As Rice University continues to grow, we will continue to hire additional staff. What does that mean for you? It could very well mean that you will be involved in the hiring process, and more specifically, in the role of interviewer. So how can you help your department hire the best candidate for the position? Answer: By utilizing interviewing practices that yield the best results!

Prepare for the interview.

We expect the candidate to come prepared for the interview, but as an interviewer, you should also be prepared. Start with the job description and review both the position summary and job responsibilities. Highlight or make notes of key functions or aspects of the position that are important (i.e. – This position will support the Dean as part of the administrative team in the dean’s suite. This includes: heavy appointment calendar management.).

Prepare the questions for your upcoming interview beforehand based on the key aspects you highlighted from the job description. Use behavioral based questions to gain insight to their previous experience. Remember that past performance predicts future behavior! For example: This position involves heavy calendar management. Tell me about a time when you had multiple important meetings or events you had to schedule for your boss that involved both internal and external contacts. What did you do, how many people were involved, how did you handle that, etc.

Familiarize yourself with the candidate’s information prior to the meeting. Review their resume and highlight experience or areas that relate to your open position that you want to explore further. Again, use behavioral based questions to get more information (i.e. – I see that you worked on a special committee for green ideas at ABC company. Can you tell me more about your role on the team? What specific things did you do to contribute to the success of the team? What brought that opportunity to light – did you volunteer, were you nominated or appointed?).

Select the proper location for the interview. You want the location to be inviting, comfortable and allow you to easily talk with the candidate. Pick a place that will minimize possible distractions.

(continued pg. 4)
NEW! Job Description Writing Workshop

"Writing job descriptions are a pain! I never know what to write."

Take the guess work out of creating or updating a job description. Contact Angela Lipari, HR Sr. Compensation Analyst, to schedule a Job Description Writing Workshop for your department, division, or school today.

Whether you are a veteran job description writer looking to sharpen your skills or you have never written a job description before, the Job Description Writing Workshop has something for everyone.

The workshop is an interactive, 90 minute tutorial that covers the basics of writing a job description and provides tips, resources, and tools to make your job easier.

Workshops are currently being scheduled through December 1st. Contact Angela Lipari at extension 6323 or via email at alipari@rice.edu to set up your Job Description Writing Workshop at the location of your choice.

Recruitment Surveys: What New Hires Have to Say!

As we mentioned in the last newsletter, we are now surveying hiring managers and new staff hires to get feedback on how the selection process is working and what can be improved.

We have been pleased with the valuable information and feedback we have received from the departments and our new hires, and in this newsletter, we want to share with all of you some of the things we’re hearing as a result of the new hire survey specifically.

Getting the Word Out. We asked our new hires how they learned about job opportunities at Rice University.

The majority (51%) noted RICEWorks, our on-line application and job posting site. Other responses included: Other — job fairs, professional associations, etc. (24%), Rice employees (22%), and Outside Job Advertisements (3%).

Why Work at Rice? In asking about their primary reasons for choosing Rice as their next employer, here are the top five answers: Interesting Work, University Culture, Location, Advancement Potential and Employee Benefits.

How Do We Compare to Others? When asked if Rice’s recruitment process compared favorably to that of other companies and institutions, results showed that 50% strongly agreed, 21% agreed and 11% were neutral. The other 18% were not interviewing or applying elsewhere. None of the survey responders disagreed.

How Happy Are You? The overall satisfaction with the staff recruitment and interview process was great. When asked if they were very satisfied with the Rice process, 60% strongly agreed, 35% agreed, 3% were neutral and only 2% disagreed. Based on comments provided, we believe the dissatisfaction came from the amount of time it took for the applicant to be contacted for an interview or the time between the interview and final selection.

One new hire noted, "From the time I applied for the position, to the time I was offered the position, over two months had passed."

What Can You Do to Improve Your Next Staff Hiring Process? Other comments offered by our new hires for improving the overall staff recruitment process were:

- When interviewing, provide information on the timeline for the search and then follow it.
- Keep in touch with interviewees throughout the process, and keep them informed as to where you are in the search.
- Give specific driving and parking instructions when setting up your interviews. “For someone new to campus, it can be difficult!”

What Do the New Hires Say Went Well?

When asked what was most remarkable or impressive about the application and interviewing process at Rice, new hires said:

- “The personal component — Every person I spoke with during the process, from someone calling on the phone to arrange an interview, to the people I interviewed with, to Wylie (HR Staff Recruiter) when he called to make the offer was very kind, personable, and helped to make the process a good (stress-free!) experience.”
- “The on-line application was very convenient.”
- “Very thoughtful interview process by the department.”

(continued pg. 4)
Wiley’s Words of Wisdom

Once your position is posted on RICEWorks, and you have started to receive applications, there are a number of things that your recruiter can do to help you move the process along as efficiently and smoothly as possible.

