

SEARCH COMMITTEE HANDBOOK

**OFFICE OF HUMAN RESOURCES
MARIETTA COLLEGE**



This handbook contains guidance and resources to enable staff and faculty who are involved with the hiring process to be more efficient and effective. It is designed to provide assistance to the hiring official, the search committee chairperson, and the members of the search committee.

Questions, comments, or suggestions about the HANDBOOK can be addressed to the Office of Human Resources

CHARGE TO THE SEARCH COMMITTEE CHECKLIST

In most cases, the hiring official develops a charge to the search committee that includes the following:

- Official or working title of position.
- Position (job) description and a copy of the advertisement or position announcement.
- Essential and preferred criteria for selection, criteria that are important to the department and the College, and the hiring official's view of the position's scope and short and long-term challenges and opportunities.
- Time frame for completing the search.
- Procedure for review of applications that are received after the initial review has been completed.
- Duties of the search committee chair and individual committee members.
- Hiring authority's involvement in the search process.
- Preferred number of candidates to visit the campus and a general idea of the conduct of the campus visit and the individuals/groups with whom the candidates will meet.
- Format in which the committee's final recommendations are to be brought forward -
- ranked candidates, unranked candidates, written narrative.
- Where and how the committee will receive administrative and logistical support.

TIPS ON FORMING A SEARCH COMMITTEE

- Committee chairpersons should hold positions at the same level as or a higher level than the vacant position. Exceptions are often made for faculty, who may be asked to chair faculty search committees, regardless of their rank or tenure status.
- The size of the committee should reflect the extent to which the position is involved in the campus overall. Search committees for positions that have broad campus responsibilities might call for large committees, although there is no requirement for the size of any committee. Remember, it can be very difficult to schedule meetings and interviews with large committees.
- Committees should have an odd number of members. This can help eliminate the potential for a tie when it comes to final ranking of candidates.
- Attempt to form a committee that is diverse in terms of gender and race.
- Attempt to appoint as a committee member an individual who has performed or held the vacant position or a similar position.
- Attempt to appoint as a committee member an individual who has supervised the vacant position or a similar position.
- Appoint ex-officio members from HR.
- Determine whether each potential appointee has sufficient time to devote to search committee duties.
- Ensure that the committee possesses technical expertise sufficient to make astute comparisons amongst applicants.
- Ensure that the committee represents a variety of perspectives on the role and function of the vacant position.
- Where appropriate, appoint stakeholders -- for example, a student representative on a search committee for a College Activities position, faculty on a search committee for a librarian, or a member of the President's Cabinet in a search for a vice president.

SAMPLE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Work experience in general:

- Please describe your present responsibilities and duties.
- How do you spend an average day?
- How would you characterize your level of computer literacy? What are some of the programs and applications with which you are familiar?
- Describe the most complex problem you had to solve in your current/last position?
- Discuss some of the problems you have encountered in past positions.
- What do you consider to be your most important accomplishments in the last three positions you have held?
- What would you want from your next job that you are not getting now?
- Describe your involvement with committees, your role on the committees, and what you learned from each experience.
- In previous positions, how much of your work was accomplished alone and how much as part of a team effort?
- What was the most radical idea you ever introduced to an employer, and what was the result?
- What kind of policies and procedures, if any, have you created and to whom did you take them for approval? What was the outcome?
- Describe the most difficult interpersonal challenge you have been faced with and what you did about it.
- Have you had public speaking experience? If so, who was the audience, and what was the purpose?
- Give an example of a potentially volatile situation or individual that you successfully calmed down and how you went about it.
- Describe the best boss and the worst boss you have ever had.
- Describe your ideal job.
- Describe a time when you went "beyond the call of duty" to accomplish a task.
- Describe the most difficult person you have ever worked with and how you handled him/her.
- What is the biggest conflict you have ever been involved in at work? How did you handle that situation?
- What new programs or services have you started?
- How would you describe "on-the-job stress" and how do you handle it?
- Tell us how you would learn your new job in the absence of a formal training program.
- Think about a co-worker from the present or past whom you admire. Why?
- Can you share with us your ideas about professional development?
- Describe some basic steps that you would take in implementing a new program.
- What are one or two of your proudest professional accomplishments?
- How do you feel about diversity in the workplace? Give us some examples of your efforts to promote diversity.
- Tell us how you go about organizing your work. Also, describe any experience you have had with computers or other tools as they relate to organization.
- Describe your volunteer experience in community-based organizations.
- What professional associations do you belong to and what is your level of involvement?

