Best Practices Guide to Effective Recruiting

Writing Effective Job Descriptions

- Start the process by conducting a job analysis.
- Research, collect, evaluate and document the important facts about a job.
- Answer the WHAT, WHY, and HOW questions:
  - What are the primary duties and functions?
  - What are the minimum qualifications? Desirables or Preferred?
  - Why do I need this position?
  - Why does the employee do it? What is the purpose?
  - How does this position fit into the organization as a whole? Reviewing the organizational chart and updating if needed will be helpful.
- Begin sentences with action verbs.
- Use the present tense of verbs.
- Describe the desired outcome of the work rather than the method for accomplishing it.
- Keep sentence structure simple; omit all words that do not contribute necessary information such as “a”, “an”, “the”, etc.
- Avoid terminology that may be interpreted differently by different people, i.e., try to avoid words such as “frequently”, “often”, “high level”, “assists”, etc.
- Avoid language that could be interpreted as discriminatory.
- Use clear and concise language.
- Consider the use of the job description in the recruitment process.

Job Analysis

Job analysis provides a way to identify essential functions and determine minimum qualifications and selection criteria. Selection criteria determined through job analysis will help make better decisions during the selection process. Performing a Job analysis is also critical to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Through job analysis an employer can determine the essential functions of a job as well as the criteria for determining whether an individual can accomplish the essential functions with or without reasonable accommodations.

Essential Functions

Essential functions of the job are the tasks that are fundamental, not marginal. A qualified candidate is an individual who satisfies the skill, experience, education and other job-related requirements of the position held or desired, and who, with or without reasonable accommodation, can perform the essential functions of that position. For example, the essential duties for a Receptionist position may be to answer the phone and assist callers; record messages for department; greet clients and customers. Non-essential or marginal job functions/duties may include serving coffee to clients and customers and escorting clients to staff offices.

Questions to ask when preparing essential job functions:

- Does or will the position actually perform the function?
- Does the position exist to perform the function?
- Would the job change if the function(s) was removed?
• How important is the job function?
• How is the function performed?
• How much time is spent on the function?
• What are the consequences if the function is not performed?
• Are there other employees available to perform the function or is it required of each employee to perform many different tasks?
• Is the function highly specialized, and the person in the position is hired for special expertise or the ability to perform it?

Non-Essential Functions
Non-Essential Functions are other duties and responsibilities that are occasionally performed or in addition to the essential duties of the position. If the duty is viewed as unimportant to your company’s operation, or the duty is performed infrequently, or there is sufficient staff to reassign the marginal duty, or the duty can be redesigned or performed in another way, the duty would be considered non-essential.

Questions to ask when preparing non-essential job functions:

• If someone else performed this job duty, would it affect the essence of the position?
• What is the frequency this duty is performed?
• Is there enough staff to reassign the marginal duty to other employees?
• Can the marginal duty be redesigned or performed in another way?

A well-written job description should include the purpose of the job, duties and responsibilities, qualifications, and skills, knowledge and abilities (KSA’s) required to perform the job. Writing a job description that is dynamic and functional will benefit you in the end. Many jobs are subject to change because of organizational changes, new technology, and personal growth. Jobs change as incumbents and the organizational needs change.

Purpose of a Job Description
A job description is a written statement that describes the main objective of the job and clearly and concisely communicates the essential and non-essential job functions as well as the minimum and preferred qualifications pertinent to the position. An accurate and well written job description will be useful to:

• Clarify and align the position with the organizational mission.
• Evaluate work distribution and departmental organization (job restructuring).
• Analyze jobs to determine appropriate pay ranges and classifications.
• Identify the knowledge, skills and abilities the idea candidate should possess.
• Provide the candidates and incumbent an accurate representation of what the job entails and the minimum and preferred qualifications.
• Comply with ADA requirements which require that job descriptions include essential functions.
• Comply with EEOC requirements that the essential duties or functions are fundamental to the position (as opposed to marginal).
• Comply with equal opportunity, equal pay, overtime eligibility, and other legal requirements.
• Identify reasonable accommodations to enable a disabled person to perform the essential functions.
• Determine the value of a particular job in comparison with other jobs.
• Screen applicants and evaluate and compare candidates.
• Train employees.  
• Create performance standards that can be used in performance evaluations.  
• Assist incumbents in understanding their jobs better.  
• Counsel employees on career opportunities and their interests.  
• Write an effective advertisement copy.  
• Write appropriate interview questions.  
• Create your selection matrices.  

**Elements of a Job Description**  
Job descriptions should include the following elements:

- Position Title  
- Purpose (Job Summary)  
- Job Functions (Duties and Responsibilities)  
- Minimum and Preferred Qualifications (Required/Desirable for Position)

**Position Title**  
Identify the job in a word or two (Program Manager; Assistant Professor; Secretary; Electrician; Police Officer).

**Job Purpose/Job Summary**  
The purpose of a job should be a concise statement of the primary purpose of the position and role in the department that make the job unique. Establish the reporting structure above and below the position in this section as well as the level of decision-making authority.

Creating a job purpose/job summary is an important part of the job description because it creates the foundation of the position. To help define the scope, accountability and qualifications needed, identify and talk with stakeholders, co-workers, supervisors and subordinates.

Questions to ask when preparing a job purpose/summary:

- Why does this position exist?  
- What does this position accomplish?  
- What are the end results or objectives of this position?  
- Who are the key stakeholders? Students, faculty, staff, the public or other?  
- How does this position support the department and its mission?  
- What are the expectations for this position and/or person in this position?  
- What are the current or past responsibilities?  
- What functions are no longer needed and can be eliminated?  
- What are the new needs or functions that can be developed or restructured?  
- How can the position be made better, become more valuable, more productive – even more attractive to recruit qualified applicants?
Job Functions – Duties and Responsibilities

The main body of the job description is a numerical listing of specific job duties and responsibilities identified from the job analysis. It requires writing the detail of each essential function, duty, task, responsibility and role within an organization. The job duties and responsibilities should contain clear, declarative statements in priority order of the major tasks, duties and responsibilities.

