

## INTERVIEWING/SELECTION

### 6. Decide

It is extremely tempting to think that by the time you have reached this stage, a decision can easily be made as to an applicant's suitability. Unfortunately, far too many interviewers make their decisions early on in the interview, and then spend the rest of the time looking to confirm or ratify their original gut feeling or first impression. Amazingly, statistics suggest that around three out of four of all interviewers make their minds up about an applicant within the first 5 minutes—not exactly a careful and considered assessment process, is it?

Good interviewers must suspend their judgment until as late in the interview as they can. To do this, they should tell themselves the following things:

- I should not judge whether I like/do not like this applicant personally.
- I should not lead the applicant or stray from the outline I have planned out.
- I should base my assessment only on responses that illustrate capability to do the job (or not).

## Sample - Do Not Copy

Despite the above assurances, the greatest enemy of the interviewer is their basic feeling of empathy. When we meet someone new, it is quite natural for us to compare and contrast. This means that we look for similarities and we look for differences in the other person, compared to ourselves. If we find more in common than not, or we find one major similarity or interest or passion, it can create a powerful bond. A skilled interviewee might be familiar with this basic psychological reaction, and might even look to create or draw out an empathetic reaction. In fact, with a little bit of prior research or by being observant, an interviewee can even discover some areas of interest to use to their advantage.

Even where there is high empathy or extremely low or non-existent empathy, it is the interviewer's responsibility to accept this as emotional baggage, and then put it to one side and focus on the facts and the applicant's capability to do the job in question. Hence, an interviewer can suggest to an applicant "Yes, I share your love of sailing, but it won't be much use to either of us in this conversation. Can I therefore ask you...?" The more the applicant sees you staying professionally focused, the more you control the interview and push its balance, to make it as objective as it can be. This will also mean that you ultimately make sound decisions about the applicant.