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AMERICA'S BEST FIRST JOB.™**



# Interview Guide



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# 01 Choosing Great Employees

At your McDonald's, everything runs on teamwork so you're always on the lookout for great candidates — those golden individuals who can move at the speed of happy, serve guests delicious food, and make people smile.



## How do you know whether or not a candidate has what it takes to create the Feel-Good Moments that McDonald's is famous for?

Look to the Gold Standard Hospitality principles.



**Connect with Guests**



**Be Authentic**



**Put Guests First**



**Serve Delicious Food**

These four principles give us guidelines for creating great guest experiences — and together, they form a great foundation for choosing new employees.

This interview guide is designed to help you ask the right questions — and listen for the right answers — so you can connect with candidates, uncover their talents, and make an educated decision. In the following pages, you'll find simple interview tools for team and management candidates.

Keep this guide readily available so that you can come back to it whenever you conduct interviews.

Note: These best practices and suggestions are provided for your consideration. Choose the ones that work for you.

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# 01 Reduce Turnover with “One More to the Core”

The right interview strategy can help you reduce turnover in your restaurant.



## Here's how:

Imagine a McDonald's restaurant with ten positions:

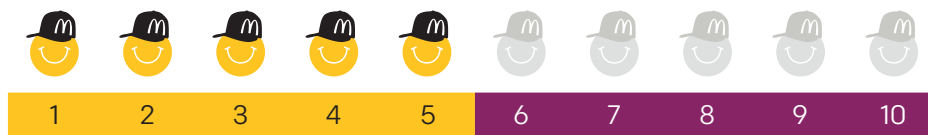


If the annual turnover for this restaurant is 100%, does that mean that each of those ten positions turns over once each year?

Probably not.

Chances are, there were **some positions where there was zero turnover.**

These were “core” positions because they were filled by employees who remained for the entire year. It also means the restaurant had **other positions where there was 200% turnover.** Let's say that our imaginary McDonald's has five “core” positions with employees who remain all year long and five other positions that turn over twice.



What if this restaurant's manager had access to clear, easy-to-use tools with the right questions to ask candidates — plus guidance about how to evaluate their answers? Could these tools result in one more employee, who would be a good fit for the team and remain for a year, adding “One More to the Core”?



This illustration shows how just one smart hiring decision **can reduce a restaurant's annual turnover by 20%.**

That's why it's worth the effort to use the tools in this guide to find the right fit for each open position. Remember — just adding “One More to the Core” can make a big difference in your restaurant's turnover numbers.

## Tips for Choosing Candidates

- ✓ **Be picky.**  
Great team members deserve to work with other great team members. Your team will be demotivated by having to work with someone who doesn't measure up to the Gold Standard Hospitality Principles.
- ✓ **Seek multiple candidates.**  
Consider at least two or three candidates for an open position. Settling for a candidate who isn't a good fit will likely cause more problems and take more time than holding out for an awesome candidate.
- ✓ **Listen carefully.**  
The interview tools will help you assess whether a candidate's answers indicate a good fit for your restaurant.
- ✓ **Be open-minded.**  
Take the time to conduct a complete interview before making a decision. Looks and experience may not convey someone's ability, especially for first-time job seekers.

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## Prep for the Interview

To find excellent candidates, you need to know what golden candidates look and sound like.

Fortunately, you know more about this than you might think.



### Use Your Best Performers as Role Models

Think about the most outstanding team members or managers you've worked with, past and present. Ask yourself this question: **Who are the golden people on my team now?**

Now think about each person who comes to mind and answer these four questions:

	Question	Answer
<b>Knowledge:</b> May either be acquired prior to becoming a team member or within a short period of time after starting	What do they know?	
<b>Attributes:</b> Personality characteristics and motivations that demonstrate hospitality and will enable greater success within the role	Who are they?	
<b>Experience:</b> Types of work experience that would help someone succeed as a team member	What have they done?	
<b>Skills:</b> Behaviors that are linked with the ability to be successful in the specified role	What can they do?	

Take a couple minutes to write down your answers. Even better: if you have more time, conduct a practice interview with one or more of these individuals using one of the interview tools in this guide. Pay attention to their responses to your questions. Take notes. This exercise can tell you a lot about what golden looks and sounds like.

It's also helpful to think about team members who fell short of expectations. Why did they fail? What were their knowledge gaps? What attributes, experience or skills were missing?

