## Great Customer Service: Hiring Interview Guide Based On Candidate’s Past Experience

For Position:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Candidate’s name\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Telephone number\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Interviewed by \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Date\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

| **Focus** | **Questions about a real past situation** | **Competencies or Indicator** |
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| **Rapport** | Observe the behavior of the candidate before and during the interview | * Do they make friendly, appropriate eye contact? * Do they show appropriate enthusiasm, neither too much nor too little? * Do they smile often? * Do they use positive, upbeat language? |
| **Accomplishment** | Tell me in detail about a significant accomplishment on the job. | Competencies revealed |
| **Key Competency:**  **Handling complaints** | Tell me about a time when a customer was very upset and complained to you … | **Indicators**   * Thanked customer for speaking up * Encouraged customer to talk * Listened non-defensively * Apologized whether or not person was involved * Expressed empathy * Clarified what customer wanted * Offered options * Agreed on plan of action * Followed through |
| **Key Competency:**  **Building rapport with customers** | Pretend that you need to build rapport with a patient and family  very quickly and effectively…. What do you say and do? | **Indicators**   * Smiles, makes eye contact, introduces self, calls customer by name * Says welcoming words, like “I’m glad to see you” or “Welcome, I was expecting you!” * Asks open-ended question to get customer talking * Offers help or states intention to help * Nods and/or shows other nonverbal signs of actively listening |
| **Key Competency:**  **Explaining delays** | Tell me about a time when you explained a delay to a customer… | **Indicators**   * Approached customer to explain before customer had to speak up * Apologized in sincere way * Expressed words of empathy for customer’s frustration * Gave clear explanation of cause of delay without reflecting negatively on colleagues or the practice * Gave customer time estimate * Promised to check back * Assured they won’t be forgotten |
| **Key Competency:**  **Judgment** | Tell me about a time when you had to make a hard decision without having a chance to talk with your supervisor… | **Indicators**   * Considers alternatives * Exercises independent judgment * Is decisive in a timely fashion |
| **Strengths**  **One strength related to a key competency** | What do you consider to be your strengths for this job?  Tell me about a situation in which you demonstrated that strength. | **Indicators**  Strengths mentioned |

Source: *Physician Entrepreneurs:* *The Quality Patient Experience* by Wendy Leebov, 2008 **©**.