Questions to ask when writing job duties and responsibilities:

Leadership/Supervisory

- Will this position have a supervisory/office management role?
- Consider making any qualification requirements more flexible, i.e., rather than ask for a degree in a particular discipline or field, consider a degree in a particular or a related field.
- Consider the number and type of employees supervised, level of authority to hire/fire, conduct performance evaluations, assign work and priorities.
- Will this position organize, coordinate or assign workflow within the office?
- Will this position now or in the future hire, train, supervise, evaluate staff and/or students?
- Will this person represent you or the organization/department to others outside of the University or internally?
- What kind of decision-making, problem-solving on a regular basis would you need from this position?
- Is this position authorized to write or change policies and procedures? If so, for the unit or for the University?
- Does this position chair committees or lead working groups?

Budget/Fiscal Responsibility

- Will this position independently manage the budget?
- Would the position be authorized to approve expenditures?
- Is there grant management or writing in the position?
- Is generating revenues a requirement?
- Does this position monitor vendor contracts or get involved in the bid process?
- Does this position contribute to the budget development process?
- Would this position prepare purchase requisitions, prepare time and attendance records or be responsible for maintaining inventory and ordering supplies?
- Does this position have any responsibilities related to Graduate Assistants, such as coordinating financial support or teaching assignments?
- Does this position get involved in budget reporting and/or auditing functions?

Administrative

- Will this position be required to compose web information or update the website?
- Would this position be involved in coordinating or supporting special events such as Open Houses, graduations, conferences, symposiums, meetings? Would this person be responsible for logistics and equipment?
- Would this position be accountable for personnel actions?
• What kind of correspondence would this position compose, and for whom?
• Will this person serve as an authoritative resource for information? Will this position be required to analyze and interpret data, or write narratives?

Knowledgebase

• Is this a trainee position?
• Does this position require a special body of knowledge that can be leaned on the job?
• Does this position require experience that can be gained only by working in a similar job for years?
• Is a degree in a specific discipline recommended or required for the position?
• Is a professional license or certification required for the position?
• Does this position require a special body of knowledge which can be gained only through several years of concentrated study and training?
• What physical demands are required to perform the essential job functions, i.e., walking, lifting, equipment operation, etc.?
• What mental abilities are required to perform the essential job functions?
• Which requirements are minimum qualifications and which are preferred qualifications?

Technical / Scientific Research

• Would this position be required to use computers and equipment other than standard MS Windows and office equipment?
• Will this position be working on projects that require specialized knowledge or experience using technology and/or equipment?

Extent of Public Contact

• Consider the people, agencies, institutions with whom the incumbent will have contact. What is the type and frequency of the contact, i.e., negotiating contracts, answering questions, serving as a resource, etc.?

Working Conditions and Environment

• Does this position require the incumbent to travel? In-state? Out-of-state? How often?
• Does this position require the incumbent to work a varied schedule? Weekends? Nights? How often?
• Are there unusual working conditions, i.e., load noise, extreme temperatures or other weather related conditions, risk of injury or loss of life, exposure to fumes, confined spaces, etc.?
• Would this position be exposed to unpleasant and/or dangerous situations which could cause injury?
**Required and Preferred Qualifications and KSAs**

Qualifications are the educational requirements, certification/licensing requirements and experience, as well as the knowledge, skills and abilities (KSAs) required to successfully perform the duties of the job.

Before writing the minimum qualifications you should evaluate your needs. Suggestions include:

- List all the KSAs necessary to perform the job and separate the minimum qualifications from the preferred.
- The qualifications must support the essential functions.
- Qualifications should be used as criteria for reviewing applications/resumes.
- The ADA prohibits disqualifying a candidate who meets the qualifications of the position and whose disability can be reasonably accommodated.
- Consider making qualification requirements more flexible, i.e., rather than ask for a degree in a particular discipline or field, consider a degree in a particular or a related field or consider an equivalency of experience, training and education in lieu of a degree.
- Use specific language.

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<th>Specific</th>
<th>Vague</th>
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<tr>
<td>Proficient with Microsoft Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Access</td>
<td>Computer skills</td>
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<td>Proven ability to supervise employees involved in graphic design; experience managing a large staff of professional and/or technical staff.</td>
<td>Supervisory skills</td>
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<td>Proven ability to present technical and/or non-technical information to a variety of audiences</td>
<td>Good presentation skills</td>
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<td>Demonstrated ability to deal effectively with the public, students, faculty, staff and external agencies</td>
<td>Good interpersonal skills</td>
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**Note:** Be sure that the stated minimum and preferred qualifications are defendable and directly related to the duties and responsibilities of the position. If you are going to use criteria in the selection process it must be identified in the minimum and/or preferred qualifications.
### Key Words Used in Job Descriptions

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Search Committees

- Identify a search committee that is broadly representative of the University; inclusive of subject experts, customers, external agency representatives; and diverse in gender and race.
- Include individuals with different perspectives and expertise and with a demonstrated commitment to diversity.
- Ensure search committee members can commit the time and effort required.
- Ensure confidentiality throughout the process. A breach of confidentiality may result in the cancellation of the search. This can lead to a loss of time and money as well as the loss of qualified candidates.
- Remember that search committees serve in an advisory capacity. Ultimate responsibility for hiring decision rests with the hiring manager.
- Ensure search committees review the job description, ad copy and especially selection criteria prior to assessing applicants.
- Prepare and provide search committee members with a qualification/selection criteria matrix to assist them with ranking applicants.
- The appropriate number of people comprising a search committee can vary.
- Telephone interviews can be beneficial, and at times necessary, under certain conditions and qualifying circumstances.

While search committees are not required for all positions, they can strengthen the recruitment process and the identification of the best qualified applicants by combining the experience of various individuals that comprise a search committee. Search committees also reduce the opportunity for illegal discrimination allegations and help to protect you against accusations of arbitrary or inappropriate applicant evaluation and candidate selection.

Search committees also have an important role in attracting the most talented candidates to the University. Members of a search committee are often the first impression a candidate gets of an organization and therefore each member has a responsibility to represent the University as a diverse and welcoming community. Search committees have the ability to make a fundamental change to a department by recruiting the most qualified candidates available. Search committee members should also have a thorough understanding of the position and those who are committed to the mission and goals of the University.

Guidelines for the Hiring Manager

- Select a committee chairperson that has the ability to lead people and has a thorough understanding of the position for which you are searching.
- Define role of search committee, i.e. top five candidates in ranked order; top five candidates no rank; top five candidates no rank but comments.
- Make sure that committees receive their charge before beginning the search process. Is the committee instructed to make a hiring decision or a hiring recommendation?
• Establish goal timelines for the search and ensure that the search committee chair and members you choose can devote the time necessary to achieve your goals.
• Ensure that the search committee has a thorough understanding of their role in the search process.
• Aim to establish a diverse search committee.
• Review the charge of the search committee.