### Interview Prep Tips

- Pick your spot.**  
 Find a quiet place without heavy traffic to conduct the interview.
- Be considerate.**  
 Be on time and let your team understand you're conducting an interview and should only be interrupted for an emergency. Set distractions aside.
- Read up.**  
 Review the application of the candidate prior to the interview.
- Print out.**  
 Print a copy of the appropriate interview tool and be ready to take notes.

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# Conduct the Interview

This guide includes a printable interview tool for team members and another tool for interviewing managers.



## Gold Standard Hospitality principles



**Connect with Guests**



**Be Authentic**



**Put Guests First**



**Serve Delicious Food**

## Interview Tips

- ✓ **Print out.**  
Print a copy of the appropriate interview tool and be ready to take notes.
- ✓ **Be consistent.**  
Ask the same questions to all candidates so you can compare their responses.
- ✓ **Be careful.**  
Only take notes about the candidate's responses to your questions. Avoid writing down observations about the candidate's physical appearance.
- ✓ **Obey the law.**  
Avoid asking questions that aren't related to the job or the qualifications of the candidate. If you have any questions about this, check with your owner operator, HR partner or other appropriate contact.

## There are four sections to each interview tool:

- 1 Gold Standard Categories.**  
Each interview question is aligned with one of the four Gold Standard Hospitality principles.
- 2 What to Ask.**  
Choose 1–2 questions from each of the four hospitality principles. Be consistent with your questions for each candidate.
- 3 What to Listen For.**  
Use this column to help you assess the candidate's responses.
- 4 Interview Notes.**  
Use this section to jot down your notes about the candidate's responses.

## Interview Tool Links

- ▶ [Team Member or GEL Interview Questions](#)
- ▶ [Management Interview Questions](#)

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## Conclude the Interview

Your approach to the end of the interview will vary depending on whether or not you want to hire the candidate.

### For Candidates Who Are a Great Fit

Talk to the candidate about the benefits that will be most appealing to him or her. For example, mention the Archways Opportunity program to candidates who are putting themselves through school. Or mention flexible hours for candidates who are considering McDonald's as a second job.

Ask the candidate if they have any questions. At McDonald's we often interview people who have not had a lot of job search experience, so they may not know what to ask.

The interview tools also include a section for "The Candidates Turn" to ask questions, to help candidates interview you and learn more about working for McDonald's.

This is a great way to keep the conversation going and establish a positive rapport with interviewees.

### For Candidates Who Aren't a Good Fit

Every interviewee is more than a prospective employee — it's likely that he or she is also a guest. If you are certain you won't want to hire an individual, you don't have to tell them so outright. It is more kind and respectful to say something like this:

*Thank you for coming in today. I have two more interviews scheduled for this position. If you don't hear from me shortly, you can assume we've selected another candidate.*

By giving them a short window of time to expect an answer, you are letting these candidates know they should continue to apply for other jobs elsewhere.

If a candidate should call or come back to inquire about their interview status, you should let them know you've selected another candidate. Keep in mind they are still a guest.

### Tips for the End of the Interview

- ✓ **Be thoughtful.**  
 Make sure each candidate feels respected and appreciated.
- ✓ **Set expectations.**  
 Provide candidates with information about what next steps, if any, will follow the interview.
- ✓ **Thank them.**  
 Remember that your candidate is also a guest. Thank them verbally, and you may consider giving them a BOG card to extend your appreciation.

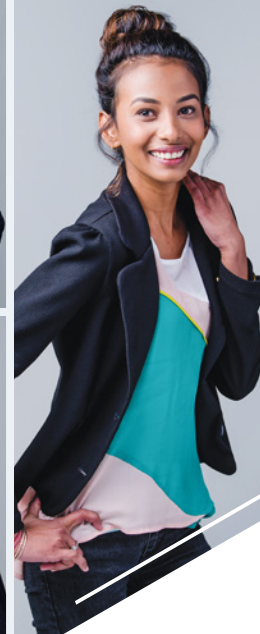
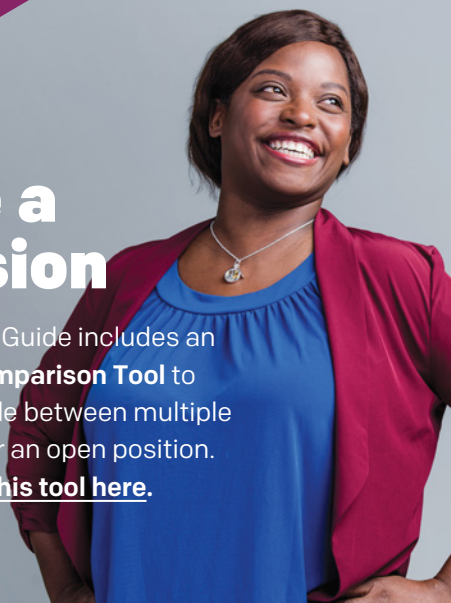
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# Make a Decision

