Recruitment & Selection

Purpose of this Toolkit

To assist employees in the Division of Student Affairs and Academic Support in the application of best practices when it comes to the recruitment and selection process.

Best practices in recruitment and selection include the following steps:
- Planning
- Job analysis and writing a position description
- Search Committee process
- Recruitment
- Search Committee training
- Application Review
- Interview and Selection
- Record Keeping
- Reference Check
- Onboarding
- Process Evaluation

A poor recruitment and selection process increases the probability of a poor hire, and this can have a significant impact on the organization both financially and non-financially.

The financial cost of hiring a poor candidate extends beyond the costs involved in appointing the person; it also extends to the ongoing salary and when a probation period is not managed efficiently or if a position is different from what was advertised, possible legal costs.

A poor recruitment decision can also have a demoralizing effect on staff as their roles may be affected while time, money, and effort are spent bringing the recruit up to standard, impacting the motivation to carry out their own roles and possibly the productivity of the department or the Division of Student Affairs.

Effective recruitment and selection are foundational to achieving the strategic priorities of the Division of Student Affairs and Academic Support at University of South Carolina; Student Experience & Post-Graduate Success, Research, Scholarship & Community Impact, and Operational Excellence. By hiring individuals who not only possess the requisite skills but also embrace a student-centered mindset, our organization ensures high-quality service delivery that supports student success from matriculation through post-graduation.

Utilizing human resources best practices such as competency-based job profiling, structured interviews, and data-driven assessments enables us to predict the best-fit candidate for each role. That predictive alignment strengthens our institutional ability to build a capable workforce that advances holistic student engagement, supports scholarship and community partnerships, and underpins efficient, barrier-free operations aligned with our division's goals. In short, when we recruit thoughtfully, we do more than fill positions we invest in a team that lives our strategic vision and delivers on our promise of exceptional service.

Student Affairs and Academic Support
UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA

Planning

Planning is the first step in the process. It involves holistically looking at the recruitment and selection process and includes scheduling activities, resources and time to support the process. A sample 90-day timeline is included in the appendix.

- Selection committee members should have an interest in the position as well as a day-to-day job connection.
- Determine the ideal number of candidates you want to include in a phone pre-screening and for an on-campus interview.
- If possible, book time in advance to review applications and conduct phone and on campus interviews.

Good planning positively affects the experience of all parties involved, including the applicant.

Keep in mind:
A position description takes 4 to 15 days for approval once it reaches Classification and Compensation.
Job postings are typically approved within 24 hours once it reaches Talent Acquisition.
Positions should be posted a minimum of 5 days a *maximum* of 30.

Job Analysis and Writing a Position Description

The purpose of a position description is to document job duties, inform the employee of job responsibilities, serve as a communication tool between the supervisor and the employee, provide a basis for the employee planning stage of the performance management process, determine proper classification and compensation and serve as a basis for a job posting. Writing an effective position description begins with a job analysis.

To begin:
- Review the current position description.
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Consider:
- What skills does an ideal candidate need to successfully perform the role?
- What base of knowledge would you like them to have (e.g. knowledge of Student Development Theory, budget management, health and safety practices)
- What are the minimum qualifications a candidate needs to perform in this role?
- What preferred qualification does the role need?

Job Related Minimum Qualification Set by the state.	Typically requires a bachelor's degree and 1 year of experience.
Required Certification, Licensure/Other Credentials	CPA, MD, PhD.
Preferred Qualifications Qualifications you would prefer the candidate to posses but are not necessary for success. These do not change the screening qualifications.	Master's degree and 3 years' experience in student services.
Knowledge/Skills/Abilities This section should include the knowledge and skills a candidate needs to be successful in the position.	Knowledge of Student Development Theories.

The Director of Position Management for Student Affairs can help you aligning your position.

Start writing or updating your position description

Remember a good position description should accurately reflect the responsibilities of the role, using simple language to explain tasks, duties, and responsibilities of a position. It should not include any gender-coded words and avoid jargon and acronyms. There is a comprehensive pd tool in the HR/Finance ticketing system under Resources and a copy provided in the appendix.

Writing an effective position description is crucial for attracting qualified candidates and ensuring clarity about the role. Here are some tips:

- Start with a clear job title: Make sure the title accurately reflects the role's responsibilities and level within the organization.
- Provide a concise overview: Begin with a brief summary of the position, including its purpose, main responsibilities, and key objectives. This gives candidates a quick understanding of what the role entails.
- Outline key responsibilities: Detail the specific duties and tasks the role involves. Use bullet points for clarity and readability. Focus on essential functions and avoid listing every possible task.
- Be mindful of language and tone: Use clear, concise language, avoiding jargon or biased language.
- Be honest and transparent: Avoid overselling the role or exaggerating expectations. Be transparent about challenges, workload, and any potential downsides to ensure candidates have realistic expectations.
- Supervisors can use AI writing tools to assist with clariuty and formatting.
- Proofread and revise.