Guidelines for the Search Committee Chair

• Act as spokesperson and facilitator.
• Coordinate search committee meetings and timelines.
• Describe the duties, responsibilities and expectations of the committee members during the search process.
• Ensure proper documentation is maintained.
• Review committee expectations regarding confidentiality and meeting attendance.
• Identify administrative support to take notes, perform data entry tasks, make travel arrangements (if applicable), schedule interviews and prepare itineraries for campus visits.
• If an applicant or candidate checks to see why they were not selected, only one individual on the committee should respond.

Guidelines for the Search Committee Members

• Ensure that you are available to interview all candidates in order to ensure each candidate is given an equal opportunity to demonstrate their abilities.
• Provide a variety of perspectives on the role and function of the position in question.
• Treat all applicants in a respectful manner.
• Participate fully and consistently.
• Ensure confidentiality
• Review applications and create shortlist of applicants
• Assist in development of interview questions.
• Determine how to create shortlist - vote, consensus, etc.
• Check references as assigned.
Recruitment

Best Practices

- Prepare a recruitment plan for all vacancies including timelines, application deadline, interview schedule, and target dates for submitting recommendations.
- Think outside the box!
- Develop a recruiting culture! All employees should be charged with recruitment. Be proactive, recruit prior to having a need. Build relationships with past, current and prospective applicants before there is a need.
- Contact people you know in the field. Even if they are not currently looking for a new position, they may know someone who is looking. Contact women and minorities who have received grants or professional recognition and ask for names of potential applicants.
- Talk to colleagues at other schools and ask about their recent grads.
- Talk to current employees.
- Solicit names of people who may be qualified and interested from other professionals in the field.
- Encourage faculty and staff to network at professional meetings and conferences. They can provide potential applicants with general information about UConn as well as information about specific job openings. They should also be encouraged to solicit resumes or C.V.s (curriculum vitaes) from talented professionals which can also be maintained in a departmental database for future vacancies.
- Make contact with recent alumni.
- Identify prospective applicants who have achieved success outside the typical academic setting.
- Subscribe to professional organizations’ newsletters, listservs, etc... and advertise in their publications, journals and similar media.
- Write job postings/ad copies that demonstrate to the potential candidates why they want to work for in your department. Or provide them with a link to your departmental website so that they can learn more about you. For faculty recruitment, showcase academic excellence by highlighting department faculty and their research programs.
- When you conduct a search and have a number of qualified applicants, continue to maintain relationships even with those that you did not select or those that did not select us. At some point you will have another vacancy to fill and they may still be interested.
- Build long-term relationships and develop a plan for keeping in contact with these individuals on a regular basis.
- Communicate with applicants. Letters that confirm receipt of resumes and letters that notify unselected applicants when a search has been filled are important. We need to leave applicants whether selected or not with a good impression of the University.
- Attend conferences that provide recruitment opportunities. Contact prospective applicants when a position becomes available and encourage them to apply.
- Use directory fellowship programs at both the dissertation and postdoctoral levels, including those that support individuals from diverse backgrounds, i.e. SREB, etc.
• Send a periodic update about job openings. Invite the interested parties to visit your organization when in the area. Your professional and ongoing contact with potential applicants ensures recruiting success.

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• Recruitment is not just done through networking and print advertisements. Rather than spending a lot of money on long print ads, consider shortening the advertisement and listing a link to your departmental web site which offers more information about the position and where more can be learned about your department and the University of Connecticut. This saves money and provides a more complete overview of the employment opportunity.

**Note:** The Department of Labor requires employers to submit documentation that demonstrates evidence that a competitive search was conducted when sponsoring a foreign national’s application for a green card. One of the requirements for employers in this situation is to provide proof that a print advertisement was placed in a national publication, i.e., Chronicle of Higher Ed, New York Times, etc.
Advertising Requirements for Hiring H1-B Visa

Faculty members hired on a H1-B visa that applies for permanent residency based on employment status will need to be sponsored by the University.

The International Student and Scholar Services (ISSS) assists departments with the process of sponsoring the visa and/or petitioning for a green card for new employees who are H1-B visa holders. Working closely with the department, ISSS will file a labor certification with the Department of Labor. One of the provisions of the Department of Labor’s (DOL) regulations, called “Special Handling”, provides eligibility requirements for international faculty whose job responsibilities involve some classroom teaching. To qualify for “Special Handling” the labor certification must include a report that describes the competitive recruitment process.

The report must prove to the DOL that a national search was conducted and every effort was made to attract an applicant pool of qualified U.S. workers. Another DOL requirement is that the University provide a copy (also known as a “tear sheet”) of at least advertisement that was published in a national print journal (the ad must be in print, not electronic) as well as other documentation that demonstrates the additional recruitment effort.

The report must represent that the foreign national selected for the position was more qualified than any U.S. workers available to do the job, and that the foreign national has the required experience as described in the labor certification, and as advertised vis-à-vis the job posting advertisement. This is an example of why it is critical to 1) consider your recruitment plan prior to launching the search and 2) conduct reference and credential checks on all candidates considered for hire.

Please note that recruitment efforts that do not meet the DOL’s criteria and the recruitment efforts are not considered to be extensive, the position may need to be re-advertised.
Writing Effective Ad Copies

For optimal results, job advertisements and recruitment processes should follow the classic AIDA selling format:

- **Attention**: Attention is to attract attention from job-seekers. It is the headline of the advertisement that draws attention to the job.
- **Interest**: Interest is to attract interest by establishing relevance in the minds of ideal candidates. The advertisement must portray information in a way that relates closely to how readers think about their positions.
- **Desire**: Desire is to create desire to pursue the employment opportunity. The ad must be appealing and show the rewards available to the successful candidate.
- **Action**: Action is to provide clear and concise instructions for response to the ad copy / job posting.

It is important to try not to accomplish too much in the ad copy. It should not be a complete job description.

- Be concise and brief
- Use short sentences, familiar words, and personal pronouns
- Make the ad appealing
- Use the present tense
- Avoid jargon, abbreviations, and/or acronyms
- Market the position and the University as an Employer of Choice

Careful attention should be given to any potentially offensive or discriminatory statements in advertisements. Employment advertisers should also be aware that the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 have raised additional issues. Wording used in advertising that focuses on the job process rather than job results can be viewed as discriminatory.

