

## **Interview Etiquette**

The interview process within your house is a very important part of getting and keeping your house full and financially self-supporting. Although each house is autonomous, there are suggested interview guidelines that each house can follow. Your outreach worker can supply your house with a copy of these guidelines if you do not have one. Below are a few suggestions that can help to make the interview process a more comfortable one for the house and the applicant.

1. Have the application and a pen ready, with a quiet place for the applicant to sit and fill it out.
2. Introductions: Each individual will introduce themselves.
3. Open with a brief explanation of the Oxford House concept.
4. Show the “60 Minutes” DVD. (Have house members sit and watch with applicant. This is also a good time to pass around the application for members to review.)
5. Have the House President read the application out loud, and address any missing information.
6. Have applicant speak briefly about him/herself.
7. Conduct your Q & A time.
8. Give a brief explanation of share of expenses, move-in fees, house expectations, chores, fines, etc.
9. Ask applicant if they have any questions for the house.

Once the interview is over, you may ask the applicant to set into another room. Explain that after they leave, the house members will discuss the interview and vote. Let the applicant know that someone will call them in to say if they have been accepted or not. In the event that the applicant was not accepted and they question why, simply explain to them that they did not get an 80% vote from the House members – then refer them to another house.

### **Note to house members:**

**DO:** Listen, share briefly about yourself, put the person at ease, and ask questions if you want more information.

**DON'T:** Give advice about their recovery, discuss anything related to house business or another member's problems, or discuss sexual preference, politics or religion.

### **Suggested Interview Questions**

1. Tell us a little about yourself.
2. How did you get to this point in your recovery?
3. How do you feel about your addiction? (Probe for denial – do they accept the disease concept – anger – willingness – desire?)
4. What is your plan for recovery?
5. Do you go to AA/NA meetings? What step are you currently working on, if any?
6. Do you have a sponsor? If not, will you get one within 2 weeks?
7. Have you identified your relapse triggers? If so, what are they?
8. Can you tell us any behaviors you might exhibit that would indicate you are headed towards a relapse? If we see these behaviors in you, would you comply with a house contract to address these behaviors?
9. What is your job history? Do you have a profession, trade or skill?

10. Do you have an anger problem? If so, what provokes the anger? Ask them to name something that would make them angry. Have you ever attended anger management? (Probe for aggressive behavior, physical and domestic violence)
11. How do you feel about group living? Are you compatible with most people? Are you willing to work with others?
12. Are you involved in a relationship (significant other, children, etc.)?
13. Are you involved in any relationships that may be potentially disruptive to the house?
14. Are you on any medications? If so, what? If you are on narcotics, is your doctor aware of your addiction? (Explain the house policy on medication.)
15. Tell us about your legal problems
  - a. How many times have you been in jail
  - b. How long? What for?
  - c. Do you have any legal charges pending?
  - d. Are you currently on probation? If so, what for?
  - e. How did your addiction relate to your illegal activities?
  - f. At what age did it start? Does crime precede addiction? Frequency of institutionalization? (Probe for criminal mentality)
16. Are you a registered sex offender?
17. Can you handle being confronted in a constructive manner?
18. Can you confront others in a constructive manner?
19. Do you have any prejudice issues (racial, sexual, etc.)?
20. Would you have any problems performing chores? (Disabilities, grass cutting, etc.)
21. What do you feel you can offer this house?
22. What can Oxford House offer you?
23. Why do you want to live in an Oxford House?
24. Scenario: You and your roommate become friends. One day your roommate tells you they have had a bad day (got fired from their job, lost their girlfriend/boyfriend, death in the family, etc.). They need to unwind a little and they just took one hit or drink, but they are so sorry and promise to never do it again. They really want to continue to live in Oxford House, and know they will be evicted if anyone finds out, so they ask you to please keep this a secret. How would you handle this situation?
25. Explain the house guidelines. Go over probationary period, meeting attendance requirements, and house meetings dates and times. Make sure they understand that house meeting attendance is mandatory.
26. Explain Chapter and Housing Service Committee meetings, dates and times, and rotation. Make them aware of your houses attendance expectations.
27. Explain officer positions and the houses expectation to fulfill them. (It's a good idea to let them know there are "outside" duties as well.) Ask them if they have any disabilities that would prevent them from fulfilling a position (unable to read, do math, etc.).
28. Explain the move-in cost (non-refundable move in fee/alumni gift and advance rent). Explain the weekly rent amount, date and time the rent is due, and expectation to be current on rent at all times.
29. If accepted, when could they pay rent and move in?
30. Explain the voting procedures of accepting a new member (80%) and that the house will call them as soon as possible (no longer than 24 hours) to let them know if they are accepted or not and the terms of their probation contract if they are accepted.