- Tell us about your preferred work environment.
- What experiences or skills help you manage projects?
- Tell us how you would use technology in your day-to-day job.
- In what professional development activities have you been involved over the past few years?
- What things have you done on your own initiative to help you prepare for your next job?
- Do you have any additional information that you would like to share?
- Do you have any questions for us?

Supervision:

- What are the characteristics that you prize most in an employee? What behaviors or characteristics do you find intolerable?
- Give an example of a time when you were disappointed by an employee's lack of accomplishment and what you did about it.
- In your experience, what motivates employees?
- Describe how you would handle a conflict between two or more of your staff members.
- What can a supervisor do to create a positive working environment?
- What methods of communicating with your staff have you found most successful?
- What recognition and reward systems have you found to be most effective?
- In your opinion, what is the role of a supervisor?
- In your opinion, what are the major responsibilities of a supervisor?
- What is an effective training and orientation program for a new employee?

GOOD INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR FACULTY CANDIDATES

This is a sampling of generic questions to assist search committees in developing interview questions that may be asked of candidates for faculty positions.

- Describe your teaching style.
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- Describe your teaching philosophy.
- What technology applications have you utilized in the classroom?
- How do you engage students, particularly in a course for non-majors?
- Share your ideas about professional development.
- In your opinion, how should the workload of a faculty be split and into what areas?
- What changes have you brought to the teaching of (particular discipline)?
- How would you go about being an advocate and resource for the use of technology in the teaching and learning process?
- What courses have you created or proposed in the past five years?
- What do you think are the most important attributes of a good instructor?
- Where does this position fit into your career development goals?
- How do you define good teaching?
- What do you think are your greatest strengths as an instructor?
- In which areas do you feel you can use some further development?
- How do you feel your teaching style can serve the student population of Marietta?
- In what professional development activities have you participated over the past few years?
- What pedagogical changes do you see on the horizon in (particular discipline)?
- How would your background and experiences strengthen this academic department?
- How do you adjust your style to the less-motivated and under-prepared student?
- How have you involved your students in your research?
- What are your current research interests?
- What are the most recent books and articles that you have read?

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS TO AVOID

Questions relating to an applicant's race, color, religion, age, gender, national origin, or disability **CANNOT** be asked during an interview because they are illegal. Questions to avoid include:

- Are you a U.S. citizen?
- Where were you born?
- What is your birth date?
- Do you have a disability?
- Are you married?
- What is your spouse's name?
- Do you have any children?
- Do you have childcare arrangements?
- What church do you attend?

The following questions should be asked **only when there is a bona fide, job-specific reason** to ask them. If asked of one candidate, they should be asked of all candidates for the same position:

- Do you have any responsibilities that would conflict with the job's attendance or travel requirements?
- Are you able to work in the United States on an unrestricted basis?
- Are you able to perform the duties on the job description with or without reasonable accommodations?
- Do you have any conflicts that would prevent you from working the schedule discussed?
- What languages do you speak or write fluently?
- Have you worked under any other professional name or nickname?
- Do you have any relatives currently working for the College?
- Would you have any problem working overtime if required?

The basic rule of thumb is to ask questions that pertain to the particular position and the experiences/education of the candidate. Do not try to gather "personal" information about a candidate. If candidates disclose unsolicited personal information do not question them about it unless there is a job-related reason to do so.