For example, instead of stating "A valid CT driver's license is required for this position," the ad should read "Travel is required." Awareness and sensitivity can help to avoid problems. ADA questions or issues may be addressed by calling the Office of Diversity and Equity at (860) 486-2943.

Tips for Preparing Effective Ad Copies

- **Job Posting Title**: State the specific job title (e.g., Professor OR University Librarian 2). If the appointment can be made at more than one level list all potential titles (e.g., Assistant/Associate/Professor OR University Librarian 1/2/3). You may only hire at the advertised levels.
- **Department**: State the Department Name and/or Regional Campus. If advertising is being done externally include the University of Connecticut.
• **Position Summary:** Provide a brief summary as well as the essential functions and major duties and responsibilities of the position. The job summary may also include information about the hiring department and/or University of Connecticut.

• **Qualifications:** Include minimum qualifications (i.e., KSA’s, education, licensure, experience, technical expertise, other unique requirements) and desired or preferred qualifications.
  
  o Explicitly state any degree requirements (e.g., B.A., B.S., M.B.A., Ph.D., J.D., etc.) If a degree is required in a specific field of study, consider whether other fields of study are acceptable. If so, include the phrase “or related field or discipline” so you do not inadvertently eliminate potential candidates.

  o Explicitly state requirements for work experience in quantifiable amounts of time, (e.g., three years experience advising undergraduate students). Requirements that are not quantifiable (e.g., experience advising undergraduate students) will make it difficult to differentiate qualified and unqualified applicants.

  o If there are credentials that may be considered in lieu of the stated minimum requirements for degree, work experience or other qualifications, it must be stated explicitly in the advertisement (e.g., License as certified building official may be considered in lieu of a Bachelor’s Degree or An equivalent combination of training, education and experience may be considered).

• **Terms of Employment (Appointment Terms):** Ads must specify whether the position is full or part-time and whether the position is permanent or temporary (established with an end-date). Salary/salary range and benefits information may be included if desired.

• **How to Apply:** Ads should specify what documentation to include as part of the application, i.e., Letter of Application/Letter of Interest/Cover Letter, Curriculum Vita/Resume, Professional References, Letters of Recommendation, Evidence of Publication Record, Writing Samples, Research Interests, Transcripts, etc. The ad copy should also specify a closing date is desired. You may be prohibited from requiring additional documentation once the search has been launched and the position is advertised without re-posting all of the advertisements again with the new criteria as well as notifying any and all applicants who already applied.

• **Affirmative Action Statement:** See list of approved affirmative action statements.

**Job Aid**

**Affirmative Action Statements**

The University of Connecticut has a strong commitment to affirmative action and employment advertising is the employer’s first public notice of that intention. One of the following approved affirmative action statements must appear in employment ads:

• In keeping with our commitment to build a culturally diverse community, the University of Connecticut invites applications from women, people with disabilities, and members of minority groups.
• At the University of Connecticut, our commitment to excellence is complemented by our commitment to building a culturally diverse community. We actively encourage women, people with disabilities, and members of minority groups to apply.
• The University of Connecticut actively solicits applications from minorities, women, and people with disabilities.
• The University of Connecticut encourages minorities, women, and people with disabilities to apply for this position.
• We encourage applications from under-represented groups, including minorities, women, and people with disabilities.

Sample Statements of Screening Dates
Since personal outreach activities, networking, quarterly or monthly publication dates, for example, and other recruitment strategies require time and effort, firm screening dates or deadlines may inadvertently exclude highly qualified applicants. Therefore you are encouraged to use one of the following statements:

• Screening of applications will begin on (date) and continue until the position is filled.
• Screening of applications will begin on (date) and continue until a suitable acceptable candidate is found.
• Applications received by (date) will be given preference in the screening process.
• For full consideration, submit letter of application, resume (curriculum vitae) and contact information of three professional references by (date).
• Applications will be accepted until the position is filled.
• Position will be available (date).
• Target starting date for position is (date).
Candidate Assessment and Selection

Screening and Selection Process
Although there is no standard screening method, the committee members should have a common understanding of the stated criteria. Decisions regarding the screening methods should be made by the committee and its chair. Establishing a fairly standard format will ensure a consistent process that will lead to an organized, efficient and productive assessment and selection process. Whether using a sophisticated numerical rating scale or a checklist to ascertain whether or not applicants/candidates meet minimum requirements or possess additional desirable qualifications, using Best Practice guidelines will help ensure a smooth process and maintain consistency with the University’s policies and procedures and compliance with state and federal laws.

Screening Matrices
A screening matrix is a tool for objectively screening applicants’ qualifications and comparing their qualifications to the minimum and preferred qualifications for the position. A screening matrix also allows the search committee and/or hiring manager to compare candidates’ qualifications at a glance.

It is important that minimum and preferred qualifications are clearly stated and that operational definitions for each qualification are highlighted. For example,

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Qualification</th>
<th>Operational Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Degree</td>
<td>Bachelor’s, Master’s preferred</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verbal Communication Skills</td>
<td>Verbal Proficiency During Interview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Written Communication Skills</td>
<td>Writing Samples</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Benefits of Using a Screening Matrix
The screening matrix ensures that selection decisions are made in a non-discriminatory manner. When candidates are not successful in the selection process the search committee must be able to provide objective reasons for their decision.

Various Levels of Screening

Applicant Screening
*Need definition of applicant*

The applicant screening matrix should primarily evaluate the minimum (required) qualifications which may include: experience, education, licenses, certifications, and skills and abilities essential to perform the job duties. The minimum qualifications must be clearly stated in the job advertisement so each applicant’s materials can be screened objectively. Applicants that do not meet the minimum qualifications must be eliminated from further consideration at this time. Preferred qualifications such as credentials, experience, and accomplishments which enhance an applicant’s ability to perform the job should also be identified.

Be sure to document why an applicant was eliminated from the pool. Documenting the disposition of all applicants is essential to ensuring the search process is in compliance with University, State and federal policies, laws and regulations.
Interviews
During the interview you may be able to best determine the personal attributes of the applicant. Personal attributes such as decision making, teamwork, innovation, customer focus, managing conflict, etc will enable the search committee to determine which candidates will best fit within the organization.