This Interview Guide includes an **Applicant Comparison Tool** to help you decide between multiple candidates for an open position. [You can find this tool here.](#)



## Compare Applicants

After you have completed all interviews for an open position, use the Applicant Comparison Tool to summarize your interview notes, consider how well the candidates meet the Gold Standards, and decide which one will get the offer.

**Here is an example of a completed form:**

Candidate	Connect with Guests	Be Authentic	Put Guests First	Serve Delicious Food
A	<i>Seems more interested in computers than people</i>	<i>Doesn't seem open to being coached</i>	<i>Does not seem very friendly</i>	<i>Looking for any kind of job</i>
B	<i>Is a good listener</i>	<i>Is responsible, including other jobs</i>	<i>Very outgoing, including in school</i>	<i>Likes being around food</i>
C	<i>Had some good ideas about taking care of others</i>	<i>Misses a lot of work</i>	<i>Not a good candidate for cashier</i>	<i>Likes retail and restaurants</i>

**Decision: Making an offer to “B”.**

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## Tools

This Interview Guide provides printable tools you can use to conduct candidate interviews, compare candidates, and find referrals:

- ▶ **Team Member or GEL Interview Questions** ..... 9–12
- ▶ **Management Interview Questions** ..... 13–16
- ▶ **Applicant Comparison Tool** ..... 17

Please print only the following tools you need to bring to each meeting.



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## Team Member and/or Guest Experience Leader (GEL) Interview

**Interviewer notes:** Start with a little small talk to put your candidates at ease. Ask how their day is going. Thank them for coming in. Spend a few minutes telling them about your McDonald's experience and what you do today. You should also explain if the restaurant is corporate or operator owned.

**Create a feel-good moment:** At the start of the interview, consider offering the candidate a coffee. At the end of the interview, you can offer the candidate a menu item or give them a BOG card for a return visit. Remember — they're not just a candidate but also a guest.

**Get started:** Explain that you'll be asking questions that will help you learn about the candidate and you'll take notes to help you remember what was said. Add that you'll ask the same questions to everyone who is applying for the position so you can fairly compare each candidate. Let the candidate know that he or she will have a chance to ask you questions as well.

**Throughout the conversation:** Remember the attributes of your golden team members. Keep them in mind as you listen to the candidate's responses to your questions. Consider where your candidate may best fit your restaurant based on their responses. Are they a great fit for a GEL role? Would they be an awesome asset to production? Could they do both?

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Choose 1–2 questions from each of the four hospitality principles. Be consistent with your questions for each candidate.

Ask This	Examples of what to listen for	How did the candidate answer? <i>Your Notes:</i>
<b>Introduction:</b>		
<p>It's great that you've decided to apply for a job at McDonald's. Can you tell me why?</p> <p>As a follow up, what do you know about the position you're applying for?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enthusiasm in McDonald's as a brand and not just looking for "a job"</li> <li>• Looking to learn new skills or get great training</li> <li>• Understands the position responsibilities; a first time job seeker may not really know, so take this time to provide an honest overview of what the job entails</li> </ul>	
<p>Please tell me about your previous work or volunteer experiences. Start with your first significant experience and bring me up to today.</p> <p><i>(Follow up)</i> What did you enjoy most about your previous work?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Has learned from past job or school/community activities</li> <li>• Has strong /relevant experience (example: Retail experience) of what the job entails</li> </ul>	
<b>Connect With Guests:</b>		
<p>We like to make sure that every guest receives an authentic greeting to start their experience. What are two different ways you would welcome a guest?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Greeting includes smiling, saying hello or welcome</li> </ul>	
<p>Let's say you are hired here and while working, a guest is angry because the item they ordered is sold out. What do you do?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understanding their frustration</li> <li>• Helping them find another menu item</li> </ul>	



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### Be Authentic:

Tell me about a time when you served as a role model for others.

- Successful in getting others to follow his/her lead
- Set a positive example

What can a manager do to help you do a better job?

