

SUGGESTED OXFORD HOUSE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Open by explaining the Oxford Concept briefly and showing the CBS "60 Minutes" video. Tell the applicant that being honest is the most important part of the interview, and that no particular answer will necessarily result in non-acceptance.

NOTE TO INTERVIEWERS

DO LISTEN!
SHARE briefly your sameness.
Put the person at ease.
Keep personal opinions to yourself.
Ask questions if you want more information.

DON'T Give advice about their recovery (you're not a counselor).
Discuss anything relating to house business or another member's problems.
Discuss sexual preference, politics, or religion.

IF THERE ARE ANY "GUT FEELINGS" THAT SOMETHING ELSE NEEDS TO BE ADDRESSED, NOW IS THE BEST TIME TO DO IT!!

1. Tell us a little about yourself (background) and how you got to this point in your recovery.
2. Why do you want to live in an OH? What do you feel OH can offer you? What do you feel you can offer OH?
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? Can you provide us a written copy?
5. What are your views on sponsorship? Do you go to AA / NA / CA?
6. Are you willing to participate with OH chapter (chapter meeting, functions)? Willing to attend 3 chapter meetings? Serve as a house officer?
7. Have you ever relapsed? Have you identified your relapse triggers? What are they? What's different this time?
8. Explain the move-in fee and equal share of expenses (rent). Then, do you think you can handle your financial obligations to the house? How?

9. Show rules. Will you have a problem complying with any of the rules, including the weekly chore and business meeting (mandatory)? Explain weekly, special and emergency meetings. Explain House Officer positions.
10. Can you tell us behaviors that may indicate that you may be headed toward a relapse? If we see these behaviors in you, would you comply with a House vote for special requirements (meeting attendance, contract)?
11. What is your job history? Do you have a profession, trade, or skill? If so, what? Do you have a reentry plan to the job market?
12. What's your anticipated length of stay, and what do you hope to accomplish?
13. Do you have an anger problem? What provokes the anger? (Probe for aggressive behavior, physical and domestic violence, and isolation). Have you ever attended anger management?
14. Are you involved in a relationship (significant other, children, etc.)? Are you involved in any relationships that may be potentially disruptive to the house?
15. Do you have any medical problems, including mental disorders the House should be aware of? Are you on medication? Any narcotics? Does your doctor know about your addiction? Are you / will you be responsible with your meds and keep them safely stored? Note that pills are subject to a pill count.
16. Do you have any legal issues pending (court dates, probation, etc.)? Are you a convicted sex offender?
17. Can you handle being confronted? Can you confront others in a constructive manner?
18. Do you have any prejudice issues (racial, sexual preference, etc.)?
19. If accepted, when do you anticipate moving in? Explain the move-in fee, and that payment is due upon move-in.
20. Explain the voting procedure of the house and the 80% necessary to be accepted. Tell them when they can expect an answer.
21. Read aloud the disclaimer after line 20 on the application and ask if they understand it.
22. Ask if they have any questions for the group.
23. Scenario: you and your roommate become buddies. One day they tell you they have had a real down time (lost job, breakup, death in the family, etc.), couldn't deal with it all and took just one toke or just a couple of drinks but, of course, will never do it again. They don't want to get kicked out and ask you to keep the secret. How would you handle this?

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS FROM OXFORD HOUSES

Q. When an emergency meeting is held to vote on expulsion of a member for using or disruptive behavior, does the member in question have a right to attend the meeting and vote?

A. *Yes, in a democratically run Oxford House, every member has the right to vote, even if they are suspected of breaking house rules. Emergency meetings should not be held without the member in question being present (unless, of course, this member cannot be found).*

Q. Does Oxford House, Inc.'s status of being a "tax exempt" non-profit mean that individual Oxford Houses don't have to pay state sales tax on house purchases?

A. *No, all state taxes have to be paid on house purchases. "Tax-exempt" in the case of Oxford House means that Oxford House, Inc. does not have to pay federal taxes on income they receive to start Oxford Houses and that contributions to Oxford Houses or Oxford House, Inc. are considered tax deductible by the IRS.*

Q. When a member is expelled from the house and owes money on the phone bill, fines, etc., can the house keep that member's unused rent paid to the house in advance and the Security Deposit (move-in fee) to cover unpaid bills?

A. *No, by law, unused rent must be returned to the expelled member. It is up to a house vote as to whether or not to return the Security Deposit (move-in fee) based upon the application the resident signed upon entering the house.*

Q. Can the house keep an expelled member's belongings in return for unpaid rent or other expenses?

A. *No, houses cannot legally keep belongings in lieu of unpaid bills. The goods should be kept in a safe place and if not picked up within a reasonable amount of time, a certified letter should be sent to the individual or his/her family giving them a time (at least two weeks) when the goods will be sold or given away if not picked up. The certified letter will protect houses if an expelled member decides to sue for the belongings.*

Q. What if a zoning inspector from the city shows up at our door? Do we let him/her in?

A. *Politely ask the inspector to call Oxford House, Inc. at 301-587-2916 before they do an inspection of the house.*

Q. What if our house receives a document stating that our house is being sold or foreclosed?

A. *Call Oxford House, Inc. toll-free at 800-689-6411 and the office will advise you on how to proceed.*

Q. If our house is moving to another location or shutting down, can we use the security deposit as the last month's rent?

A. *No, the landlord's security deposit is meant to cover damages to the house only – it is never to be considered as rental payment unless the landlord agrees to this arrangement – in writing – after the walk-through inspection is completed.*

Q. Can residents have locks on their bedroom doors?

A. *No. Boarding houses have locks on doors because people rent rooms and do not participate in the managing of the house directly. Oxford Houses are run by the residents and behave like families and residents share the entire house with mutual respect. Locks that are part of the doorknob for privacy in bathrooms are acceptable.*

Q. Can an Oxford House resident take prescribed narcotics while living in the house?

A. *There may be occasions when an individual has serious surgery that requires pain medication. There are non-narcotic pain medicines. If the resident must have a narcotic medication, the group conscience should consider if this might trigger or have a negative affect on any member. It is suggested that the person having to take the medication have a letter from his/her doctor acknowledging that they are aware of the individual's addiction and that in their professional opinion, there is no other alternative or suitable medication. Certain safety measures should be taken such as two keyed locks. The key holders would be the individual taking the medication and another safe household member. The medicine must be dispensed as prescribed; no prescription medication should ever be shared or sold to another member.*

Q. How much time must elapse before a relapser can return to a house?

A. *The House Manual suggests that members should not be readmitted until there is a clear demonstration that he/she has returned to solid sobriety. Each house develops its own rules of what constitutes "solid sobriety". Some accept successful completion of a rehabilitation program; others require at least a month of no drinking or drugging and regular attendance at 12 step meetings as requirements for reacceptance into a house.*

Q. Can a resident be put on contract?

A. Yes. *This is done by House group conscience, but should only be used as a last resort to help a person to change negative behaviors. The house must vote, including the person in question, and the terms should be specifically documented in the minutes and with the person in question. Contracts are strictly a matter between a house and its members. Oxford House, Inc. does not have a position on contracts. **Tough Love Works!***

Q. Does the House President have a vote?

A. Yes. *The President pays an equal share of rent and has an equal vote like all other residents.*

Other Questions??

Call Oxford House, Inc. at 800-689-6411 or write:

Oxford House, Inc.

1010 Wayne Avenue, Suite 400

Silver Spring, Maryland 20910