When a position is vacant, or a new position is created

- Review and complete the pd tool in the HR/Finance ticketing system under Resources. Meet with the Director of Position Management for Student Affairs if you need help, or have questions or concerns.
- Submit ticket to HR system and attach the pd update document.
- Meet with Director of Recruitment and Selection for Student Affairs or designated HR representative to discuss recruitment plans and timeline.
- Invite search committee members and include a copy of the position description. Ensure that the committee
- members chosen will have time to devote to the search. Choose members who will bring a variety of diverse perspectives to the interview process. Consider bringing colleagues from various departments of the university as committee members.
- If you select your search committee prior to posting, include their names when you submit a ticket to post your position. If this is done after the position is posted, inform the Director of Recruitment and Selection for Student Affairs or designated HR representative to update the posting, this will give the search committee access to review candidates.

Search Committee Process

A Search Committee is a more formal method of interviewing candidates. It generally will consist of three to five members, often with at least one member being from outside of the department or outside of Student Affairs and Academic Support, depending on the position. A search committee is required for all full-time staff positions. Any exceptions to this requirement must be approved by the Executive Director for Student Affairs and Academic Support.

Using Students and Community Partners

Students play a vital role in the interview and selection process for new hires. Their perspectives are essential, and we strive to ensure they have meaningful opportunities to engage with candidates and provide feedback. Best practices help ensure their voices are valued while keeping the process professional and equitable:

Clarify the Role of Students

- Make clear how their input will be incorporated (formal evaluation forms, debrief sessions, or written feedback).

Provide Training & Orientation

- Offer a brief training on search committee responsibilities, confidentiality, implicit bias, and professionalism.
- Explain what's appropriate to ask/avoid in interviews (e.g., not asking about family status, personal background, etc.).
- Share evaluation rubrics so students know how to assess candidates consistently.

Structure Student Involvement

- Bring students in after the candidate pool has been narrowed down to the first round selection by the search committee.
- Have students participate in phone interviews.
- Have students participate in candidate interviews, open forums, or presentations. *(Collaborate with students to develop interview questions that reflect their interests and concerns. This ensures that student voices are represented and that candidates address topics important to the student community.)*
- Students may join phone interviews to interact with candidates and ask questions.
- Provide a structured feedback mechanism using formal questions and rubrics
- Consider a student-only session with the candidate, followed by a private debrief with the committee.

Foster a Safe Environment for Input

- Make sure students feel their perspectives are respected.
- Committee chair should emphasize that student perspectives are essential, especially on teaching, mentoring, and accessibility.

Protect Confidentiality

- Remind students they cannot share candidate information outside the committee.
- Provide a clear accountability process if confidentiality is breached.

Give Students Feedback

- After the process, debrief with the student participants:
- Share how their input influenced the decision.
- Recognize their contribution as part of leadership development.

Involving **community partners** (such as employers, alumni, or community organizations) in a search committee or interview process can be valuable, but it needs clear structure. Here are the best practices:

- Define whether community partners will be full voting members or serving in an advisory role. Typically, they serve in an advisory/non-voting role rather than as decision-makers.
- Protect the confidentiality and institutional integrity, consider a required confidentiality agreement.
- Similar to students, bring community partners in after the candidate pool has been narrowed down by the search committee.
- Structure their engagement, consider focused involvement such as:
    - -Participating in campus visit interviews or forums.
    - -Offering feedback on community engagement/partnership potential.
    - -Joining a panel discussion with other external stakeholders rather than every step of the committee.

Community partners add credibility and broaden the perspective of a search process, but they should be well oriented, limited in scope, and advisory to preserve fairness, confidentiality, and institutional control.
Only University of South Carolina staff should be granted Search Committee access to view all applicant materials in the posting system. Students and community partners should not be given access to confidential applicant data.

Training

Search committees play a vital role in recruiting, evaluating, and recommending the most qualified candidates for employment by the division. Search committee members can be the first division employees that a candidate will meet. Each member has an opportunity to represent the Division of Student Affairs and Academic Support as a welcoming community during the search process. Search committees should be properly trained to serve in this capacity. Student Affairs and Academic Support is responsible for training search committee chairs and members. Best practices and overview are provided during the first meeting of the committee with the Director of Recruitment and Selection for Student Affairs or designated HR representative. The search committee chair, with assistance from the Director of Recruitment and Selection for Student Affairs or designated HR representative ensures each search committee member understands and follows the procedures outlined in this document.

