



# Building Bridges

A publication by Pepperdine University's Graduate School of Education and Psychology  
Career Services Department

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"Appreciate everything your associates do for the business. Nothing else can quite substitute for a few well-chosen, well-timed, sincere words of praise. They're absolutely free and worth a fortune."

-Sam Walton



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## Welcome to Career Services!

At Pepperdine University, Graduate School of Education and Psychology, our Career Services department is dedicated to building relationships with employers while better understanding your recruiting and hiring needs. We work to establish partnerships with organizations that value the unique contributions our students can provide. It is our hope that we can work with your organization in matching Pepperdine's highly qualified graduates with your exciting career opportunities.

## PepPro: The ultimate resource for job postings

By: Sadaf Mayet

Pepperdine University, Graduate School of Education & Psychology, is committed to helping you with your organization's hiring needs.

PepPro is our FREE job posting website. It is an excellent resource to help you connect with our outstanding students, upcoming graduates, and alumni who are dedicated to pursuing careers in the fields of education and psychology.

PepPro provides you with the ability to post job openings, internships and/or volunteer opportunities and receive resumes from qualified Pepperdine students and alumni.

You may also utilize PepPro to keep up to date with and register for campus-wide events such as:

- career fairs
- workshops
- organizational panels
- networking opportunities and much more.

To access PepPro, visit: <https://gsep-pepperdine-csm.symplicity.com/employers/>

After registering for an account, please be sure to fill in your profile. Next, click on the "Jobs" tab to post all of your employment opportunities.

If you are having trouble logging on to the site, please contact us via email at: [gsep.careerservices@pepperdine.edu](mailto:gsep.careerservices@pepperdine.edu), or via phone at: 310-568-5666.

We look forward to working with you!



## Interviewing: Illegal and Inappropriate Interview Questions

By: Prachi Sharma

“Federal and state laws prohibit prospective employers from asking certain questions”

Federal and state laws prohibit prospective employers from asking certain questions that are not related to the job they are hiring for. Questions should be job-related and not used to find out personal information.

Below is a list of illegal questions and some possible legal alternatives for employers.

### National Origin

**What you can't ask:** Are you a U.S. citizen?

Although this seems like the simplest and most direct way to find out if an interviewee is legally able to work for your company, it's hands-off. Rather than inquiring about citizenship, question whether or not the candidate is authorized for work.

**What to ask instead:** Are you authorized to work in the U.S.?

**What you can't ask:** What is your native tongue?

Finding out about a candidate's native language may seem like a good way to find out about their fluency, but you may offend applicants that are sensitive to common assumptions about their language. Additionally, as an employer, it's not your concern how the applicant attained fluency in a language, just that they are fluent.

**What to ask instead:** What languages do you read, speak or write fluently?

### Age

**What you can't ask:** How old are you?

While it seems like a simple question, it's, in fact, quite loaded. Knowledge of an applicant's age can set you up for discrimination troubles down the road. To be safe, just

ensure that the candidate is legally old enough to work for your organization.

**What to ask instead:** Are you over the age of 18?



### Marital/Family Status

**What you can't ask:** What's your marital status? Do you have children?

Clearly, the concern here is that family obligations will get in the way of work hours. Instead of asking about or making assumptions on family situations, get to the root of the issue by asking directly about the candidate's availability.

**What to ask instead:** Would you be willing to relocate if necessary? Would you be able and willing to travel as needed for the job? Or would you be willing to work overtime as necessary?

### Disabilities

**What you can't ask:** Do you have any disabilities? Disabilities, whether they're physical or mental, may affect a candidate's ability to do the job, but it's critical that you avoid asking about them. Rather, find out if the applicant can handle the job requirements.

**What to ask instead:** Are you able to perform the specific duties of this position?

### Arrest Record

**What you can't ask:** Have you ever been arrested?

In sensitive positions, such as those that deal with children, you may want to find out about your candidate's legal fortitude. But ensure that you ask directly about crimes that relate to your concern.

**What to ask instead:** Have you ever been convicted of a felony?

### Military

**What you can't ask:** Were you honorably discharged from the military?

A bad military record can be illuminating, but you can't ask about it. Instead, ask about the candidate's experience, and they may volunteer this information on their own.

**What to ask instead:** Tell me how your experience in the military can benefit the company.

### Personal Information

**What you can't ask:** How tall are you? How much do you weigh? In a labor environment, height and weight may be essential to the job, but these questions are too personal. It's best just to ask directly about the candidate's ability to do what's required of them.

**What to ask instead:** Are you able to reach items on a shelf that's five feet tall? Are you able to lift boxes weighing up to 50 pounds?