CONDUCTING AN INTERVIEW

Interview Preparation:

- Schedule a conference room where there will be no distractions.
- Review the job description.
- Draft and agree upon specific questions to be asked of all candidates. Questions should be open-ended, informational, situational, and behavioral (see Samples that follow).
- Review the candidate's resume/application.
- Agree on the format for the interview.
- Ensure that you know and can identify the indicators of the candidate's ability to perform the job.

Interview-in-Process:

- Introduce committee members.
- Describe the format of the interview.
- Let the applicant do most of the talking.
- Keep the interview on track.
- Observe nonverbal behavior.
- Take notes.
- Leave time for the candidate to ask questions.
- If the candidate seems to be a possible finalist and if references have not been checked, ask if you can check the references provided by the candidate as well as references not listed on the resume.
- Describe the remainder of the search process and the approximate time frame. **DO NOT MAKE PROMISES YOU CANNOT KEEP AND KEEP PROMISES YOU MAKE.** If you tell a candidate that you will get back to him/her by a specific date, be sure to follow through. If the time frame changes, be sure to notify the candidates.
- Thank the candidate for his/her time.

Post-interview:

- Evaluate the candidate with agreed upon evaluation format (see Samples that follow).

TIPS ON TELEPHONE INTERVIEWS

Telephone interviews can be conducted as the first step in the search process, especially when there is a "long list" of potential interviewees. Certain rules of uniformity should be followed when conducting telephone interviews: the same questions should be asked of all candidates, the same information about the process should be given to the candidates, and the same members of the search committee should participate in all telephone interviews. Telephone interviews with the search committee should be planned in advance -- the candidates should be given a brief description of the process so that they can be prepared. The interview should be conducted in a room large enough for all committee members to sit comfortably and within hearing and speaking range of the telephone. There should be no distractions -- cell phones and pagers should be turned off, the door should be closed, telephone extensions should be forwarded to other lines -- and committee members should be seated and ready before the interview begins. A "dry run" to insure proper logistics can be helpful.

PLANNING AND ARRANGING THE TELEPHONE INTERVIEW

- Schedule a call of no more than 30 minutes with interviewee and committee.
- Review interviewee's application materials.
- Prepare questions. Determine the order in which interviewers will introduce themselves.
- Determine the order in which interviewers will ask questions.
- Test the speakerphone.
- Make sure there are no scheduling conflicts with the interviewing room.
- Agree on an evaluation tool (see Samples that follow).

SAMPLE INTERVIEW EVALUATION BASED ON GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

Candidate's Name _____

Date of Interview _____

Position Interviewed For _____

1. Candidate's strengths:

2. Candidate's weaknesses:

3. Describe your level of satisfaction with the candidate's responses to questions asked?
Which questions, if any, were left unanswered?

4. Does this candidate appear to be able to perform the job?

5. What reservations, if any, do you have about this candidate's ability to succeed at Marietta?

6. Other comments.

7. Where do you rank this candidate in relation to the other candidates who have been interviewed?

Name of Individual Completing Form _____

SAMPLE INTERVIEW EVALUATION FOR FACULTY CANDIDATES

Candidate's Name _____

Date _____

Position Interviewed For _____

- MASTERY OF A BODY OF KNOWLEDGE

In your opinion, did the candidate have sufficient mastery of a body of knowledge in (*specific discipline*)?

Was the candidate's area of professional emphasis evident and was his/her level of knowledge in this area sufficient to be considered expert?

- TEACHING ABILITY

Was the candidate's teaching philosophy consistent with the needs and expectations of Marietta faculty and students?

How would you evaluate the candidate's presentation?

- SCHOLARSHIP

Did the candidate have a well thought out and planned research agenda?

Has the candidate been published and presented papers? How often and where?

- SERVICE RELATED TO THE PROFESSION

What committees has the candidate worked on?

