



Personal Interviews: Our Suggested Process, Tips and Techniques

Personal interviews with the nanny you eventually employ will form the basis for your relationship with them. Creating a structure for the process and spending some time in preparation will enhance your ability to make a good hiring decision.

Plan on using the personal interviews to accomplish the following:

1. Fully describe the position you are offering
2. Learn enough about the candidate to assess their ability to meet your expectations as a caregiver.
3. Evaluate how well you'll be able to work together in promoting the healthy development of your children.

Here are some general guidelines you can use to help develop your interview questions:

- Making a candidate feel welcome and at ease will improve the chances of learning what you want to know about them.
- Keep your questions consistent across applicants, so that you form a fair basis for comparison
- Try to ask questions that are open-ended and don't suggest the "right" response
- Ask for examples from the candidate's prior experience
- Prepare questions that address developmental stages/issues specific to your family situation and child-rearing philosophies.

Some examples might be:

- Should a crying baby be picked up?
- How would you handle a temper tantrum?
- What do you consider misbehavior and how would you handle it?
- How do you feel about play dates? How have you handled situations when playmates or siblings disagree?
- How would you plan for a day when there is no school?

Perhaps most critical is assessing how a candidate will work effectively with you as parents.

Some areas to cover in this regard might include:

- What situations have bothered them in the past?
- If a problem arises in your situation, how would the nanny approach you with it?
- If you, as parents, have an issue, how would they want to be told?
- How do they like to handle daily communication with parents?
- What do they think it's important for parents to know about a child's day?
- How will they help support your family as a whole?

It is good to plan for at least two meetings with the candidate you'll hire. The initial meeting on Zoom or FaceTime - should provide ample opportunity for the adults to focus on each other. If there is mutual interest following a remote interview, then an in-person meeting should be the next step. This can certainly involve the children, but keep in mind it can be difficult for candidates to know how to appropriately divide their attention between their potential charges and a potential employer. (Some families choose to have a relative, friend or the old nanny help with children during part of the interview.). If the in-person interview goes well and you're serious about moving forward with a candidate, a trial day or half day is a great next step. This is an excellent opportunity for the potential nanny to have more extended interaction with your children and gives everyone time to see what it would be like to work together.