



# Sample Board Questions

## **THE BOARD INTERVIEW – TIPS, IDEAS and SAMPLE QUESTIONS**

**Being invited to the interview is a very good sign.** In most cases, it means that your finances and references generally check out favorably. The interview is the board's opportunity to meet you and ask specific questions about your application. Most boards are looking to make sure that you are cordial and will be good cooperative neighbors.

**Prepare for a lack of privacy.** The board has great latitude in the kinds of questions it can ask, be prepared for this and *do not avoid answers to personal questions, or be angered by this intrusion.* If you don't know an answer or it is a question that you are not sure of, let them know that you are not sure and you will get back to them.

**Be aware that the board has not been privy to your process,** so please do not bring to the interview any aggravation you have encountered up to this point. They will not react well to complaints about the process or their managing agency.

**The style of the interview can range** from an informal gathering of board members in an apartment to a formal interview with board members lined up at a table with you in the hot seat. A short interview is better than a long one. While there are no hard and fast rules, a short cordial interview with a few board questions and remarks is often the best co-op board interview. **Do not expect an answer at the end of the meeting.** Most boards do not give their decision until a day or two after the meeting.

**Be aware of the trouble maker interviewers who will try to make you angry or defensive.** They may ask provocative or "trick" impertinent questions to see how you react. *Prepare for that and be calm.* They are not looking to put prospective shareholders on the defensive – but are simply looking for information to understand if you will be responsible, neighborly and co-operative.

**If the board asks the same questions that you already answered in the package** or sent as a supplement when the managing agent asked, just take a deep breath and repeat your answers. The board member most likely didn't understand it, didn't read it, or has no idea that the managing agent has already asked you this once before. (Or maybe they do know and want to be sure your answers are consistent.) –

**Consider this a business interview** and dress conservatively. We recommend you let the board members lead the conversation. Be aware that the board may not know your situation or be familiar with your line of work. Keep your answers short, and simple. Shake hands firmly, relax and be yourself - Hopefully you will be comfortable enough to look members of the committee in the eyes and *smile* whenever appropriate.

**Couples should decide in advance who will answer what types of questions.** For example, you may agree to answer all financial questions and your spouse will answer all other questions. Do not discuss answers to questions with your spouse in front of the board. Only answer questions asked and let the board run the show. **Boards rarely turn down applicants for being too boring.**

**Never volunteer information or engage in unsolicited conversations** except for basic cordial remarks and greetings. **Never talk much about the building except to compliment it.** Any questions about an aspect of the building -say the lobby or anything else – should not be brought up as **all your building questions should be answered prior to the interview.**

The following questions are a combination of POTENTIAL questions and others that are simple, sometimes inane questions that will give you an idea of what a Board or interview committee member may ask in a Board interview.

#### **FINANCES - GENERAL QUESTIONS**

1. How much did you make last year? How much did you make the year before?
2. How much will you be making this year? How much will you make next year?
3. How long have you been employed in your profession?
4. Exactly how much of what you made last year was salary/bonus? Currently, how much is your salary/anticipated year-end bonus?
5. How stable is your position? Profession?
6. If there is a large assessment, would you be willing and able to pay your share?

#### **WORK - GENERAL**

1. Do you entertain a lot at home?
2. What do you see as the market and future growth of your profession?
3. Tell us about your business and its history.
4. What are your prospects for the future?

#### **FINANCES/WORK - SPECIFIC QUESTIONS/CONCERNS**

1. What is your main source of income?
2. Tell us about your projected income.
3. If it is a no pied-a-terre building, please make the board feel comfortable that you will be using the apartment as your primary residence, should they inquire.

## **PERSONAL**

1. Do you entertain frequently?
2. What kind of parties do you give?
3. We like people to contribute to the building. Are you willing to do that?
4. Do you have a dog or cat? If not, are you planning to have a dog or cat in the apartment?
5. Where are you from? etc. (Typical conversational questions)
6. Why did you choose this apartment? This building?
7. Do you play a musical instrument?

## **RE: ALTERATIONS TO THE APARTMENT**

1. Are you planning to do work in the apartment? What kind?
2. Do you realize that you need to use licensed, insured contractors to do the work? Do you know what the process is for doing renovations?
3. You know you have to have board approval? Do you know the entire process (i.e. submitting architect's/engineer's drawings, etc.)?

## **MISCELLANEOUS**

1. Will you be able to help in Co-op matters? (The answer should be yes, if I can time permitting - after all, this is a major investment).
2. Do you know that the 60-80% of the floors should be covered (this is a standard House Rules provision)

I would recommend not asking any questions to the Board at the interview. (Any questions should be addressed to the managing agent in advance or after the meeting). You may want to express your positive feelings about the building/apartment. Don't get into any discussions on a building issue, etc. (however benign they may seem) – it rarely leads to a positive end.