Search Committee includes

- The Chair, a person in the same or a higher-level position than the one to be filled (often supervisor.)
- The remaining committee members will be chosen by the direct supervisor of the vacant role.
- Director of Recruitment and Selection for Student Affairs or designated HR representative, if requested, may sit in on interviews and be there to help monitor and assist the search committee, but will not have a vote in the selection process.

Search Committee Chair	Search Committee Member
• Serve as liaison between the committee, the hiring manager, and Director of Recruitment and Selection for Student Affairs or designated HR representative. • Call and facilitate meetings; ensure members understand the committee charge. • Maintain confidentiality about applicants, candidates and search committee proceedings. • Develop committee members' assignments and delegate tasks. • Work with the hiring manager and Director of Recruitment and Selection for Student Affairs or designated HR representative. to develop and make available tools, templates, interview questions and materials for conducting the search. • Ensure all records are maintained in compliance with FOIA requirements. • Ensure interviews and other evaluation materials are documented. • Correspond with semifinalists and finalists and check references. • Coordinate administrative and logistical support. • Serve as lead host for candidates on campus. • Coordinate the efforts of committee members. • Perform the duties of a regular committee member. • Perform other duties as requested by the hiring manager.	• Attend and participate fully in all committee meetings. • Attend and participate fully in all committee meetings. • Help to identify and contact potential applicants. • Maintain confidentiality about applicants, candidates and search committee proceedings. • Review candidates' resumes, CVs, cover letters and applications. • Screen applicants according to the selected evaluation criteria and committee charge. • Host candidates. • Participate in the interview process. • Perform other duties as assigned by the search committee chairs.

A search committee is considered a legal body of the university. As such, all screening and interview documents will be kept and are subject to the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests. For this reason, a valid explanation for eliminating or keeping each candidate is vital. This is also why completed screening tools should be accurate and unbiased. It is imperative that we interview the top-ranking candidates according to the forms, should SAAS receive a FOIA request.

Confidentiality

Maintaining confidentiality protects the integrity of the search process, and search committee members are required to maintain the confidentiality of applicant/candidate names, committee discussions and recommendations both during the search process and after the search process is complete. This protects the University as well as individuals under consideration who may not want their candidacy known to current employers. At the beginning of each search, all search committee members should sign the University of South Carolina Confidentiality Agreement for Search Committee Members. The search committee chair is responsible for ensuring all confidential materials are collected from committee members and all relevant and required documentation is submitted to the Director of Recruitment and Selection for Student Affairs or designated HR representative, assigned to your committee, a copy is provided in the appendix.

Once a posting is live

- Set up a meeting with the Director of Recruitment and Selection for Student Affairs to discuss:
- Discuss bias training, conflict of interest.
- Map out timeline of phone interviews on campus, start date etc. Confirm the job close date.
- Develop an application screening tool that identifies key qualifications and preferred previous experience related to each candidate's education and experience.
- Where to post position/ external advertisement.
- Discuss competencies necessary to perform the position to help create phone interview questions and on campus interview questions.

Application Review

The process of attracting appropriate and suitable candidates for your position is an important factor.

When reviewing an application creating a spreadsheet like the example below with the list of top qualifications and ranking your applicants is a helpful way to review candidates. A template can help ensure a fair assessment of candidates.

First Name	Last Name	Masters & 1 or Bachelor's & 3	Leading Teams	Program Design	Assessment	Developing Partnerships	Total Points	Interview	Reason
		Y/N	0,1,2	0,1,2	0,1,2	0,1,2		Y/N	
Carolina	Gamecock	Y	2	2	1	2	7	Y	
Russell	House	Y	0	2	1	0	3	N	Does not have required experience
Thomas	Cooper	Y	2	2	2	2	8	Y	
Darla	Moore	N	_	_	_	_	_	N	Does not have re-quired education

List your selection Criteria based on KSA's

- Use an Application Screening tool to evaluate the submitted materials to ensure the candidate is qualified by comparing them to the position description provided. If the candidate does not meet the minimum qualifications, there is no need to evaluate the candidate. The screening tool, often referred to as a screening document or matrix, is numerically based.
- Remember part time experience is counted as half.
- The scores of each candidate should be added together. The 2-3 that rise, numerically, to the top are who should be interviewed first.

