

RICE Works Newsletter

7 Mistakes Hiring Managers Should Avoid:

1. Failure to Prescreen Candidates

A few minutes on the phone can save you hours from unnecessary interviews!

2. Failure to Prepare Candidates

Brief candidates on details of the organization, position & other interviewers, so time in the interview can be spent determining skills and fit for the open position.

3. Failure to Prepare other Interviewers.

Plan ahead, make sure everyone is on the same page prior to the interview!

4. Relying Solely on the Interview to Evaluate a Candidate.

Utilize skills assessments, writing and/or work samples when appropriate.

5. Evaluating Only Personality, and Not Skills and Experience.

It's nice to hire someone you like, but it's more important to hire the strongest and best candidate.

6. Failure to Differentiate the Critical Job Skills

Focus on 3 or 4 of the most critical characteristics and don't settle for anyone that doesn't bring them to your workplace.

7. Using Too Small a Candidate Pool

Don't settle; it's better to reopen your search!

- HR Daily Advisor 12/08

Rice University HR Recruitment

Put on Your Detective Hat and Become an Employment Detective!

We are often asked in recruitment "how can we be sure we're hiring the best candidate for the job?" While nothing is foolproof, you can incorporate some key methods to help you identify the best candidate.

Once you've posted a strong job description, start with reviewing the applications and resumes with a closer eye – looking for clues that might indicate the type of employee this candidate currently is and could be for you. You can also utilize behavioral based questions in the interviews, as well as trying to conduct the interviews with a panel to get a better sense of the candidates' knowledge, skills

and abilities (KSAs). Finally you can complete reference checks on your finalist(s) before submitting a hiring proposal. By doing all of this, you become an "employment detective" of sorts, uncovering vital information necessary to assist you in hiring the best candidate for the job!

When reviewing applications, here are some areas to pay special attention to:

- Candidate has several gaps in employment, job hopping from one job to the next in a short amount of time (even at the same company), excessive layoffs, short tenure, etc.

- Candidate notes they require visa sponsorship. This is not a problem, but you will want to investigate costs, process and possible delay in start date.
- Pay attention to all sections of the applications — educational background, criminal history, nepotism, etc.

As you begin to prepare for the interviews, we would suggest you put together a list of questions to be used for all the interviews, based on your job description that includes behavioral based questions.

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Weather Report Indicates a



Freeze

As you have most likely heard, Rice has instituted a hiring freeze for all staff positions, except those that are fully funded by research funds. The freeze went into effect on November 24, 2008 and will continue until further notice.

This action, along with a small reduction in operating budgets, is intended to recoup dollars in order to provide some cushion to help with the fiscal year 2010 (July 1, 2009 to June 30, 2010) budget and as well as future budgets. Due to the current economic conditions, Rice is expecting a lower rate of increase for our endowment distribution than had been assumed this past summer.

Information regarding procedures and details on the freeze was sent to all Deans, Vice Provosts and Vice Presidents the week of December 8 along with information on how to request exceptions for jobs deemed critical to the operation of the University.

Below are situations effected by the hiring freeze. Greater detail can be obtained from your Dean's or Vice President's office, or by contacting your HR staff recruiter.

Hiring situations subject to the hiring freeze:

- Jobs posted or in active search mode as of November 24, 2008
- Future staff postings
- Temporary hires for greater than 30 day assignment
- Reappointment of existing temporaries

Exceptions to the hiring freeze:

- Regular and temporary staff positions funded 100% by research funds.
- New temporary hires for less than 30 days (with approval of Dean or VP)

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Recruitment Surveys: Hiring Managers Perspective

In our last newsletter we shared survey results from our new hires. This month we'd like to focus on results from our recruitment satisfaction survey sent to hiring managers after a staff hire is completed.

As with the feedback gathered from the new hires, we have found this information to be valuable in assessing ways to continuously build upon and improve our services to you. For all who have participated in the surveys, THANKS!