Please don't hesitate to consult with GSEP Career Services regarding interview questions previously discussed, or others that may be of concern.

# A Conversation with Dr. J.L. Fortson, Ed. D. Lecturer of Education

By: Jaclynn Robinson, M.A.

Dr. Fortson teaches at Pepperdine University and specializes in the creation of innovative educational programs to meet the needs of all students and the institutions that employ them. Here, she explains why her students are a great fit for any school.

### Where did you receive your degrees and in what field?

I have an A.A. from Miami-Dade Junior College in Liberal Arts; a B.A. from the University of West Florida; a M.Ed. from Loyola Marymount; and an Ed.D. from the University of San Francisco.

### Which GSEP programs do you teach for?

M.A. in Education with Teaching Credential and Ed.D. in Organizational Leadership.

### What makes your students/alumni highly qualified job candidates?

They are more than just highly qualified.

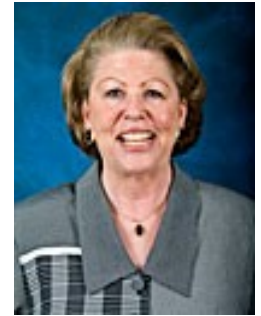
### Where have your students been placed after graduation?

They have obtained employment all over (not just Southern California but in many other states).\*

### Why should employers hire GSEP students/alumni?

Because they are the BEST prepared professional educators anywhere (and they come with a guarantee; if the Principal is not satisfied or finds an area where the educator might be lacking, I will personally work with the educator until I am satisfied that they are meeting expectations of the administration).

*Dr. Fortson serves on the Committee on Accreditation's Board of Institutional Reviewers for the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing. She is also recognized at the state and national levels as an expert in the field of professional educator preparation.*



*Dr. J.L. Fortson, Lecturer of Education at Pepperdine University's Graduate School of Education and Psychology*

\*various school districts, medical centers, non-profit agencies, etc.

## Networking: Valuable at Every Stage of Your Career

By: Kirsten L. Cunningham, Assistant Director of Career Services

Networking is the often misunderstood art of relationship building. Many people think of networking only when they are searching for a job. In reality, networking should be incorporated into your life so that it becomes second nature. This way you can develop mutually beneficial relationships to help you throughout the span of your career. We all know that we should spend time networking, but many of us are uncomfortable doing so.

### Elevator Speech

By developing a well-thought out and rehearsed elevator speech, you'll be more comfortable networking at those big conferences and events, as well as in your day to day life. The premise behind an elevator speech is that you need to be able to effectively tell your story in the time it takes to travel several floors in an elevator.

Using this four-step formula to develop a strong elevator speech will help you to feel more confident as a networker.

### Step 1 – Who are you?

The key is to pique the listener's interest.

Example:

"I'm (name) and I'm the Principal at Bridges Charter School."

### Step 2 – What can you offer? What have you accomplished?

Focus on selling points that will appeal to the listener. For instance, briefly explain your background and the skills you possess.

Example:

"I have experience in teaching and administration at both the elementary and middle school level and my area of expertise is staff development."

### Step 3 – What do you want?

This is the most important part of the elevator speech. Clearly state your purpose so that the listener can quickly discern what they can do to help you.

Example:

"I'm looking forward to meeting people in the charter school systems so that I can develop a network to share charter school best practices."

### Step 4 – Bounce back question

At the end of your elevator speech ask an open-ended question that will prompt the listener to give their own elevator speech so that you can gather information and begin to develop a relationship.

Example:

"What is your area of specialty?"  
"Which school or district are you with?"

With a solid elevator speech, you'll be comfortable and confident in developing business relationships at every stage of your career.



## Building Bridges

Pepperdine University Graduate School  
of Education and Psychology

### Career Services

Comments, questions, or  
concerns?

We'd love to hear from you!

#### General Information

Phone: (310) 568-5666

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### Have positions to fill?

Pepperdine University Graduate School of Education and Psychology, Career Services Department can help!

Our students come from a variety of master's and doctoral programs in areas such as:

#### Master of Arts in Education & EdD

- Education with Teaching Credential
- Administration
- Learning Technologies
- Organizational Leadership

#### Master of Arts in Psychology & PsyD

- Marriage and Family Therapy
- Psychology
- Clinical Psychology

## Upcoming Events

#### Spring 2010

GSEP's annual Career Fair will take place in the spring at both our West LA and Irvine campuses. It is a great way to meet with our highly qualified students in order to discuss any job opportunities, internships, or volunteer work that your organization has available. Plan to attend and stay on the lookout for upcoming information. This is an event you won't want to miss!

