United States
of America

Working for America

Overview of Screening Questions

The right candidates can only be identified by asking the right questions. Developing the right screening questions for any position is a collaborative effort involving a team of Subject Matter Experts (SMEs), the hiring manager, the HR professional, and others with insight into the position or the assessment method. Automated assessment tools often include lists of the knowledge, skills, abilities, competencies and questions potentially required of a given position. It is from these libraries that hiring managers - and others involved in the effort - select the content of their "pre-screening" questions (those in the vacancy announcement).

Below are some of the types of questions the user will find in a Question Library. Keep in mind that different types of questions are used to elicit different kinds of information. The type of question asked will directly contribute to the reliability, scope and utility of the applicant's response.

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Applicant Assessment:
Asks the applicant to rate him or her self


Short Answer:
Requires a written response with a maximum length of 250 characters


Long Answer:
Requires the applicant to enter a written (text) response


Multiple Choice:
Asks the applicant to choose one of the possible answers provided.


Multiple Answer, Multiple Choice:
Provides the applicant with a list of possible responses, one or more of which can be selected


No Answer:
Allows the user to add comments to the questions list that require no answer from the applicant


Number:
Requires that a numeric answer be provided


True or False:
Applicant selects whether the statement is True or False


Yes or No:
Requires the applicant to answer the question with Yes or No
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To best utilize these questions, consider these tips:

- Whenever possible, avoid using Applicant Assessment questions. Try to reword them and change them into another question type, such as multiple choice.

- Avoid using subjective terms such as: effectively, timely, accurately, best, good, works well with others, etc.

- Do not include multiple tasks in a question. Rather, use multiple choice questions and make the tasks choices, or, develop two separate questions.

Please see Sample Screening Questions for examples of how to best use certain question types.