Next time you complete a staff hire, please watch for the survey invitation which will be sent to you via e-mail. Your feedback is crucial to improving the quality of work we provide as well as the quality of your new hire!

Your Recruiter

The first part of the survey focuses on the professionalism, customer service and knowledge of your staff recruiter. We are thrilled to report that we consistently have high marks in these areas.

Level of satisfaction with information provided regarding recruitment & hiring process:

82%, Very satisfied
18%, Satisfied

Recruiter provided consistent and professional customer service:

85% Strongly agreed
14% Agreed

Recruiter's understanding and knowledge of my department:

83%, Excellent
14%, Above Average
3%, Average

Rating of my recruiter's knowledge of the recruitment process (applicant review, interviewing, etc).

80%, Excellent
10%, Above average
10%, Average

Quality & Quantity of Applicants

In order to find the best hire, you need to develop an adequate pool of applicants in regard to quantity and quality.

Below you will see the results averaged from our all of our surveys. During your next search, if you find you're anything less than satisfied, communicate that immediately with your recruiter. Your recruiter can help you identify ways to build your pool.

When asked how satisfied hiring managers were with the quantity of applications:

56%, Very Satisfied
24%, Satisfied
20%, Somewhat Satisfied

Regarding satisfaction with the quality of applications, hiring managers said:

32%, Very Satisfied
45%, Satisfied
18%, Somewhat Satisfied
5%, Not Satisfied

Referrals

In most searches you will identify a couple of top candidates but only hire one. To help "share" those other quality candidates, we ask hiring managers to provide information on other candidates they identified, but didn't hire, that might be a good fit for Rice in another position.

The recruiters take that information, review the candidate, and then share that information with other hiring managers who are in active searches that might be a good match for the 2nd or 3rd "runners up."

Through this process we have identified 10 candidates and have actively shared those resumes with others.

We encourage you to give us this feedback, either through the survey or by calling your recruiter.

Recruitment Best Practices

We have a short list of best practices that we firmly believe impact the quality of a hire and that everyone should take advantage of in their searches. In the survey, we ask hiring managers about their adoption of these practices, and here's what we know from the latest survey.

Interview Format

20% One-on-One only
30% Group/Panel Interview Only
50% Both one-on-one and group interviews.

Best practice is to make sure that you have some level of group/panel interviews. **Way to go!**

Used Skills Assessments

10% — Yes
90% — No

We need improvement!

Skills assessment (free to the department) are of great use in administrative support positions. Talk to your recruiter to learn more!

Aware that recruiter can help with interview questions and interview techniques?

100% — Yes !
0% — No

Did you check references on your final candidate?

100% — Yes !
0% — No

This one seems like a no-brainer, but you never know!

What worked best for you?

Over the past year, here are a few of items that hiring managers have indicated worked well for them:

- ability to see applications on-line in real time and be able to update statuses
- quickness of the hiring process once the final candidate was chosen

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Wiley's Words of Wisdom

When preparing to post a position in RICEWorks, it is important to keep in mind what information you want to learn about the applicant. One tool that is available to you is the screening questions included in the application. Your recruiter will always include questions that directly reflect the posted requirements, and applicants can be screened out depending on how they answer those questions. But if you want to know more about an applicant's experience and/or knowledge in a certain area, additional screening questions can help.

It can be very helpful to create some open-ended questions to get more information from applicants. These questions can be very similar (or even the

same) as the open-ended, behavioral based questions used in interviews. Questions like this will usually begin with 'Describe a time when you had to...' or 'Explain in detail when you had to use...' These questions can reflect skills that are required or preferred, or situations that occur on a day-to-day basis in your department. Even questions about the applicant's willingness to work overtime or how they would describe their own work ethic can give insight to what kind of employee the applicant may be. The Office of the Registrar and the School of Natural Sciences have used questions like these on their applications for various positions to help them identify the stronger candidates

in the applicant pools.

