Salisbury UNIVERSITY

Search Committee Expectations

Staff

Fairness & Equity

- Follow all SU rules and government laws about fair treatment and not treating people unfairly. You can find these rules on the Office of Institutional Equity's website.

- Don't talk about sensitive topics with job seekers or use unfair information when making decisions. This includes things like gender, race, age, disability, and more. If a job seeker talks about personal things that don't relate to the job, steer the conversation back to the job.

Fairness & Equity

Illegal interview questions are ones that you're not allowed to ask because they could lead to discrimination. Stick to job-related questions only.

- Do you have any physical or mental disabilities?
- What country are you from?
- How often are you deployed for Army Reserve training?
- What is your gender, sex or sexual orientation?
- Are you married or single?
- What is your religion?

Fairness & Equity

Unconscious bias occurs when individuals make judgments or decisions influenced by stereotypes or personal preferences without conscious awareness. These biases can result in favoring certain individuals while treating others unfairly. Essentially, it's a subtle form of discrimination that operates beneath the surface of conscious thought, potentially impacting interactions and outcomes in various aspects of life. *For more examples refer to the file named **13 types of Unconscious Bias**.*

- **Stereotyping:** This is a generalized belief about a group of people where the interviewer has a clouded judgement of the candidate based on their social category and not the skills or competencies of the interviewee.

Fairness & Equity

- **The halo/pitchfork effect**: This is when you let one positive/negative trait overshadow everything else.

- **Nonverbal bias:** This is when the interviewer makes a judgement based on the candidate's nonverbal cues.

- **The “like me” syndrome:** This is when the interviewer is biased towards candidates who are similar to them in terms of background, interests, etc.

Fairness & Equity

- When reviewing applicants, use the same standards for everyone and ask the same questions. Make sure to evaluate them objectively and avoid vague criteria that can lead to inconsistent decisions. While a cover letter isn't necessary, it can be a plus if applicants have one. But don't automatically reject someone for not having one.

- "Equity" means fairness and justice, which is different from "equality." It acknowledges that not everyone starts from the same place and may need different support to succeed. Candidates may ask for accommodations during the hiring process, and you should direct them to HR for assistance.

Fairness & Equity

- Treat all applicants the same, regardless of their connection to the organization. Don't give special treatment or "courtesy interviews." Only interview candidates who are qualified, and make sure the process is consistent for everyone, **including internal candidates.**

- All candidates should go through the same assessment and interview process, even internal ones. Treat them equally, offering the same opportunities as other candidates, such as campus tours.

Confidentiality

- Maintain utmost confidentiality and only discuss the search with the search committee (if applicable), HR and the chain of management overseeing this position. There are sometimes others involved in the search process who have access to application materials such as cover letters and resumes and/or who participate in interviews. Search committee chairs and/or hiring managers are responsible for educating those individuals of the confidentiality requirements regarding the search.

Confidentiality

- No one is permitted to share application/search materials or information they've been privy to as part of the process with anyone outside of the committee, the hiring manager or HR. If someone approaches you and asks how the search is going, just tell them you can't discuss it. If they press you, refer them to HR.

- Confidentiality can be especially important for internal searches. Please be mindful others may overhear your discussions or may see your computer screen.

Documentation

- Documentation is critical and should support decisions made.
  - Minimum Qualification spreadsheet
  - Interview questions and answers (for each person who participates in the interview)
  - Candidate assessments forms (for each person who participates in the interview)

➢ **Comments on Appearance**:
  - Candidate was well-dressed and presented themselves professionally, unlike some of the other candidates who looked sloppy.
  - She seemed older than I expected. Are we sure she can keep up with the demands of the role?

Documentation

- **References to Protected Characteristics**:
  - He's a great candidate, but I'm a bit concerned about his accent. Will our clients understand him?
  - She's a single mother. Do you think she'll have the flexibility to meet the job's demands?

- **Stereotypical Assumptions**:
  - He's Asian, so I assume he's good with numbers. We could use someone like that in accounting.
  - She's a young woman, so I'm not sure if she has the leadership skills necessary for this role.

- **Language or Jargon Associated with Bias**:
  - He's a bit of an old-timer. I wonder if he'll struggle with the new technology we're implementing.
  - She's a real firecracker. We need someone who's more level-headed for this position.

Documentation

- **Inappropriate Questions or Probes**:
  - Are you planning on having children anytime soon? We need someone who can commit to the job long-term.
  - What church do you attend? We like to hire people with strong religious values.
- **Negative Characterizations or Generalizations**:
  - She's from the city. I'm not sure if she'll be able to handle the rural lifestyle here.
  - He's from the South, so I'm worried he won't fit in with our progressive company culture.
- **Bias in Evaluation or Feedback**:
  - She did a good job in the interview, but I'm concerned about her ability to handle the stress of the job.
  - He lacks confidence. I'm not sure if he has what it takes to lead a team.

Documentation

- **Lack of Consistency or Fairness**:
  - We asked all candidates about their extracurricular activities, but I didn't write down her response because it's not relevant.
  - I gave him a lower score for communication skills because English isn't his first language, even though he communicated effectively.
- **Implicit Bias or Microaggressions**:
  - You're so articulate for someone from your background.
  - You're too young to understand the complexities of this job.
- **Exclusionary Language or Attitudes**:
  - We need someone who's a good cultural fit, and I'm not sure if he'll mesh well with the team.
  - She's disabled, so I don't think she'll be able to keep up with the physical demands of the role.

Documentation

- Candidate Finalist Report should be done between round 1 and round 2 interviews and need all approvals before proceeding with scheduling finalist interviews
- 3 Reference checks (at least 1 supervisory, ask the same questions for each person contacted)
- Request to hire summary and documented approval from VP or AVP

➢ All these documents are important for retention and should be turned into HR in one packet at the conclusion of a search. If we were to receive a challenge related to a search, we should be able to look back at these documents to tell us why certain applicants/candidates were not selected at what stage and the documentation should show a fair process was followed.

Miscellaneous

- Please do not record virtual interviews
- MD Equal Pay Act - We must give salary range to those who have applied for job who ask for it and can't use someone's salary history in making assessments/decisions for the search, do not seek applicant wage history.
- It's necessary to communicate with internal candidates who were not selected, and it's the responsibility of the search chair to conduct these conversations.

Miscellaneous

- If at any time, anyone has any ethical or conflict of interest type of concerns, discuss with the committee chair if you are comfortable or bring them to HR. The chair or hiring manager is expected to bring any concerns forward to HR for discussion.

- The job market is tough for employers, it is important to move swiftly, assess applications throughout, once first considerate date hits review last few that come in and contact folks for interviews. I encourage search committees to go ahead and block time on calendars for future dates now.

Salisbury UNIVERSITY

Quick Links

- Competency Questions
- Candidate Interview Questions Form
- Candidate Assessment Form
- Telephone Reference Check Form

Salisbury UNIVERSITY

Search Committee Expectations

Staff