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Introduction and Recruiting Checklist

The Office of Human Resources (OHR) understands that the search process can be a difficult time for a Hiring Manager and the committee. The OHR is available and committed to help make the search process efficient, while ensuring a fair applicant experience. Below is a brief checklist of the role of the Hiring Manager.

- If you have not already had Taleo training, contact your Employment Specialist to receive training. Unsure of who your Employment Specialist is?
  - Bonnie Yourik: Academic Affairs, Innovation and Applied Research, Student Affairs, University Marketing and Communications
  - Tara Richards: Administration and Finance, Athletics, Executive, University Advancement
- Already trained on Taleo? You can start by entering your requisition; however, still contact your Employment Specialist to discuss your recruitment strategy. This includes:
  - Where you will post the job
  - How long the job will be posted
  - Past issues with filling this position
  - Job posting information
  - Members of the interview panel
- Review the Taleo training materials
- Review and disposition applicants
- Utilize the Taleo interview module prior to the interview taking place
- Conduct at least three in-person interviews; (see the Interview Preparation and Questions section for details)
- Upload interview notes and reference checks in Taleo (contact your Employment Specialist with issues)
- Email your Employment Specialist for the offer information
- Notify other candidates when the search is closed
Diversity and Inclusion

Towson University values diversity and fosters a climate that is grounded in respect and inclusion, enriches the educational experience of students, supports positive workplace environments, promotes excellence, and cultivates the intellectual and personal growth of the entire university community. What does that mean for you throughout the search process?

- Ensure a visibly diverse interview panel. This means that there should be visual diversity with at least two out of the three categories concerning age, race, and gender. If you have questions or concerns about your panel, contact your Employment Specialist.
- Review the materials on illegal interview questions and sample interview questions (see the Appendix section for details)
- Learn more about unintentional bias. Project Implicit is a resource where you can take a test to understand more about thoughts and feelings outside of conscious awareness and control. Click [here](#) to take a test.

Ensuring a diverse and inclusive search is a priority for all hiring committees. If there are any questions or concerns, please contact your Employment Specialist.

Ethics and Confidentiality

In order to ensure a fair and equitable search process, committee members should maintain accurate records and notes, and understand this information is public record. Each hiring committee should conduct outreach to attract a diverse applicant pool, and not enter the search process with any pre-conceived notions of a final applicant. In addition, members of the search committee must be aware of Towson University’s [nepotism policy](#) and ensure strict adherence. Finally, all information should be kept confidentially within the committee and the OHR.
Initiating the Search

A search may be initiated at any time through Taleo; however, the OHR strongly recommends having a conversation with your Employment Specialist at this time. The Employment Specialist can provide feedback and guidance on the job posting, the length of time the position should be posted, and any unique issues with the search. The OHR strongly recommends using the Taleo training documentation when initiating a search.

The request to fill a vacancy will go through an approval process, which includes the OHR’s Classification/Compensation Specialist, the unit’s Associate Vice President/Dean, Divisional Budget Officer, University Budget Officer, Vice President, and CFO (for Regular and Contingent II positions). A position may not be posted without the required approvals. Please work with your Divisional Budget Office if there are any budget restrictions prior to initiating the search.

Search Committees

A diverse search committee of at least three individuals is required for all searches. Your committee should include those who:

- Are able to provide unbiased, objective, and respectful feedback on candidate selection
- Bring unique and broad perspectives to the committee
- Have a strong commitment and understanding to diversity
- Have experience in searches that have successfully recruited and hired candidates from underrepresented groups
- Are familiar with policies and legalities of employment decisions

The OHR recommends the Hiring Manager meet with the Search Committee prior to reviewing applications to discuss the search objectives and set expectations. In addition, make sure your committee understands their role in the process. This includes accepting interviews in Taleo, taking interview notes, and completing post-interview evaluations.
Outreach

Outreach is a major part of recruiting. The OHR is working to expand our outreach university-wide, but members of the search committee must also consider job-specific outreach each time a position is posted. This includes outreach at local meetings/conferences, as well as local, regional, and possibly national institutions and organizations.