- Excitement to learn and be coached

Why would someone recommend you for this job?

- Team player
- Loves working with guests
- Friendly



### Put Guests First:

While serving a guest you notice a parent's child has spilled their lunch, creating a potential hazard. What would you do?

- Excuse yourself from the current guest to find help for the other and keep the restaurant safe

Tell me about a time when you had to help someone who was difficult or rude. How did you handle the situation?

- Does not get defensive
- Resolves the situation

You are working in the restaurant and it's very busy when a co-worker asks you to help out with a guest. What would you do?

- Awesome team members help the co-worker, demonstrating initiative



### Serve Delicious Food:

As a team member, in what part of the restaurant do you think you would most enjoy working, such as the kitchen or guest service?

- Use information for possible placement and training. They may also reveal that none of the areas sound enjoyable, which could change the outcome of the interview.

How do you deal with tasks you don't really like to do?

- Our golden team members may not like them, but do them anyway. This shows flexibility.

Why do you think it is important for a guest to get what they ordered correctly?

- It creates a great experience, more likely they will come back

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Ask This	Examples of what to listen for	How did the candidate answer? <i>Your Notes:</i>
<b>In Conclusion:</b>		
If you are hired, what do you hope to gain from this job?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Listen for an interest in growth and development, not just obtaining “a job”</li> </ul>	
That was my final question. Is there anything else you would like to tell me about yourself?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Listen for information applicable to the job. If you’d like more detail or clarification about the candidate’s answer, ask now.</li> </ul>	

## The Candidate’s Turn!

Our best ingredient is the people on our team. So we’re on the lookout for newcomers who think in sync and make it work. Ask the candidate what questions they may have about the job or McDonald’s. If they do not have any questions to ask, you may consider offering them additional information provided below. You do not need to provide them all of this information, but it may be beneficial.

Tell Them	Share Your Experience
The most important thing to know about McDonald’s as a place to work is...	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What do you as the interviewer and employee at McDonald’s believe is the most important thing a new hire should know?</li> </ul>
There are opportunities at McDonald’s to grow in your career. Some people may only work as crew, but there are others who move into management, jobs at the corporate offices and even some who go on to own a McDonald’s.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You may choose to include more about your career progression, or a leader’s within your organization</li> </ul>
People succeed at McDonald’s because they...	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What has made others on your team successful?</li> </ul>
I love working here because...	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Why do you love your job?</li> </ul>

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## Manager Candidate Interview



**Interviewer notes:** Start with a little small talk to put your candidates at ease. Ask how their day is going. Thank them for coming in. Spend a few minutes telling them about your McDonald's experience and what you do today. You should also explain if the restaurant is corporate or operator owned.

**Create a feel-good moment:** At the start of the interview, consider offering the candidate a coffee. At the end of the interview, you can offer the candidate a menu item or give them a BOG card for a return visit. Remember — they're not just a candidate but also a guest.

**Get started:** Explain that you'll be asking questions that will help you learn about the candidate and you'll take notes to help you remember what was said. Add that you'll ask the same questions to everyone who is applying for the position so you can fairly compare each candidate. Let the candidate know that he or she will have a chance to ask you questions as well.

**Throughout the conversation:** Remember the attributes of your best managers. Keep them in mind as you listen to the candidate's responses to your questions. Do they have the experience to lead people and shifts, or take on additional responsibilities?

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Choose 1–2 questions from each of the four hospitality principles. Be consistent with your questions for each candidate.

Ask This	Examples of what to listen for	How did the candidate answer? <i>Your Notes:</i>
<b>Introduction:</b>		
<p>Thank you for applying at McDonald's. Why are you interested in working here?</p> <p>As a follow up, what do you know about the job?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strong interest in leading/ developing people in a fast paced environment, including retail or quick service restaurants</li> <li>• Enthusiasm of McDonald's as a brand</li> </ul>	
<p>Please tell me about your previous work experiences. Start with your first significant experience and bring me up to today.</p> <p>What have you enjoyed most about your previous work?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Listen for relevant managerial experience not only leading others but responsibilities such as scheduling, ordering or managing a P&amp;L report</li> <li>• They should be passionate about training others or working to help a team be successful</li> </ul>	
<b>Connect With Guests:</b>		
<p>How would you train your team to get guests to come back again?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• You are looking for someone who would go above and beyond, possibly suggest a new menu item and creating feel-good moments</li> </ul>	
<p>How do you excite a team about what they are going to do? <i>(Follow up)</i> Tell me about it.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Listen for motivation methods focusing on meeting goals</li> </ul>	
<p>How would you deal with a very angry guest who was yelling at a team member?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Our best managers step in to deal directly with unhappy guests, and then take steps to make sure the problem doesn't happen again. Manager should also consider how to address the situation with the team member.</li> </ul>	



