Screening Applicants

Here are a few things to keep in mind when reviewing the applicants:

• When evaluating any criteria, the following factors can all be considered: Is it job related? How related? How extensive? How recent? How well presented?

• Each person screening applications must have a thorough understanding of the required and preferred qualifications. A definition of the criteria (i.e. what is ‘related experience’?) and a value assigned to that criteria (what is minimally related vs. exceptionally related?) should be provided to each screener prior to the review of application materials.

• The initial screening of applicants is based on the written application materials that applicants have submitted and is limited to only the qualifications that can be identified on the resume/application. Remember: screening should be an objective evaluation with the same criteria applied to each applicant. Personal knowledge should not be used in evaluating written materials.

• As you review each applicant's resume look for evidence of the required education and experience.

  If applicant does NOT meet all required qualifications, code as “Not Qualified”, i.e. do not assign a rating. Enter a comment to explain why the applicant was not qualified.

  If applicant meets all required qualifications, continue to the preferred qualifications. and assign a rating of 0-5 based on these qualifications.

• Make notes of any areas of concern. These should be discussed in the interview if the applicant rises to the top of the screening. Ensure concerns are business related and will not leave you open to possible discrimination charges. Contact the Office of Equal Opportunity & Diversity if you are unsure your concerns could be considered discriminatory.

• Make objective notes about strengths (“strong job progression”) or weaknesses (“no evidence of hands-on experience”) observed in the application materials or comments about indirectly related experiences (“ran quality control at ABC Mfg”) that may ultimately affect the decision.

• Guidelines on using the information from the questions on the Employment Application.

  Are you 18 years or older? You may eliminate an applicant from consideration who answers this ‘no’ IF the position requires work that prohibits persons under 18 from performing the duties. See Child Labor regulations.

  Are you legally authorized to work in the United States and Iowa State University? You may eliminate an applicant from consideration who answers this “No” IF you are not willing to allow for the time
it will take for the applicant to receive the authorization. For information on how long it will take to receive 
authorization, contact Deb Vance 294-0373 at International Students & Scholars.

**Are you related to any university employee who is in a supervisory position at ISU?**
You may eliminate an applicant from consideration who answers this “Yes” IF hiring the applicant would 
violate the rules on employing a relative.

**May we contact your current employer?**
If the applicant answers ‘No’, you should not contact their current employer without first discussing this 
with the applicant.

**Have you been convicted of a misdemeanor or felony?**
You may eliminate an application from consideration who answers “Yes” IF the conviction is recent and 
creates serious risk to ISU (Example: A conviction of theft for a position that handles cash.) For 
convictions that are not recent or where there is a question about risk, contact EOD/HRS.

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**Avoid Common Mistakes:**

**Common Mistake #1: Scoring applicants the same, or higher than the applicants, 
you have requested for interview approval.**
It is important if you choose candidates for interview over candidates with the same or higher score, you 
provide justification. This scenario could be justified, but most often reasoning is left out of the applicant 
notes, which prompts a call from EOD/HRS.

For example
- Applicant #1 scored 5 preferred
- Applicant #2 scored 4 preferred

You request to interview Applicant #2 but not Applicant #1 and there are no comments to explain.
To avoid this common mistake, include notes. This could be as simple as “references poor” which is 
simply stated and lets EOD/HRS know you realize the score is higher.

**Common Mistake #2: Changing the applicant’s status to “Not Qualified” if you are 
not interested in interviewing them even if they meet all the required qualifications.**
If the applicant meets the minimum required qualifications they are considered qualified and need to be 
rated on the preferred qualifications. They may not be the BEST qualified for the position thus their 
preferred rating would reflect that. You may choose a status of “Not Interviewed- Department decision” to 
indicate you do not wish to consider them.

**Common Mistake #3: Only scoring those applicants you wish to interview.**
All applicants received by the guarantee consideration date must be scored prior to requesting interview 
approval. This will let EOD/HRS know you have considered all applicants and have rated them based 
upon the advertised qualifications. If you receive an application after the guarantee consideration date 
and you review the materials, you must consider them at that point.

You can keep applications received after the guarantee consideration date in the “Under Review by 
Manager” status if you would like to consider them if the other applicants do not work out. But once you 
review the materials they become part of your pool.

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