your decision. Have you ever asked a job applicant something you later realized was perhaps something you shouldn't have? Or wanted to ask a question but were unsure if it was legal to ask?

When you're interviewing a potential new hire, it can be maddening to try to navigate the jungle of what you're permitted to ask and what is unlawful. Inquiring about their hobbies is technically taboo. Asking about past medical procedures or additional benefits coverage can get you in trouble. Requesting information on other positions they've applied for is not good either. There are a host of questions you could ask in a conversation that could technically be unlawful. Don't put yourself in this precarious situation.

Sometimes it's best to avoid **asking** and start **telling**. Tell potential candidates about specifics of the job itself, including duties, travel required, hours, physical requirements, etc.... It will then be up to the candidate to plan accordingly should they be offered the position. Sometimes offering more information about the job itself or stating specific requirements of the position at key times (long hours during end-of-month for example), can assist you in avoiding having to ask a candidate how they plan to accommodate these unique circumstances.

Why place yourself in a situation where you're unsure about what you're allowed to ask or not ask? Partner with an HR provider who can brief you and your hiring managers on what's proper and what's off the table in the interview. Your goal is to garner information from an applicant to decide if they'd be an asset to your corporation, not to end up in a courtroom over improper interrogation procedures. Keeping your staff on the same page and properly informed on the

regulations regarding this tricky area of recruitment helps insure you'll be free to spend YOUR spare time on something other than litigation!

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