What professional associations does the candidate participate in?

Overall Evaluation

Excellent Candidate _____

Good Candidate _____

Unacceptable Candidate _____

Name of Individual Completing this Form _____

PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES FOR EVALUATING A CANDIDATE'S POTENTIAL "FIT" TO THE DEPARTMENT AND COLLEGE

The following list includes examples of attributes that might be sought by a department and the College. Search committees can use this as a guide in developing a list for the particular search they are involved in.

Attributes Sought by a Department

- Teamwork oriented
- Flexible in terms of job responsibilities and their evolution.
- Customer service oriented
- Possesses leadership experience
- Possesses sense of humor
- Supports flexible scheduling
- Supports professional development
- Understands diverse learning styles
- Has published, given presentations, done research, received grants
- Has interdisciplinary emphasis

Attributes Sought by the College

- Supports diversity
- Welcomes innovation, creativity, new perspectives
- Supports community service
- Understands and is open to making accommodations for people with disabilities
- Is technologically savvy

QUESTIONS FOR EVALUATING CLASSROOM PRESENTATIONS

- Was the candidate's bearing professional?
- Was the candidate well prepared?
- Was the learning objective clear?
- Did the candidate attempt to establish rapport with the class?
- Did he/she demonstrate mastery of his/her subject?
- Did he/she present the subject matter in an effective manner --clarity, well paced?
- Were learning aids used? If so, how effective were they?
- How did he/she handle questions from the class?
- Did the candidate engage the class and hold its attention?
- Did the presentation start and end on time?
- Did you learn something worthwhile from the presentation?

Appendix A

Understanding Illegal vs. Legal Interview Questions

| INQUIRY AREA | ILLEGAL QUESTIONS | LEGAL QUESTIONS |
|---------------------------------|--|---|
| National Origin/ Citizenship | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are you a US citizen? • Where were you/your parents born? • What is your "native tongue"? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are you authorized to work in the United States? • What language do you read/speak/write fluently? (This question is okay only if this ability is relevant to the performance of the job) |
| Age | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How old are you? • When did you graduate? • What's your birth date? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are you over the age of 18? |
| Marital/ Family Status | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What's your marital status? • With whom do you live? • Do you plan to have a family? When? • How many kids do you have? • What are your child-care arrangements? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Would you be willing to relocate if necessary? • Would you be able and willing to travel as needed for the job? • Would you be able and willing to work overtime as necessary? <p>(These questions are okay assuming they are asked of all applicants for the job.)</p> |
| Affiliations | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What clubs or social organizations do you belong to? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • List any professional or trade groups or other organizations that you belong to that you consider relevant to your ability to perform this job. |
| Personal | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How tall are you? How much do you weigh? (Questions about height and weight are not acceptable <i>unless</i> minimum standards are essential for safe performance of the job.) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are you able to lift a 50-pound weight and carry it 100 yards, as this is part of the job? |
| Disabilities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do you have any disabilities? • Please complete the following medical history. • Have you had any recent or past illnesses or operations? If yes, list them and give dates when these occurred. • What was the date of your last physical exam? • How's your family's health? • When did you lose your eyesight? How? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are you able to perform all the essential functions of the job? (This question is okay if the interviewer has thoroughly described the job.) • Can you demonstrate how you would perform the following job-related functions? • As part of the hiring process, after a job offer has been made, you will be required to undergo a medical exam. (Exam results must be kept strictly confidential, except medical/safety personnel may be informed if emergency medical treatment is required, and supervisors may be informed about necessary job accommodations, based on exam results.) |
| Arrest Record | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have you ever been arrested? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have you ever been convicted of _____? (The crime named should be reasonably related to the performance of the job in question.) |
| Military | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If you've been in the military, were you honorably discharged? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In what branch of the armed services did you serve? • What type of training or education did you receive in the military? |

Source: National Association of Colleges and Employers (Job Choices 2006)