

# Search Committee, Chairperson, Hiring Official Guide

(where search committee functions as advisory group only)

The following guidelines have been developed to assist search committees with their responsibilities and to ensure compliance with university policy and employment law. **Not following these guidelines subjects a committee meeting to Florida Sunshine Law (see handout on search committee meetings and Florida Sunshine Law).**

1. A search committee gathers facts from application materials/interviews and reports that information to the hiring official.
2. Search committee members should devote the time necessary to study each candidate's application materials, fully participate in all committee activities, and meet established deadlines.

## Reviewing Application Materials:

- 1) Selection criteria is provided by the hiring official to assist the search committee with the review process. This can also be found on the online job posting under "Preferred Qualifications."
- 2) After Human Resources has approved the applicant pool, the committee should review the application materials of all applicants and forward the strengths and weaknesses on each to the hiring official for review.

Committee member may *individually* document the strengths and weaknesses of each applicant and provide this to the Search Committee Chair. The Search Committee Chair may compile the strengths and weaknesses provided by each committee member into one document and send the feedback to the hiring official for his/her review.

## Interviews:

- 1) The hiring official may ask the search committee to conduct interviews. It is the hiring official's responsibility to identify which candidates to interview and to provide this list to the committee. Sample interview questions may be found online at <http://uwf.edu/ohr/Employment/Behavior%20Based%20Interview%20Questions.pdf>.
- 2) After identification of the interviewees by the hiring official, the committee may conduct reference checks on the applicants who are selected for interviews prior to inviting the candidates to campus and provide the results to the hiring official.
- 3) Upon completion of the interviews, the committee should provide a list of strengths and weaknesses on each candidate interviewed to the hiring official. The hiring official will be responsible for identifying the finalist(s).

**Note:** It is not the responsibility of the search committee to develop selection criteria, rank applicants, identify interviewees, or select finalists. This must be done by the Hiring Official; otherwise, the meeting becomes subject to Florida Sunshine Law.

**Search Records:**

All public documents regarding the search should be provided to the Hiring Official to be included as a part of the official search records.

This completes the role of the search committee.

**Search Committee Tips:**

*Do not* select or reject applicants or identify applicants for interview.

*Do* compile a list of strengths and weaknesses on every applicant in the applicant pool based on the selection criteria and provide to the hiring official for his/her review.

*Do not* rank the applicants.

*Do* conduct interviews at the request of the hiring official and provide a list of strengths and weaknesses on the interviewees to the hiring official.

**SEARCH COMMITTEE CHAIR GUIDELINES**

1. The Search Committee Chair receives a charge from the hiring official regarding the search: committee make-up, criteria, interview questions, if applicable, and timeline.
2. The Chair
  - a. Provides leadership to the committee members and manages the search process to ensure it is efficient, effective, and accountable.
  - b. Informs the committee that they will function as an advisory group to the hiring official and will not make decisions regarding who is interviewed and who is identified as the finalist.
  - c. Coordinates with the hiring official to set up interview schedules for the applicants to be interviewed, if applicable.
  - d. Communicates with the hiring official to keep him/her informed of the status of the search.
3. Provides the hiring official with the committee's compiled list of strengths and weaknesses of each applicant, as well as those interviewed.
4. After the hiring official has identified a finalist, the Chair will need to update the statuses of each applicant on the online job posting site. Indicate who was interviewed, who was not hired and the reason, and who the finalist is.

5. Once a finalist has been identified, the following must be completed and forwarded to Human Resources. The committee chair can coordinate the following with the hiring official:
  - a. A **background screening form** must be completed and sent to Human Resources for processing. The background screening must be complete **prior to making an offer of employment**. You will be notified when you are approved to make an offer of employment  
<http://uwf.edu/ohr/internal/forms/formsAlpha/B/Background%20Screening.pdf> .
  - b. A **staff certification form** must be completed for all positions, with the exception of Faculty.  
<http://uwf.edu/ohr/internal/forms/formsAlpha/S/Staff%20Certification.pdf> .
  - c. **Official sealed transcripts** must be sent to Human Resources, if required for the position, with the exception of Faculty.
  - d. A **signed application** must be submitted to Human Resources for all new employees.
6. Per University Policy HR-20.00-2004/07, the hiring official is the record keeper for the search records. The chair should provide all search documents to the hiring official.

## HIRING OFFICIAL GUIDELINES:

1. The Hiring Official is responsible for the make up of the search committee, selection criteria, interview questions, identification of interviewees, and timeline.
2. The Hiring Official is the person who will be responsible for selecting the finalist(s) for the position.
3. The Hiring Official is responsible for maintaining the search records for four (4) years from the date of hire.

## CONFIDENTIALITY

All committee discussion is privileged information. Each member assumes the responsibility not to discuss any candidate's name, status, or the content of any committee conversation with any non-committee person or anyone not directly involved with the search within or outside the institution.

## QUESTIONS

If you have any questions during this process, please contact the Office of Human Resources at 850-474-2694 or ohr@uwf.edu.