Interviewing
An employment interview is the time to meet candidates and talk in depth to assess their knowledge, skills, abilities (KSA’s) and experience to determine if they can successfully perform the job duties and responsibilities of a given position. Prior to conducting any interview, all search committee members should discuss the objective(s) of the interview, the main topics or areas to be covered during the interview, and the itinerary and arrangements for each candidate. For consistency, it is strongly encouraged that formal interview questions are prepared in advance. During an employment interview, only ask questions that are actually related to the job and be able to demonstrate, if necessary, that they are essential in determining the candidate’s suitability for the particular job.

In order to ascertain if the candidate is the right person for the job, department and organization it is equally important to ask the right questions, which explore the competencies as defined in the job description and position announcement/advertisement, and evaluate the content and depth of their answers. Committees may choose to create a set of general questions designed to elicit more specific information from candidates; others construct hypothetical situations to which the candidates are asked to respond; and others may use a presentation or colloquium as a selection tool.

Non-directive questions that are broad, open-ended and require a narrative response may be used to assess attitudes and goals, such as in personnel management; but, be sure that these questions are related to the performance of the job and that the assessment of the candidate’s responses are not purely subjective. Exercising objectivity is essential to make accurate hiring decisions and meet legal guidelines for fair employment. Follow-up questions will ensure that you have all the information and enable you to select the candidate who best meets the identified job criteria.

Individuals and committees conducting searches and interviews should at all times consider the public relations aspects. Prompt and courteous communications regarding the status of the search, the person’s candidacy, and the final outcome indicate the University’s sensitivity to a candidate’s feelings and the University’s intent and desire to attract competent employees. A successful search and interview will reduce time and expenses as well as reflect well on the University and provide an opportunity to build relationships with candidates for future opportunities.

Behavioral interviewing
Behavioral interviewing says that “the most accurate predictor of future performance is past performance in a similar situation”. Behavior-based questions are more informative and probing than traditional interview questions such as: Tell me about yourself, What are your strengths/weaknesses, Why do you want to work for us? Many Fortune 500 companies, public and private organizations are using this approach because often times it leads into more revealing questions and enables you to identify patterns or a consistent behavior which is likely to be indicative of their future actions, decisions, behaviors… ultimately their potential for job success. The ideal candidate should demonstrate in a variety of ways that they are capable of performing the job and have the potential to be an asset to the organization.
The best way to gain this information from a candidate is to identify the skill set or selected competencies required for a particular position and analyze how they accomplished something, or what they did to achieve the end result and/or why they responded as such. **STAR** is an acronym meaning:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S</th>
<th>Situation or Task</th>
<th>Describe the context in which the action or behavior took place. (When, Why did you, What were the circumstances)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>T</td>
<td>Action</td>
<td>What did you do, How did you, What was your role</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Result</td>
<td>What was the result, How did it work out, What problems/successes, What was feedback</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Using this interviewing approach will more likely have the candidate provide specific examples of past experiences or situations and provide an opportunity to further explore vague or theoretical answers by asking follow-up questions. Obtaining detailed information is sometimes required to find the answer whether it be no experience, not applicable, or false.

An alphabetical listing of approved behavior and competency based questions is available via a link. These questions will guide you in conducting an objective and effective interview enabling you to assess the candidate’s KSAs and experiences.

**Phases of the Interview**

*Prepare for the Interview*

- Identify people based on their position level/rank/tenure status, technical/scientific relevancy, department, work groups and diversity.
- Identify a search committee chairperson.
- Give each member of the search committee a job description, organizational chart and a list of the interview questions.

*Schedule Interviews with Candidates*

- Reserve appropriate locations and conference rooms w/ audio-visual capabilities if presentation will be given.

*Distribute Selected Interview Questions to Each Interviewer*

- Use a standard form, grid, or matrix.
- Interviewers or teams are responsible for asking questions as assigned or chosen.
- Having more than one interviewer assess each competency will provide a more comprehensive assessment.
Tailor Questions to Candidate’s Background/Experiences as it Relates to Position

- Use a variety of questions:
  - **Behavioral-Based** - address capabilities • proficiency • know-how • experience (KSAs) necessary to perform job duties and responsibilities.
  - **Attributes to Address**
    - Ethic
    - Problem-Solving
    - Interpersonal/Social Skills
    - Leadership
    - Motivation
    - Professional Characteristics
    - Personal Characteristics

- Distribute a standard **evaluation form** to each interviewer (if available or use attached) for each competency that will be assessed.

Time for the Interview

Interview the Candidate

- Greet the candidate, offer your name and position title.
- Explain the need for the position.
- Describe the interview plan:
  - Who will be conducting the interview?
  - Specific questions will be asked to get information about jobs/experiences as listed on their CV or resume.
  - Information about the organization and the position.
  - Indicate that you will be taking notes.
- Transition to asking the candidate questions. Begin with general questions and move into targeted questions relating to the specific job you are trying to fill.
- Give the candidate a welcome packet which may include information about the department, an organizational chart, job description, information about background checks (if applicable), etc.
- As if the candidate has any questions that have not been answered.
- Give the candidate information on the organization, structure, and the position (if not already provided).
- Explain the next steps in the process.
- Offer the candidate your business card should you want to have that person contact you, i.e., follow-up, thank you note, networking, etc.
- Thank the candidate for their time and a productive interview; escort candidate out of the office.
Close the Interview

- Review your notes.
- Seek any clarification that your review has raised.
- After candidate has left, fill in the evaluation form to document the results of the technical and behavioral competencies assessed.
- Prepare and submit recommendations for the top candidates to the hiring manager.

Acceptable and Unacceptable Interview Questions

What Can You (Legally) Ask Prospective Employees?