Applications may often show a candidate's current salary. Please do not show bias by not interviewing a candidate because their current salary is higher than the pay range. They should be evaluated on their experience only. A record should be maintained by the search committee chair of applicants that have been rejected from the pool along with the reason for their rejection. Examples of reasons for rejection are listed below:

REASONS FOR APPLICANT REJECTION
1. Does not have required experience
2. Does not have required education
3. Could not contact
4. Qualifications not competitive with other applicants
5. Applicant declined interview
6. Position will not be filled at this time
7. Insufficient education and/or experience provided
8. Does not have required computer/software skills
9. Does not have required licensure/certification
10. Other
11. Applicant Withdrew

- After the committee chooses who they would like to interview, the chair will submit the candidates' names to The Director of Recruitment and Selection or the designated HR representative. This should be completed prior to setting up the phone interviews.
- The Director of Recruitment and Selection for Student Affairs or designated HR representative reviews all candidates selected for phone interviews to confirm candidates are qualified.
- Keep in mind that all interviews need to be consistent. If you bring your first candidate to campus, they all need to come on campus. If you require a presentation, they will all need to give a presentation on the same topic.

After conducting phone, Microsoft Teams or Zoom interviews, the search committee will meet to discuss the candidates. Completed applicant screening tools should be submitted to the supervisor or search committee chair before this meeting. The supervisor or chair will total the scores for each candidate to identify the top applicants, who will then be invited to campus for in-person interviews. The supervisor or chair is responsible for scheduling phone interviews. Email templates for interview confirmations can be found in the appendix. After completing phone interviews, schedule a meeting with the search committee to review feedback and recommend finalists to the supervisor or chair.

Interview and Selection

After you have reviewed your applicants you will have your top candidates who you will phone interview before you bring your top 3 to 4 to campus. Design your interview questions based on the selection criteria from your KSA's. You can create a template to assist with scoring, for example:

<table>
<tr><td>Applicant Name</td><td colspan="2"></td></tr>
<tr><td>Question 1</td><td colspan="2"></td></tr>
<tr><td>KSA – Ability to make clear decisions under pressure</td><td colspan="2">Score:</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3">Definition: The thought process of selecting a logical choice from the available options.

When trying to make a good decision, a person must weigh the positives and negatives of each option, and consider all alternatives. For effective decision making, a person must be able to forecast the outcome of each option as well, and based on all these items, determine which option is the best for that particular situation.</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3">Question: Describe a time when you had to make a difficult decision in a high pressure situation. What was the setting, what did you do and what was the outcome?</td></tr>
<tr><td>Situation</td><td>Action</td><td>Result</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3">Additional Notes:</td></tr>
<tr><td>Question 2</td><td colspan="2"></td></tr>
<tr><td>KSA –</td><td colspan="2">Score:</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3">Definition:</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3">Question:</td></tr>
<tr><td>Situation</td><td>Action</td><td>Result</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3">Additional Notes:</td></tr>
</table>

Scoring should be well defined:
0= Not acceptable – Applicant did not demonstrate KSA being measured
1= Less than acceptable – Applicant insufficiently demonstrated KSA
2= Acceptable – Candidate showed sufficient evidence of KSA
3= Above Average answer – Candidate demonstrated above average use of KSA
4= Excellent – Candidate more than significantly demonstrated the KSA

- Questions should be fair and unbiased
- Observe equal opportunity laws by not including potentially discriminatory questions; A list of illegal questions[4] is provided in the appendix
- Questions should be related to job success
- All records are subject to FOIA request.

Phone Interview Etiquette

- Each committee member should introduce themselves to the interviewee and describe their role at the university.
- Give a brief overview of the university and department. This is a good time to brag a little about the University, the benefits of working here, etc.
- Explain the format of the interview to put them at ease.
- Let the applicant do most of the talking. Do not interrupt them unless it is to gently redirect them to the question at hand.
- Do not allow one member of the interview group to monopolize the interview. Allow all members the opportunity to ask the interview questions.
- Observe non-verbal cues
- Take notes. Use the pre-determined Interview Question/Evaluation tool as this will be the tool used to highlight strengths and weaknesses of each candidate.
- Make sure you leave time for the candidates to ask questions.
- Describe the rest of the search process and let them know a realistic time frame that this process will take
- Always thank the candidate for their time.

Before your first on-campus interview

- Confirm with key stakeholders' availability on proposed dates (confirm if AVP of area needs to interview)
- Discuss expected salary range with candidate, we can't confirm a number until we submit their specific experience to Classification and Compensation.
- Moving expenses $1500 standard, confirm with the Director of Recruitment and Selection for Student Affairs or designated HR representative appropriate amount before offering.
- Is travel involved? If so, contact Finance team via ticketing system and utilize Travel Process for travel approval and arrangements. Please note, it typically takes at least 10 business days to get travel approved for the candidate.
- Book Rooms for interviews.
- Supervisor or Search Committee coordinate any student interview participation involvement.
- Closer to the date, attach itinerary to candidate (template at end), questions for interview groups –
- Coordinate pick up for candidates from hotel or airport. Airport shuttle is available at Courtyard Marriott.
- Plan lunches with appropriate team members, ensure team members understand reimbursement process.
- Is a presentation required? Communicate presentation prompt to each candidate.
- Create a folder for the candidate with important documents about Student Affairs and departmental area as appropriate. Include insurance premiums and retirement information.