Towson University is also committed to our outreach efforts by interviewing at least three individuals for each position. The interviews must be in-person interviews. The committee may conduct phone interviews prior to in-person interviews as an additional screening tool. Please contact your Employment Specialist with any issues in meeting this requirement.

Evaluating Your Applicant Pool

All applications are received and reviewed electronically. Only those with access to Taleo will see the list of applicants, but applicant information can be shared with others via email. The OHR strongly recommends bringing the committee together to review candidates and have a discussion around the selection process.

Taleo offers the ability to ask required and preferred screening questions as part of the application process. These screening questions are set-up ahead of time and are free of bias. It is important to use this tool when evaluating applicants. The OHR will remove any applicants that do not meet your requirements; however, the Hiring Manager has the opportunity to identify applicants that meet all or most of the preferred qualifications (identified in Taleo as “Assets”). The Hiring Manager must review the applicant materials to validate the answers to the screening questions, but should consider those that meet the preferences first in the process. Applicants not considered should be dispositioned to “Rejected” status with a status reason for not moving forward.

The committee must be aware of their own potential biases or influences, for instance, favoring candidates with similar backgrounds as committee members. Rather than considering if the candidate is a good fit, the committee should consider if the candidate can add value. Be mindful that those with non-traditional backgrounds enrich the diversity of Towson University and make a positive contribution to the workforce.
Interview Preparation and Questions

Once the committee has identified candidates for interview, the Hiring Manager (or another member with access in Taleo), must move those candidates to “To Be Interviewed” status (see Taleo training documentation for details). Why is this an important step? Having candidates in the correct status in Taleo offers your Employment Specialist more insight into where you are with your search. The Employment Specialist may recommend that you remove the posting (if you haven’t already), or make adjustments to your panel to ensure visual diversity.

According to the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC): “It is illegal for an employer to discriminate against a job applicant because of his or her race, color, religion, sex (including gender identity, sexual orientation, and pregnancy), national origin, age (40 or older), disability or genetic information.”

Ensure that interview questions or comments made during the interview are strictly job related and do not directly or indirectly touch on any of the above topics (see the Appendix section for details).

Your Employment Specialist can also help with interview questions. Questions should be based on job duties, qualifications, and competencies. It is integral that the committee use the same set of questions for each applicant. The OHR recommends you ask behavioral or situational interview questions, where you ask the applicant to provide an example of how s/he behaved or would behave in different situations (see the Appendix for details).

Post Interview Evaluations

All members of the interview panel must complete a post-interview evaluation. The evaluation process requires the interviewer to rate the applicant, and provide comments to back-up the rating. Comments must be related to the position and completed within a timely manner.
References

Reference checks can be a helpful tool in the interview process. In addition, Towson University strives to hire the most qualified candidate for each job opening, and contacting past references shows part of our commitment. Once a top candidate(s) is selected, typically after the in-person interview, the hiring committee must contact at least two professional references. Reference checks can be completed using a Word document, or using the Telephone Reference Check form found in the Forms Repository. It may also be noted if the reference was unable to provide information regarding the candidate, or could not be reached.

The Offer

Once all candidates are dispositioned in Taleo, interviews, post-interview evaluations, and references are completed, the hiring committee may request the OHR to make an offer to the top candidate. This request should come in the form of an email to the Employment Specialist, and should include candidate name, requested salary, supervisor name, and requested start date. The Employment Specialist will submit the offer through the Taleo approval process while reviewing the materials. Once the offer is approved, the Employment Specialist will make every attempt to contact the candidate within the following 48 hours.

Only the OHR may make an offer. The hiring committee can confirm interest in the position throughout the interview process, but at no point should any member of the committee infer or guarantee employment.
Candidate Notifications

It is the responsibility of the hiring committee to contact candidates that were brought in for an in-person interview. The OHR recommends the following verbiage: “Thank you for your interest in the (POSITION NAME) in the (DEPARTMENT NAME). The search committee has selected another candidate for this position. We greatly appreciate your time and interest with this position and highly encourage you to continue to view and apply for other job opportunities. Current job openings may be found at www.towson.edu/jobs.”