Even though scheduling difficulties or other conflicts may prevent you from filling your vacancy as quickly as you had planned, here are a couple of tips that will help all parties (hiring managers, recruiters and applicants) keep up to date with real time information.

Contact Information.

When you are in RICEWorks entering job posting details there is a section under ‘Position Details’ for contact information. Normally, this is the person that the recruiters have normal contact with during the recruitment process. However, there may be times when the normal department contact will become unavailable. This unavailability may be because of business travel, vacation, illness, or any other number of things. In those cases, it would be helpful to list a second contact person who is familiar with RICEWorks and the overall recruitment process. This way, your recruiter will still have a contact in the department just in case anything unusual or urgent arises in the absence of the primary department contact.

Staying In Touch With Applicants.

When the recruitment process is extended for any variety of possible reasons, the number of applicants included in the pool can really start to grow. One of the things that your recruiter can do for you is contact the applicants in the pool by email to let them know that the position is still open and the recruitment process is continuing. By updating the applicants about the time frame for hiring or reason for delay, the applicants won’t feel forgotten or as if their application has fallen into some electronic abyss.

Elena’s Excellent Explanations

Requesting a RICEWorks Account

1) To request a RICEWorks account, go to the RICEWorks site at https://jobs.rice.edu/hr and click on “Create User Account.”

2) Complete all fields and submit your request.

3) Department Chair/Administrator should send e-mail to Elena Cumpian, elenac@rice.edu, giving their approval for the RICEWorks account to be activated.

Training Classes

Training classes for RICEWorks are available to all employees who will have RICEWorks accounts and have use of the system to perform their job duties. To schedule training, contact Elena Cumpian at ext. 5252 or elenac@rice.edu.

RICEWorks consists of two different websites. One is for applicants to view postings and apply for jobs (https://jobs.rice.edu), and the other is for administrative use for hiring managers/departments, Human Resources, the Budget Office, and the Affirmative Action Office (https://jobs.rice.edu/hr).

Michelle’s Miscellaneous Megabits (Information)

Do you feel as if your job posting is not attracting as many candidates as you would like to see?

Consider some other advertising options: posting on external job boards, professional publications, professional associations, search and/or staffing firms.

We have discounted pricing agreements with Monster.com ($100 per 30-day posting) and Chron.com/Yahoo Hot Jobs ($164.82 per 30-day posting). Your recruiter can also send you pricing information on other job boards or publications (i.e. – Chronicle of Higher Education). If you belong to any professional associations, they may have listservs or newsletters that will allow you to announce your open position. In some cases, you may want to consider getting assistance from a staffing or search firm.

Different departments within Rice have used our preferred staffing vendors and search firms with great success.

If you have concerns about the applicant pool, talk to your recruiter for suggestions and additional information. We are here to help you fill your position with the best candidate.
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Comments? Suggestions? Questions?
Please send them to us at
jobs@rice.edu.

(New Hire Survey cont.)

• “HR turned the paperwork around in record time, once it was clear that the department was interested in me.”

• “I liked being interviewed by more than one person in the management level, and then again by a group of other faculty assistants. It was fair and thorough.”

• “Everyone was extremely nice. It was evident among everyone that I came in contact with that they loved working at Rice. This type of enthusiasm and love for the institution was infectious.”

• “I was introduced and interviewed by all members of the department and able to receive answers to all of my questions regarding work environment, department etc.”

In Summary
The overall picture of our recruitment process as told by our new hires is a positive one. However, the one finding that does show up with some regularity is the length of time the process takes from beginning to end for the applicant.

We encourage you to develop a timeline for your search and then stick with it. Contact your recruiter to assist you with this matter; we can contact your top candidates and help you keep them engaged, informed and available!

Look for survey results from our Hiring Managers in the next RICEWorks newsletter.

(Prepare for Interviews to Get the Best Results cont.)

and interruptions. If you are conducting a panel or group interview, be sure that the room can accommodate everyone comfortably and let the candidate know they will be meeting with multiple staff members. This allows the candidate to prepare more fully for the interview.

Allow enough time between interviews or meetings to make appropriate notes and debrief with your panel.

Remember that the candidate is also interviewing you, the department and Rice University as a potential employer. The better prepared you are for the interview, the better the interview process will be and should help you in selecting the best fit for the position.

One of the subjects that the interviewee might be interested in is a summary of the Rice benefits package. Your recruiter can provide you with a summary benefits brochure.

If you are unsure or need assistance preparing for the interview, please call your recruiter. We’re here to help you with all aspects of the hiring process.

Learn more about interviewing in the “Interviewing: More than a Gut Feeling” class 10/28 & 29, 9AM to 1PM.

Sign up now at: http://people.rice.edu/training.cfm