After the interview

- Check references for top candidate
- Discuss salary with Director of Recruitment and Selection who will submit selected candidate to Class and Comp for approval.
- Submit SAAS Hiring Packet in Resources to Ticketing system
- Are moving expenses needed? These need to be added to offer letter and moving agreement sent to candidate.
- Once supervisor makes verbal offer, HR Representative will send offer letter via Adobe Sign.
- Finance team member works with employee on reimbursement once hired. Receipts are required.

After a candidate accepts an offer

- Notify any key campus partners of arrival of new employees
- Send an announcement to the Search Committee to thank them for their time and participation.
- Send the Director of Recruitment all interview documents
- Set your employee up for first day success, review the Onboarding Tip Sheet on the Student Affairs Human Resources Website.)
- Send out email to department announcing employee

Record Keeping

The Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) is a United States federal law that grants the public access to information possessed by government agencies. As a public institution the university is subject to state FOIA guidelines. A candidate can request their personal records from the recruitment process. It is important to keep consistent and accurate records. A FOIA checklist[5] is included in the appendix.

Reference Check

The Employment Office is responsible for verifying an applicant's educational background or obtaining a criminal background, this is done through the hiring proposal. The truth behind references is not always as straightforward as it seems.

A glowing reference doesn't necessarily guarantee an ideal employee, and an evasive response might be hiding critical information. To distinguish between genuine praise and strategic evasion, ask specific questions. Instead of relying on general inquiries, ask detailed, job-related questions that require specific examples of the candidate's performance. This can prompt the reference to provide more nuanced information.

1. Can you confirm the candidate's employment details? Start with basic information to ensure that the candidate's work history aligns with what was provided on their resume.
2. What was the candidate's role and responsibilities in your organization? Gain an understanding of the candidate's specific duties and how they contributed to the team or company.
3. How would you describe the candidate's work performance? Encourage the reference to provide details about the candidate's strengths and areas for improvement.
4. What were the candidate's key accomplishments in their role? Ask about specific achievements or projects the candidate worked on to assess their impact.
5. Can you comment on the candidate's ability to work in a team? Understand how well the candidate collaborated with colleagues and contributed to a positive team dynamic.
6. How does the candidate handle pressure and tight deadlines? Assess the candidate's ability to manage stress and meet deadlines, which is crucial in many work environments.
7. Did the candidate demonstrate strong communication skills? Inquire about the candidate's written and verbal communication abilities, as effective communication is often vital in the workplace.
8. How did the candidate handle challenges or conflicts in the workplace? Learn about the candidate's problem-solving skills and ability to navigate challenging situations.
9. Was the candidate reliable and punctual? Verify the candidate's attendance and punctuality to ensure they are dependable.
10. Would you rehire the candidate? This question can provide a straightforward indication of the reference's overall satisfaction with the candidate's performance.
11. Can you describe the candidate's work style and approach to tasks? Understand the candidate's approach to work, whether they are detail-oriented, proactive, or prefer working independently.
12. Did the candidate require a lot of supervision or were they self-motivated? Assess the candidate's level of independence and self-initiative in their previous role.

Pay attention to the tone of the reference's voice and any hesitations in their responses because uncomfortable pauses or a lack of enthusiasm may suggest underlying concerns. Never rely on only one reference. Reach out to multiple references to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the candidate's performance.

The Division of Human Resources has the following guidelines posted for reference checks.

1. You should state during the interview with a job applicant that references will be checked. Also, don't just rely on letters of reference or personal references provided by the job applicant.
2. Notify candidates that reference checks will be conducted prior to calling the references.

3. A telephone reference check takes less time than a written reference check and usually yields more information. Forms rarely uncover negative information. Employers hesitate to put into writing what they may say in a conversation.
4. The hiring supervisor should make the phone call because he or she is most familiar with the information received from the applicant and the responsibilities of the job. Supervisors should be prepared with a written list of questions to ask.
5. When calling an applicant's reference: identify yourself immediately; tell the reference about the position for which the applicant is being considered.
6. To gain as much information as possible, let the person speak without interrupting. If the reference pauses in the conversation, it usually means he/she has other information and is hesitant to share this information. Get them to talk about everything that would be helpful, but only ask for information that will be used in your hiring decision.
7. Again, ask only job-related questions and document all answers. Avoid questions that can be answered "yes" or "no."
8. One important question to get answered is whether the previous employer would rehire the applicant you are considering.

