

CAREER CENTER

University of California, Riverside

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UNDERSTANDING INAPPROPRIATE QUESTIONS

INQUIRY AREA	INAPPROPRIATE	APPROPRIATE
National Origin/Citizenship	Where were your parents born?	Are you authorized to work in the U.S.?
		What languages do you speak/read/write?
		Are you a U.S. citizen?
Age	How old are you?	Are you over 18?
	What is your birth date?	
Marital/Family Status	What is your marital status?	Would you be willing to relocate?
	With whom do you live?	Would you be willing and able to travel?
	Do you plan on having a family?	Would you be willing to work overtime?
	How many children do you have?	
	What are your childcare arrangements?	
Affiliations	To what clubs or organizations do you belong?	Do you belong to any career-related organizations?
Personal	How tall are you?	Are you able to lift and carry a 50 lb weight?
	How much do you weigh?	
Disabilities	Do you have a disability?	Can you perform the essential functions of this job?
	What is your medical history?	
	Do you need an accommodation to perform this job?	
Arrest Record	Have you ever been arrested?	Have you ever been convicted of ?
Military Record	Were you honorably discharged?	In what branch of the armed forces did you serve?

Inappropriate interview questions are those that single you out based on your age, race, gender, disability, religion, marital status, or a variety of other reasons that are contrary to equal employment opportunity and anti-discrimination laws. U.S. employers shouldn't ask such questions. But some do anyway, either to intentionally discriminate or innocently through ignorance of the law. Before responding, first assess the motive behind the question. If you don't think it was malicious and you really want the job, you might put it back on the interviewer or answer indirectly, relating the answers to the job and your ability to perform it. For example, here are sample responses to questions about

FAMILY/CHILDREN

"Are you concerned I won't be able to travel or work overtime?"

"Currently, I am focused on my career and although having a family is always a possibility, it is not a priority at the moment."

DISABILITY

"If you're concerned I won't be able to perform the duties, I think I can."

RELIGION

"I suppose everyone is religious in their own way. I do not foresee any circumstances that would interfere with the quality or commitment of my performance in working extra hours or on weekends to complete a big project for your company."

NATIONAL ORIGIN

"If you're going to ask next whether or not I'm authorized to work in the US, I am."