Unfortunately, not every applicant will answer these questions completely. Sometimes they will give the shortest answer possible or enter 'Please see resume' on the application. If this is the case, let your recruiter know beforehand if you would like us to contact the applicant and let them know they will need to answer the questions completely or the application will be incomplete, or we can pass the applications on to you for further consideration before contacting the applicants to complete the questions. Finally, if you need any assistance in creating these open-ended questions, please contact your recruiter and we will be more than happy to help.



Elena's Excellent Explanations

Make sure you remember to ask your recruiter about the **free** skills assessment testing on various applications that relate to your job posting. Recruitment has an agreement in place with a staffing vendor that allows us to send your candidates for testing. Your recruiter can coordinate with the candidate and vendor to schedule the testing and you get results back the same day your candidates test! The

various Microsoft Office applications as well as other skills assessments such as business grammar are available to test your final candidate(s). The staffing vendor has 5 locations throughout Houston that our candidates can visit to complete the assessments during regular business hours, Monday through Friday. We recommend this to all departments for administrative support type positions. This is a valuable evaluation tool at your disposal, and your recruiter can

coordinate everything. Best of all - there is no cost to the department!

Ask your dedicated recruiter for more information or to set up your finalist for skills assessment!



Michelle's Miscellaneous Megabits (Information)

Hiring a staff member that requires sponsorship and you're not sure what to do next? Have no fear—we can help you right here!

The first step is to determine what type of sponsorship your selected candidate will need. Many of our foreign national hires are under an H1-B Visa or TN status if they are from Canada or Mexico. We advise you to contact OISS to discuss and determine if H1-B or another

visa is the appropriate visa option.

If H1-B is the appropriate visa, the department will need to finalize details with the candidate regarding fees/costs and who will pay for what. The department will also need to contact the approved law firm utilized by Rice to inform them of the need to sponsor an employee for H1-B, agree upon a payment schedule and let them know who will pay for what. The depart-

ment also needs to notify HR of the need to sponsor an individual for H1-B by sending the "Approval to Initiate H1-B Visa Application for Staff Employees" form signed by the chair/head along with a current job description from RICEWorks to Jana Callan.

For more information check out the on-line H1-B/PERM manual on the HR website or contact your recruiter.





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Being an Employee Detective cont'd.

These are questions that ask about previous experience on the job. Previous behavior is one of the best predictors for future behavior. Behavioral based questions begin "tell me about a time when", "describe for me a situation where", etc. Another interviewing technique we recommend is to use panels to interview candidates. The panels should be kept to a manageable number, comprised of 3-4 staff or faculty members from your department and/or others that this position interacts with or could impact. This allows you to "see" the candidate from multiple viewpoints, as each person receives or interprets information differently, someone on the panel may see or hear something important or noteworthy that others missed.

One of your final sleuth pursuits in this process should include reference checking, even if it is an internal hire! This is your opportunity to interview managers or co-workers that have seen your top candidate in action on the job. Again, behavioral based questions can be used to determine if the finalist has the KSAs you need for your open position. We also encourage our departments to talk with current and former departments, as well as Colleen Dutton in HR when considering an internal candidate as your final selection.

You need as much information as possible to make an informed decision and help you to select the best candidate for the position. As always, your recruiter can help you with as little or as much of the recruitment process as you desire – just let us know how we can help you be a great employment detective!

Surveys cont'd.

- The ease with which I could view the resumes and cover letters and work the candidates through the process of hiring.
- Ability to work with my recruiter and get prompt and quick answers to our questions.
- Having a recruiter involved in the panel interview was a great help.
- On-line process is very user friendly and has expedited the approval process.
- Advertising the job in the Houston Chronicle generated a lot of applicants. (Note, the Chronicle isn't the only place to advertise; check with your recruiter re-

garding advertisement possibilities.)

- Found that normal advertising of the position had limited reach and pull. We needed to supplement with our own efforts — listserv, networking, etc.

What could have been improved?

- We should have advertised in more places
- Skills assessment would have been tremendous had we been able to combine it with our processes.

All in all, the feedback was very positive to the Recruitment team as we look for ways to improve our service to you.