There are many personal questions you must avoid when conducting a reference check. If you have doubts as to whether you should ask a question, **don't.** A list of illegal questions is included in the appendix,

The Division of HR also has a Reference Check Form that can be found at https://sc.edu/about/offices_and_divisions/human_resources/docs/interview.pdf. This form should be retained for three years with your hiring records for the position.

Onboarding

After effective recruitment and selection, one of the most important ways that organizations can improve the effectiveness of their talent management systems is through the strategic use of onboarding. The onboarding process focuses on helping employees new to your department and new to the university become acclimated to the work environment. University Orientation New Employee Benefits and Payroll Orientation is offered monthly in-person and online for new employees, on or after Day 1 of employment. Included in this session are training and development offerings to ensure your success during onboarding and beyond, valuable benefits information to help you make informed decisions, as well as pay and timekeeping information. To register for Orientation, go to the HR Training Calendar.

The Division of Student Affairs Orientation is offered in the fall and spring semesters. This program provides new staff with the opportunity to meet and network with colleagues, learn more about the division, and engage directly with division leadership. Visit the Staff Engagement Calendar to see upcoming orientation dates.

Onboarding Champions

The Student Affairs and Academic Support Human Resources Team aims to provide meaningful connections to new employees in the division by having them meet with Onboarding Champions. Onboarding Champions are established employees who volunteer to ensure new employees are connected to various departments across student affairs and academic support to learn about the division holistically.

Please refer to the Onboarding Packet to help you with onboarding an employee to your department.

Recruitment and Selection Process Evaluation

Evaluating your selection process will help you identify areas where you can improve.

	Always (4)	Usually (3)	Sometimes (2)	Rarely (1)	Never (0)
1. How often do you review and update your position descriptions?					
2. How often do you involve a subject matter expert when reviewing position descriptions?					
3. How often do you communicate your department's mission and values to candidates during the recruitment and selection process?					
4. How often do you use scoring rubrics when evaluating candidates?					
5. How often do you use structured behavioral interview questions?					
6. Are interview questions structured around the job's required knowledge, skills, and expertise?					
7. Do interview panel members score applicants independently before discussion?					
8. How often are selection decisions based on the aggregated numerical scores applicants receive?					
9. How often do you use structured reference checks?					
10. How often do you use a structured onboarding process?					
11. How often are probationary periods formally monitored?					
12. How often do you evaluate your recruitment process using internal feedback?					

Scoring
37 and above: You have an efficient, well managed interview and selection process. This toolkit can also be used to evaluate processes and measure improvement over a number of years through a periodic assessment.
25-37: You have very good structure to your recruitment and selection process. Look at areas where you scored three or below and incorporate them into your recruitment and selection process.
13-24: The recruitment and selection process needs improvement, incorporating the best practices in this tool kit can help your process.
0-12: The best practices presented in this toolkit can help you tremendously.

Review any areas scored three or below and incorporate improvements into your recruitment and selection process.

Appendix

90-Day Recruitment & Selection Timeline

Phase & Week Range	Key Activities	Responsible Parties	Notes / Deliverables
Planning (Weeks 1–2)	• Define hiring need and secure budget. • Identify search committee (3–5 members, diverse representation). • Schedule committee orientation with HR. • Map out target dates for posting, screening, and interviews. • Draft timeline for committee meetings and candidate travel if applicable.	Hiring Manager & Director of Recruitment and Selection	Planning document complete; tentative interview weeks blocked on calendars.
Job Analysis & Position Description (Weeks 3–4)	• Review/update position description using HR/Finance PD tool. • Define minimum and preferred qualifications (KSA-based). • Confirm classification and compensation level. • Submit PD for approval (typically 4–15 days).	Hiring Manager & Director of Position Management	Approved PD on file; ready to post.
Recruitment (Weeks 5–6)	• Meet with HR to finalize posting language and advertising plan. • Post position to USC Talent Acquisition portal (approval typically < 24 hours). • Advertise externally (as needed). • Keep posting open 10–21 days for competitive pool.	Director of Recruitment and Selection / HR & Search Committee Chair	Position posted; applicant tracking initiated.
Application Review (Weeks 7–8)	• Committee reviews applications using screening matrix. • Verify minimum qualifications first. • Identify top 5–7 for phone/Teams interviews. • Submit selected names to HR for review/approval before interviews.	Search Committee & Chair	Screening matrix completed and stored for FOIA compliance.
Phone/Virtual Interviews (Weeks 9–10)	• Conduct structured phone/Teams interviews using approved KSA-based questions. • Score candidates using evaluation rubric. • Select 3–4 finalists for campus interviews. • Send interview confirmation emails to candidates.	Search Committee & Chair	Interview ratings documented; finalists chosen.