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Ask This	Examples of what to listen for	How did the candidate answer? <i>Your Notes:</i>
<b>Be Authentic:</b>		
What are your strengths for leading a group?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Coaching and developing others is at the top of the list for our most talented managers</li> </ul>	
Tell me about the most significant goal you've accomplished at work? How long did it take and how did you get the desired results?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some to show they are thinking about the future, are committed to growth, etc.</li> </ul>	
Can you tell me about someone you helped to train who was promoted or was able to take on additional responsibilities?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Successfully develop team members by encouraging them to grow their skills</li> </ul>	
Why would someone recommend you for this job?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Listen for list of accomplishments and attributes</li> </ul>	



<b>Put Guests First:</b>		
When people come to a restaurant, what do you think they want most?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Great food, served fast and with a smile</li> </ul>	
Tell me about a time when someone failed to provide you with good service and what that person did poorly.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identifies at least two ways the situation could have been handled differently</li> </ul>	
Let's say you are training a new employee who asks what the most important thing he/she has to do as an employee in your restaurant? What would you tell him/her?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Looking for an individual who understands the importance of taking good care of the guests</li> </ul>	

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Ask This	Examples of what to listen for	How did the candidate answer? <i>Your Notes:</i>
<b>Serve Delicious Food:</b>		
How do you deal with tasks you don't really like to do?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A good answer shows flexibility</li> </ul>	
Tell me about how you keep yourself organized.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Created a plan and worked to make it successful</li> </ul>	
McDonald's promise is to make delicious feel-good moments for everyone. What does this mean to you?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Taking care of the guest, creating memorable moments that will make them want to come back</li> </ul>	
<b>Closing:</b>		
That was my final question. Is there anything else you would like to tell me about yourself?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Listen for information applicable to the job. If you'd like more detail or clarification about the candidate's answer, ask now.</li> </ul>	

## The Candidate's Turn!

Our best ingredient is the people on our team. So we're on the lookout for newcomers who think in sync and make it work. Ask the candidate what questions they may have about the job or McDonald's. If they do not have any questions to ask, you may consider offering them additional information provided below. You do not need to provide them all of this information, but it may be beneficial.

Tell Them	Share Your Experience
The most important thing to know about McDonald's as a place to work is...	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What do you as the interviewer and employee at McDonald's believe is the most important thing a new hire should know?</li> </ul>
There are opportunities at McDonald's to grow in your career. Some people move into different management roles, or jobs at the corporate offices and even some who go on to own a McDonald's.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You may choose to include more about your career progression, or a leader's within your organization</li> </ul>
People succeed at McDonald's because they...	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What has made others on your team successful?</li> </ul>

Note: These best practices and suggestions are provided for your consideration. Choose the ones that work for you.

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# Applicant Comparison Tool

Use this tool to summarize your interview notes, consider how well the candidates meet our Gold Standards, and decide which one will get the offer.

Candidate Name	Connect with Guests	Be Authentic	Put Guests First	Serve Delicious Food

## Decision:

Once you've made a decision on all candidates, follow the steps as outlined in the Hiring & Onboarding guide.

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## Make the Most of this Interview Guide

Thank you for taking time to explore this guide. Each time you use it to interview and select candidates for open positions in your restaurant, you're strengthening our commitment to Being America's Best First Job.

We designed each section to help you organize, standardize and simplify the interview and hiring process.

**Section 1:** Gives you a quick refresher course on our Gold Standard Hospitality principles, to provide a framework for evaluating candidates.

**Section 2:** Coaches you to prep for the interview by looking at your best performers as role models.

**Section 3:** Contains tools to guide you through your candidate interviews.

**Section 4:** Provides you with guidelines for wrapping up each interview, whether you want to hire the candidate or not.

**Section 5:** Introduces the Applicant Comparison Tool to use after your interviews to compare and select the candidates you want.

**Section 6:** Where you'll find the tools you need for each part of the process.

**Finding the right fit makes all the difference when you have an open position to fill. Rely on the tools in this Interview Guide to help you find your next great team member.**

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