The Acceptable Questions listed should only be asked when there is a bona fide, job-specific reason to ask them. If one candidate is asked, then all candidates should be asked the same question(s) for the same position.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SUBJECT</th>
<th>ACCEPTABLE</th>
<th>UNACCEPTABLE</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Name</td>
<td>&quot;Have you ever used another name?&quot;</td>
<td>Any reference to &quot;maiden name.&quot; An interviewer cannot discriminate on the basis of gender or marital status.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&quot;Is any additional information relative to change of name, use of an assumed name, or nick-name necessary to enable a check on your work and education record? If yes, please explain.&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>Residence</td>
<td>Where do you live?</td>
<td>&quot;Do you own or rent your home?&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>It is legal to state that person is subject to verification of meeting legal age requirements.</td>
<td>Dates of attendance or graduation of elementary or high school.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>&quot;If hired, can you show proof of age?&quot;</td>
<td>Questions which tend to identify applicants as being over age 40.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&quot;Are you over eighteen years of age?&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;What is your birth date?&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&quot;If under eighteen, can you, after employment, submit a work permit?&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;How old are you?&quot;</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Federal law allows 14 &amp; 15 yr. olds to work in a limited capacity and 16 &amp; 17 yr. olds can perform non-hazardous jobs. May specify an age limit for a position only when it can be proven that age is a BFOQ- such as the choice of one actor over another, using age as a basis for authenticity.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Origin</td>
<td>Sex, Marital Status, Family</td>
<td>Race, Color</td>
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<tr>
<td>I-9’s confirm person is either a U.S. citizen of permanent resident who is eligible to work.</td>
<td>Can ask: Are you eligible to work in the U.S.? Could you, once employed, submit documentation to that effect?</td>
<td>There are no fair questions unless appearance is a “bona fide” occupational qualification (BFOQ) i.e. if you’re applying to a modeling job, but otherwise you cannot be required to submit a photo with an application.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If fluency in a language other than English is a job requirement, an employer may ask how you learned that language.</td>
<td>Name and address of parent or guardian if applicant is a minor.</td>
<td>Questions as to applicant’s race or color. “What is your race or ethnic origin?”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unless a business case can be provided, a company can’t specify that English be the only language spoken on the job.</td>
<td>Statement of company policy regarding work assignment of employees who are related.</td>
<td>Questions regarding applicant’s complexion or color of skin, eyes, hair.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can ask: Are you eligible to work in the U.S.? Could you, once employed, submit documentation to that effect?</td>
<td>“Do you have any relatives currently working for this institution?”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Questions as to nationality, lineage, ancestry, national origin, descent, or parentage of applicant, applicant’s parents, or spouse.</td>
<td>“What language did you learn first?”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Questions which indicate applicant’s sex.</td>
<td>How applicant acquired ability to read, write, or speak a foreign language.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Questions which indicate applicant’s marital status. “Are you married” “What is your spouse’s name?” “Do you have a maiden name?”</td>
<td>Questions which indicate applicant’s sex.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number and/or ages of children or dependents. “Do you have any children?”</td>
<td>Questions which indicate applicant’s marital status. “Are you married” “What is your spouse’s name?” “Do you have a maiden name?”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provisions for child care. “Do you have child care arrangements?”</td>
<td>Questions regarding pregnancy, child bearing, or birth control.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name and address of relative, spouse, or children of adult applicant. “With whom do you reside?” or ”Do you live with your parents?”</td>
<td>Name and address of relative, spouse, or children of adult applicant. “With whom do you reside?” or ”Do you live with your parents?”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Credit Report</strong></td>
<td>Space for race may be listed in the application or as a separate form within an application packet.</td>
<td>Any report which would indicate information which is otherwise illegal to ask, e.g., marital status, age, residency, etc. Questions about applicant’s financial status, whether you own a home or have previously had wages garnished are illegal.</td>
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<td>-------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Physical Description, Photograph</strong></td>
<td>Statement that photograph may be required after employment.</td>
<td>Questions as to applicant’s height and weight. Require applicant to affix a photograph to application. Request applicant, at his or her option, to submit a photograph. Require a photograph after interview but before employment. Videotaping interviews.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Physical or Mental Disability</strong></td>
<td>Statement by employer that the offer may be made contingent on applicant passing a job-related physical examination. “Can you perform the basic functions of this position with or without reasonable accommodation?” The ADA doesn’t cover illegal drug use, so it is legal to ask whether there is use of illegal substances. Some companies request all new employees to have a medical examination.</td>
<td>Questions regarding applicant’s general medical condition, state of health, or illnesses or about the existence, nature, or severity of a disability. “Do you have a disability?” How many days were you sick last year? Questions regarding Workers’ Compensation. “Do you have any physical or mental disabilities or handicaps?” “What prescription medications do you currently take?” “Are you an alcoholic?” “Have you ever been treated for drug abuse?”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Religion</strong></td>
<td>Statement by employer of regular days, hours, or shifts to be worked.</td>
<td>Questions regarding applicant’s religion.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Under Title I of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) an employer may not discriminate against a qualified candidate who is disabled, and must make “reasonable accommodations” for physically or mentally impaired employees.
Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 allows religious organizations and sectarian educational institutions to express religious preference when hiring.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 allows religious organizations and sectarian educational institutions to express religious preference when hiring.</th>
<th>“Weekend and holiday work is required. Will this pose any difficulties for you?”</th>
<th>“Which church do you attend?” “What is your religion?” Religious days observed or “Does your religion prevent you from working weekends or holidays?”</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Arrest, Criminal Record</strong> You are innocent until proven guilty, therefore, it is illegal to ask if applicant has ever been arrested.</td>
<td>Job-related questions about convictions, except those convictions which have been sealed, expunged, or statutorily eradicated. “Have you ever been convicted of a felony crime?”</td>
<td>Arrest record, or “Have you ever been arrested?”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Military Service</strong></td>
<td>Questions that inquire about rank when discharged and discuss relevant skills acquired during applicant's U.S. military service.</td>
<td>General questions regarding military services such as dates and type of discharge. Questions regarding service in a foreign military.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Organizations, Activities</strong></td>
<td>“Please list job-related organizations, clubs, professional societies, or other associations to which you belong” — you may omit those which indicate your race, religious creed, color, disability, marital status, national origin, ancestry, sex, or age.</td>
<td>“List all organizations, clubs, societies, and lodges to which you belong, are affiliated with or member of any political, social, or religious groups, including unions.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>References</strong></td>
<td>&quot;By whom were you referred for a position here?&quot; Names of persons willing to provide professional and/or character references for applicant.</td>
<td>Questions of applicant's former employers or acquaintances which elicit information specifying the applicant's race, color, religious creed, national origin, ancestry, physical or mental disability, medical condition, marital status, age or sex.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Additional interviewing guidelines are available on the ODE web site at: [http://web.uconn.edu/wwwode/caveat2.html](http://web.uconn.edu/wwwode/caveat2.html).
Sample Interview Questions

Introductory Questions

• Tell me about yourself.
• What type of position are you seeking?
• Why are you interested in this position with the University of Connecticut?
• What organization besides this one are you looking into?
• Why have you chosen this particular profession?
• What interests you about this job?
• What challenges are you looking for in a position?
• What can you contribute to this organization?
• Where do you see yourself in five years?
• What goals have you set for yourself? How are you planning to achieve them?
• Please highlight your past jobs and what your job duties were. Ask about any gaps in employment.
• How have your educational and work experiences prepared you for this position?
• What work experiences have been most valuable to you and why?
• How has your present or previous job changed while you’ve held it?
• What were your major responsibilities?
• What unique talent/specialized skill do you offer? Why do you feel it is unique?
• What are your strengths and weaknesses?
• To what do you owe your present success?
• What has been your greatest challenge?
• What is your most significant accomplishment to date?
• What type of work environment appeals to you most?
• What characteristics do you think are important for this position?
• Why do you feel that this organization will be a career for you rather than a job?
• Is there anything else I should know about your qualifications for this job?
• If I asked the people who know you well to describe you, what three words would they use?
• If I asked the people who know you for one reason why I shouldn’t hire you what would they say?
• What makes you think you can handle this position?
• Why should I hire you?