On-Campus Interviews (Weeks 11–12)	• Coordinate campus itinerary (department meetings, student sessions, presentations). • Include student and/or community partner panels (advisory only). • Gather structured feedback from all participants. • Committee submits recommendations to hiring manager.	Search Committee & HR & Department Leadership	Candidate packets, scoring sheets, and feedback summaries complete.
Reference Checks & Final Selection (Weeks 13–14)	• Hiring manager or chair conducts structured reference checks. • Confirm top candidate's salary expectations with HR. • Director of Recruitment submits hiring proposal to Class & Comp for approval. • Once approved, verbal offer extended followed by official offer letter via Adobe Sign.	Hiring Manager & Director of Recruitment & HR	Offer approved and accepted; all documentation filed.
Pre-Onboarding (Weeks 15–16)	• Notify campus partners and committee of selection. • Submit onboarding packet and moving expense forms if applicable. • Plan first-day orientation and assign Onboarding Champion.	Hiring Manager & HR	New employee ready for Day 1; onboarding logistics confirmed.

Summary Timeline Overview

Month / Days (Approx.)	Milestone
Days 1 – 30	Planning, Job Analysis, and PD Approval
Days 31 – 60	Job Posting, Recruitment, and Application Review
Days 61 – 75	Interviews (Phone + Campus)
Days 76 – 90	Reference Checks, Selection, and Offer

Tips for Success

- Pre-book interview times early to keep the process within 90 days.
- Use structured rubrics to ensure consistent, bias-aware evaluations.
- Communicate status updates to applicants and committee members weekly.
- Document every decision — all records are subject to FOIA retention.
- Align with division priorities — emphasize student-centered service, operational excellence, and diversity in each step.

Illegal and Legal Questions

Subject	What can't I ask?	What can I ask?
Age	How old are you? What year did you graduate? What is your birthday?	Are you over 18?
Citizen/National Origin	Are you a U.S. citizen? What is your native language? Where were you/your parents born?	Are you authorized to work in the United States? (not necessary to ask this - this is verified with the I-9 at time of hire) What language(s) do you read/write fluently? (only if required by the position)
Marital/Family Status	Are you married? Do you plan to have a family? Do you have any children? What are your child care arrangements?	Would you be able and willing to travel as needed for the job? (only if required by the position) This position requires occasional overtime (nights and/or weekends); would this present a problem? Would you be willing to relocate if necessary? Note: These questions should be asked of ALL applicants if applicable.
Affiliations	What clubs or social organizations do you belong to?	List any professional or trade organizations you consider relevant to the position.
Personal	How much do you weigh? How tall are you?	Are you able to lift a 50lb weight and carry it 10 yards, as this type of physical activity is part of the job? (only when specifically required in main duties of the job, and LHR should be consulted)
Disabilities	Do you have any disabilities? Do you have any medical conditions? How is your health? Do you need an accommodation to perform this job?	Are you able to perform the essential functions of this job, with or without an accommodation?
Arrest Record	Have you ever been arrested?	(At the time of offer, LHR will advise the candidate that the offer is contingent on completion of a sufficient background check.)
Military Record	If you were in the military, were you honorably discharged?	In what branch of the armed services did you serve? What type of training did you receive in the military?
Religion	What religious holidays do you observe? Does your religion prohibit you from working any particular days?	(There are no legal questions related to this subject.)

Position File Checklist (FOIA)

1. CANDIDATES
- ☐ Printed list of all the candidates that applied for the position

2. PRE-SCREENING
- ☐ Telephone Interviews (if applicable) – including notes, questions, responses, etc.
- ☐ Hard copy of portfolios, surveys, writing samples, etc.

3. INTERVIEWS
- ☐ Candidate Interviewed - Application, Resume, Cover Letter, and other application documents
- ☐ Interview Schedule – including Telephone and Skype
- ☐ List of interview questions and responses
- ☐ Notes
- ☐ Rating Guides/Evaluations

4. DEMOGRAPHICS
- ☐ EEO Report (Accessible from PeopleAdmin by your division contact)
- ☐ Copy of the Underutilized Letter/EEO Letter

5. COMMUNICATIONS
- ☐ All email communications with candidates
- ☐ All email communications with the Search Committee or HR

6. ADVERTISEMENT
- ☐ A list of the places the position was advertised

7. FINALIST
- ☐ Application, Resume, Cover Letter, and other application documents for each finalist
- ☐ Reference Checks

Hiring Manager's Signature: ______________________________ Date:________________

Travel Process - Student Affairs and Academic Support

1. Create a ticket in Finance system: Travel: Interview Travel-Non-employee
    - Name of candidate
    - Department and position
    - Dates of Travel
    - Estimated Amount for flights, hotel, meals or gas mileage reimbursement
    - Full address of candidate
    - Accounts to be charged