Onboarding

Once a candidate verbally accepts an official offer from the OHR, s/he will begin an onboarding process. This process is split in two parts. The first part of onboarding consists of a criminal background check, education verification, and completion of an I-9. These items must be completed prior to the candidate’s start date. Once the tasks are completed, the employee will move to the next part of the process, including reviewing benefits information, policies, and other required new hire forms. All new employees are required to attend Connections, New Hire Orientation, offered every Wednesday morning.
Appendix A: Illegal Interview Questions

Interview questions must be relevant to the job and designed to evaluate the candidate’s ability to perform the duties and responsibilities of the position. Questions which are not job related must be avoided. It is especially important to avoid topics designed or likely to elicit information regarding race/ethnicity, age, gender, religion, sexual orientation, disability, criminal record, or marital/parental status or plans. Occasionally, a candidate may offer this information during the course of the interview. The members of the committee should not document this information in interview notes unless specifically in the context of how this information relates to the position.

Examples of questions to avoid:

AGE: How old are you? How old is your spouse/children? When did you graduate high school/college/etc.? How long have you been working?

CITIZENSHIP: What country are you from? Are you a naturalized or native-born-citizen? When did you receive your citizenship?

CREDIT: Do you have any outstanding debt? Do you own property?

CRIMINAL RECORD: Have you ever been arrested? When was the last time you used illegal drugs?

DISABILITY: Do you have a disability? Have you ever been treated for any of the following diseases…?

LANGUAGE: Is English your first language? What is your native language? How did you acquire the ability to read, write, or speak a foreign language?

MARITAL STATUS: Do you wish to be addressed as Miss or Mrs.? Are you married? Do you have plans for marriage/children? Do you have a maiden name?

MILITARY: What type of discharge did you receive in the military?

ORGANIZATIONS: Can you tell us about all the clubs and/or societies you belong to?

RELIGION: What religious holidays do you practice?
Appendix B: Sample Interview Questions

Questions should be based on job duties, qualifications, and competencies. It is integral that the committee use the same set of questions for each applicant.

Examples of interview questions:

EDUCATION: Can you provide an example of how your education assisted your career path? How do you feel your past education has addressed skills needed for this position?

WORK HISTORY: Can you describe a difficult problem you had to overcome in your last position and the result? Can you describe one aspect of your last position that you would change, and how? Can you provide an example of a stressful situation and how you handled it? How would your supervisor and co-workers describe you? How did you positively impact your organization? Can you describe a time that you did not meet a professional goal, including the barriers, and how you handled? What aspects of your past job did you enjoy the most and the least? What is the single most important idea you contributed to your last job? With whom do you interact with on a regular basis within your last organization?

PROFESSIONAL/TECHNICAL SKILLS: Can you describe a time you provided an innovative approach or solution? Can you describe the process you used to analyze and implement a project? Can you provide an example of a time you delivered superior customer service? Can you provide an example of a time you used this (program/equipment/tool/etc.)? If a customer called with a problem, what questions or steps would you take to resolve it? If you were managing a project, what would you include in the agenda for your first team meeting?

JOB SPECIFIC: How does this position fit into your goals and objectives? What would be the most challenging about accepting this job, and how would you handle it? What specific strengths, knowledge, and skills do you bring to this position and department? Why do you think you’ll be successful in this position? Can you describe your professional expectations in this role and as an employee of TU?

PERSONAL SKILLS: At the start of each day, how do you determine what you need to do? Can you provide an example of how you have successfully worked independently, and in groups? Can you provide an example of a difficult situation that you were able to successfully navigate? Can you describe the process of handlings multiple competing priorities with little time? What aspect of your job provides the greatest satisfaction? Can you describe why your supervisory/leadership style is effective? Can you describe a time you felt frustrated at work and how you were able to handle it?