Attendance

• Give me a specific example of a time when you did not meet a deadline. How did you handle it?
• We all face times when personal issues pull us away from work responsibilities. If possible, tell me about a time when your dependability or attendance was challenged. How did you handle it and/or remain accountable or involved in work? How long did the situation last?
Communication

- Give me an example of an idea that has come to you and what you did with it?
- Tell me about a situation when you had to speak up (be assertive) in order to get a point across that was important to you.
- Have you ever had to "sell" an idea to your co-workers or group? How did you do it? Did they "buy" it?

Conflict Resolution

- Describe a situation where you had to work with someone who was difficult, how did you handle it?
- Give me an example of a time when you were able to successfully communicate with another person even when you felt the individual did not value your perspective.
- Tell me about a time when you and your previous supervisor disagreed but you still found a way to get your point across.
- Describe a time when you facilitated a creative solution to a problem between employees.
- Thinking of the most difficult person you have had to deal with, describe an interaction that illustrates that difficulty. Tell me about the last time you dealt with him/her? How did you handle the situation?

Customer Service/Focus

- Give me a specific example of a time when you had to address an angry customer. What was the problem and what was the outcome? How would you assess your role in defusing the situation?

Decision Making

- Tell me about your most difficult decision and how did you go about making it?
- Tell me about a decision you made but wish you had done differently.
- Tell me about an experience in which you had a limited amount of time to make a difficult decision. What was the decision and the outcome/result of your decision?
- Tell me about a time when you had to make an unpopular decision.
- In a current job task, what steps do you go through to ensure your decisions are correct/effective?
- Give me an example of a time when you had to keep from speaking or making a decision because you did not have enough information.

Gaining Commitment

- Give me an example when you initiated a change in process or operations.
- Describe a situation in which you were able to use persuasion to convince someone to see things your way.
- Give me an example of a time when you were able to successfully communicate with another person even when that individual may not have agreed with your perspective.
- Give me a specific example of a time when you had to handle an angry customer. What was the problem and what was the outcome?
• Tell me about a time when you and your current/previous supervisor disagreed but you still found a way to get your point across.
• Tell me about your efforts to "sell" a new idea to your supervisor.
• How do you make your feelings known when you disagree with the views of your staff?

Continuous Learning/Development

• Describe a decision you made or a situation that you would have handle differently if you had to do it over again.
• When you have been made aware of, or have discovered for yourself, a problem in your work performance, what was your course of action? Can you give me an example?
• Tell me about a time when your supervisor/co-workers gave you feedback about your work/actions. What did you learn about yourself?
• What have you done to further your own professional development in the last 5 years?

Diversity

• Tell me about a time when you had to adapt to a wide variety of people by accepting/understanding their perspective.
• What have you done to further your knowledge/understanding about diversity? How have you demonstrated your learning?
• Can you recall a time when a person’s cultural background affected your approach to a work situation?
• How have you handled situations in which you could not understand a customer's strong accent?
• What measures have you taken to make someone feel comfortable in an environment that was obviously uncomfortable with his or her presence?

Job Fit

• Describe how your position contributes to your organization’s/unit’s goals. What are the goal’s/unit’s mission?
• Tell me how you keep your job knowledge current with the ongoing changes in the industry.

Flexibility/Adaptability to Change

• By providing examples, demonstrate that you can adapt to a wide variety of people, situations and/or environments.
• What do you do when priorities change quickly? Give me one example of when this happened.
• Tell me about a decision you made while under a lot of pressure.
• What types of situations put you under pressure, and how do you deal with pressure?
Innovation

- Can you give me an example of how you have been creative in completing your responsibilities?
- Can you think of a situation where innovation was required at work? What did you do in this situation?
- Give me a situation in which you failed, and how you handled it?

Initiative and Motivation

- Tell me about a team project of which you are particularly proud and your contribution?
- What motivates you?
- Give me an example of a time when you went above and beyond the call of duty.
- Describe a situation when you were able to have a positive influence on the action of others.

Interpersonal Skills

- Name two management skills that you think you have?
- Describe the type of manager you prefer.
- What characteristics are most important in a good manager? How have you displayed one of them?
- What have you done in the past to contribute toward a teamwork environment?
- Describe a recent unpopular decision you made and what the result was.

Leadership

- Describe a leadership role of yours and tell why you committed your time to it.
- In a particular leadership role you had, what was your greatest challenge?
- What are 3 effective leadership qualities you think are important. How have you demonstrated these qualities in your past/current position?
- Describe a situation in which you were able to use persuasion to successfully convince someone to approach things your way. What level was the person you had to persuade?
- Describe a leadership situation that you would handle differently if you had it to do over again.

Planning/Organization

- Give me a specific example of a time when you did not meet a deadline. How did you handle it?
- Using a specific example of a project, tell me how you kept those involved informed of the progress.
- Are you better at working on many things at a time, or are you better at working on and getting results on a few specific things? Please give me two examples that illustrate this.
- How do you decide what gets top priority when scheduling your time?
- What do you do when your schedule is suddenly interrupted? Give an example.
• Name one of your best accomplishments, including where the assignment came from, your plans in carrying it out, how you eventually did carry it out, and any obstacles you overcame.