- ◊ Call candidates and confirm their interest in coming to campus and the salary range meets their expectations.
- ◊ Email to book nights in hotel at Courtyard Columbia Downtown or the Graduate.
- ◊ Courtyard Downtown Columbia has an airport shuttle you can request when confirming reservation. Hotel shuttle is not available on Sunday therefore the supervisor or Search Committee member will have to pick up candidate from hotel if they arrive on Sunday.
- ◊ Email Randy@travelunlimited.com to book travel for flights, include candidate email so Randy can email the candidate to request necessary info and check flight before booking. Randy will also let you approve flight and cost before booking. Example of email below, Travel Unlimited will require a TA Number

Hi Randy-

Can we book travel for __________ travel to Columbia from _________on Monday, September 19 afternoon and fly out Tuesday, September 20 afternoon? Their email is_________________

1. 1. Once candidate is confirmed, book a room in Russell House to hold interviews and decide who needs to participate/meals/one on one time etc. Have questions for each interview group.

Emailing the Candidate about Interviews

Candidate Interview Confirmation

Email subject line: Interview with The Division of Student Affairs for [Position Title] Dear/Hi [Candidate Name]

We are pleased to confirm your interview for the position of [job position]. Your interview will take place with [interviewer details — full name and job title] on [date, time, duration and time zone, for example, Monday, March 15, 10am-11am EST]. Our office is located at [full address, for example]. For detailed directions, please click here [insert directions link]. [Add any other location details, such as access to the building or identification card requirement].I am attaching the schedule for the day.

During this meeting, we will [outline the format of the interview and mention possible topics]. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me by email [email info] or at [phone number].

We look forward to meeting with you and discussing this opportunity at [company name] further. Best/Kind regards,

[full name and signature]

Example of what to send on interview participation invites:

Hi!

We are excited to share we have [X number] four candidates coming to campus to interview for the position of [job position].

I appreciate your participation. I will add candidate materials and questions to the calendar invite.

On campus email template to candidate:

We are looking forward to having you on campus on Tuesday! I am attaching your interview schedule for your review, please let me know if you have any questions or dietary restrictions. Your confirmation number for the Courtyard Columbia Downtown at USC is for Monday, September 19 night, you should have also received your flight details via email. The hotel address is 630 Assembly Street, Columbia SC 29201. The hotel shuttle will pick you up from the airport on Monday afternoon and will pick you up for dinner at 6:00 p.m.

I am attaching some resources regarding Columbia neighborhoods as well!

Please reach out if you have any questions!

UNIVERSITY OF
SOUTH CAROLINA

Confidentiality Agreement for Search Committee Members

As a member of a Search Committee for a position within Student Affairs and Academic Support at The University of South Carolina, I understand that the ultimate success of our endeavor and the integrity of the University depend on this search being conducted in an impartial, ethical and professional manner. In consideration of my designation as a member of this Search Committee, I hereby agree to the following:

1. I understand that this Search Committee's role is to recommend candidates to the hiring authority who has the ultimate authority to select a candidate of choice.

2. I understand that I must commit and make decisions without regard to any biases of individuals based on protected class and non-job-related criteria. It is our policy to provide equal employment opportunities for all individuals without regard to race, sex, religion, color, national origin, age, disability, protected veteran status, genetic information, sexual orientation, gender identity, or any other classification protected by applicable law.

3. As a member of the Search Committee, I accept the responsibility of conducting myself in a professional manner as a representative of my department and The University of South Carolina.

4. I acknowledge that all information concerning the candidate pool is extremely confidential and agree to permanently protect the identity of individuals who have expressed interest in exploring this opportunity, including individual qualifications and merits.

5. I agree to maintain ***absolute confidentiality about all discussions*** of the Search Committee, both during the search process and after its completion. I understand that any breach in confidentiality could result in considerable damage to the reputations and/or livelihoods of the candidates, the Search Committee, and the University. I understand that I may be removed from the Search Committee if I breach any of these confidentiality obligations or fail to act in a professional manner. I also understand that should I be removed, all the terms of this agreement are still applicable and binding upon the termination of the committee.

6. I agree that any and all information in the form of papers, books, files, documents, electronic communications, or in any other form or format which comes into my possession and relates to the work of the Search Committee is confidential other than information that is or becomes publicly known other than through my disclosure.

7. Upon the request of the Chair of the Search Committee, I agree that I will return or destroy all materials which I have received.

I have read, understand, and agree to abide by all of the terms of this Confidentiality Agreement as a condition of my service as a member of the Search Committee.

*Signature:*_______________________ *Date:*________________