**Problem Solving**

• Describe the project or situation that best demonstrates your analytical abilities?
• Give me an example of a problem you solved and the process you used?
• Describe an instance when you had to think quickly to free yourself from a difficult situation.
• Tell me about a politically complex work situation in which you worked.
• Give me a specific example of a time when you used good judgment and logic in solving a problem.
• Give me an example of a time when there was a decision to be made and procedures were not in place? What was the outcome?
• Tell me about a specific time when you eliminated or avoided a potential problem before it happened.
• What types of problems do you most enjoy tackling? Give me some examples of such problems you faced. What did you enjoy about them?
• To whom did you turn for help the last time you had a major problem and why did you choose that person?

**Productivity**

• Give an example of an important goal that you had set in the past, and tell me about your success in reaching it.
• Tell me about a time when you had to complete multiple tasks/projects within a tight timeline.
• Tell me about a time when you had to go above and beyond the call of duty in order to get a job done.
• Give me a specific example of a time when you did not meet a deadline. How did you handle it?
• Describe a course, project, or work experience that was complex. What kind of follow-up did you undertake? How much time was spent on unexpected difficulties?

**Technical/Professional Knowledge**

• Give me an example of the most creative project that you have worked on.
• Describe a project that challenged your skill and/or knowledge?
• Tell me about a project you worked on that makes you most proud. What made it so good? What was your role?
• Have you taken any computer courses or seminars? Tell me about how you have implemented it into your day to day job?

**Teamwork**

• When you take on a project do you like to attack the project in a group of individually?
• What are your team-player qualities? Give examples.
• What have the experiences on your resume taught you about managing and working with people?
• How do you gain the cooperation of others? What were the challenges, outcomes? What was the long-term impact on your ability to work with this person?
• How have you recognized and rewarded a team player in the past? What was the situation?
• Have you ever had difficulty getting along with a colleague? How did you handle that situation so that you could continue to function with that person?
• What did you do in your past positions to contribute toward a teamwork environment?
• When you’ve had to enter into a team that has already been functioning, what have you found to be some effective techniques?
• Explain a time when a team member was overwhelmed with a project/task, what role did you play in helping?
• What has been your biggest frustration working as part of a team? How did you deal with this frustration?

Reference Checks

Completing a reference check is a critical part of the selection process. A thorough reference check may provide information about the candidate’s KSAs, initiative, performance and work habits which you need to know to ensure the best candidate is selected for the job. It is a way to verify and add information not obtained through the vita/resume, interview or other screening processes.

Checking references is a time consuming process, however it is critical to invest the time and resources in making a good hiring decision.

• Always check references prior to making a job offer.
• Be sure to ask the applicant if you may contact their listed references. Also, be sure to ask them prior to contacting a present employer.
• When possible, always use the most current supervisor as they are best able to speak to performance on the job.
• Identify yourself, your position, the candidate’s name, and the reason for your call.
• Check references for all final candidates and be sure to ask the same questions of each reference source. Three or more professional references are ideal.
• Ask the same reference questions for each final candidate.
• Do not stop at one reference regardless of how negative or positive it may be; contact all references for each candidate.
• Do not accept references from relatives or friends.
• Accept written letters of reference but not in lieu of a phone contact.
• Decide who will conduct reference checks. It should either be the supervisor or a member of the search committee.
• Listen to the reference’s tone of voice when conducting a reference check. You can often identify underlying issues in the tone.
• Never reveal to the candidate the information received from a previous employer or other reference. This information should be kept confidential.
Sample Reference Check Questions

- In what capacity did you work with this applicant? For how long? This will help you determine if the individual can serve as a reference.
- What was the applicant’s title and dates of employment?
- What were the applicant’s job responsibilities?
- What were the applicant’s major contributions to the organization?
- What is the candidate’s experience with working with diverse populations?
- What kind of relationship did the applicant have with other staff members? How did the applicant deal with difficult and stressful situations?
- How would you describe the applicant’s work?
- What are the applicant’s strongest job skills?
- Was the applicant organized and did he/she meet deadlines?
- Would you recommend this candidate to work at UConn?
- Would you rehire this applicant?
- Is there anything else you can add that would help us learn more about this candidate?

Note: If there is any chance you may have additional questions ask the reference if you can call back with more questions.

Credential Checks

Credential checks are a critical part of the selection process, especially for hires in jobs that require a specific license or certification and for hires in jobs where the hiring selection was based on the representation of a degree, certification, or license.

Hiring department should check the degrees, licenses and certifications of candidates that are relevant to a hiring selection or that influence the starting salary. It is usually acceptable for departments to only check the highest-level credential that a candidate identifies on his/her vita/resume.

Methods for Checking Credentials

Degree Verification

- Verify through the National Student Clearinghouse’s ‘Degree Verify’ database
- Contact the granting institution directly (the person making contact should document the institution name, office, and the name and title of the person that provided the verification)
- Obtain a letter from the granting institution verifying the candidate completed all requirements for the degree
- Obtain from the candidate a certified copy of the original diploma or transcript (this should be used only if you are unable to verify the degree using the first two methods)
License/Certification Verification

- Verify through the granting institution
- Obtain from the candidate a certified copy of the original certification or license

Criminal Background Checks

A criminal background check (CBC) is the review of an individual’s criminal history which may be used in determining the suitability for employment of candidates for a position.

Pros of Criminal Background Checks

- Criminal background checks (CBC) can assist in determining the suitability for employment and aid hiring administrators in selecting not only the best qualified candidate, but those who are also prepared to maintain a safe university community and carry out their responsibilities with integrity.
- Criminal background checks ideally encompass information about a person’s interaction with the law that an employer is entitled to consider in making employment decisions. Criminal history information is disclosed as part of the application/consideration process, prior to confirmed employment.
- CBCs increase the integrity and honesty of applicants by verifying application information.
- Disclosing that the university may conduct CBCs discourage applicant with something to hide.
- May limit legal exposure for negligent hiring and retention

Cons of Criminal Background Checks

- Limited access to records (local, state and federal/governmental databases).
- The possibility of mistaken identity.
- Legal Limitations on information that can be used by employers.
  - Only convictions and pending cases can be considered, not arrests or detentions
  - May not be able to consider crimes that have been sealed or expunged or where the applicant participated in a special pretrial alternative program.
  - Limits on misdemeanors or cases for minors.
- Possible adverse impact (discrimination) if information is used to automatically deny employment. Instead, employers must examine whether there is a sound business reason to not hire an individual with a criminal record, taking into account the nature of the offense, whether it is job-related, when it occurred and what the person has done since.
- Criminal background checks are not fail-safe in preventing the hiring of a “bad seed”. Thorough reference checks are highly recommended.