

# GUIDELINES FOR EFFECTIVE INTERVIEWS

Resource Page #10

## Before the interviews:

- Together with the committee, articulate your interview goals. Review and reflect on the desired qualifications of candidates. Make sure you will obtain sufficient information to make your decisions.
- Develop a set of core questions to be asked of each candidate. Whether you use a prepared set of questions or a more unstructured interview, develop some system of guaranteeing that someone asks each candidate the questions that will be key to the evaluation and comparison. Consider follow-up telephone conversations with candidates who were not asked all questions.
- Be sure all interviewers are aware of which questions are inappropriate.
- Consider who will interview the candidates. Discuss how to raise an interviewer's awareness of potential for bias and prejudice, and how to obtain and evaluate interviewer's feedback.
- Determine the interview structure and schedule. Be sure to provide breaks for the candidate and to permit sufficient time for the interviews. Build in some flexibility.
- Personalize the visit for each candidate. Decide which events other than interviews the candidates will engage in. Consider how you will learn about the candidate's needs and interests
- Provide opportunities for women and underrepresented members of the department to meet all candidates, not just women and underrepresented candidates. Events at which candidates can meet other underrepresented members can help them feel welcome.
- Provide candidates with the opportunity to seek information about campus resources from knowledgeable sources not directly involved in the search. Schedule a meeting for all candidates with someone qualified to discuss their diverse needs or refer them to relevant individuals and resources. This prevents candidates from having to address these needs with members of the search committee.
- Provide candidates with a detailed schedule that identifies by name and affiliation each person who will interview them and give a brief explanation of how this person relates to the search.
- Develop an information packet to share with all candidates. This packet should include information about campus and community and should provide references and resources the candidates can use without having to inform search committee members of their needs. Examples: Faculty and Staff Associations, child care and family resources, dual career policies and opportunities, and mentoring programs. The ISU ADVANCE website has downloadable resources available including Build Your Faculty Career at Iowa State, Work-Life Resources, and What to Do When Life Happens.

### During the interviews:

- Follow the plan established before the interview process and allow enough time for the interviews.
- Remind interviewers of which questions are inappropriate, and that they are not only inappropriate at formal interviews but also at meals, social events, and other informal gatherings.
- Consider distributing a list of inappropriate questions to all faculty members and interviewers.
- Ensure that all persons involved in the interviews are fully committed to recruit each one of the candidates with welcoming and equitable treatment. Assertively counteract any instances of treatment that appear to be racist, sexist, or otherwise inappropriate.
- Encourage all faculty members to attend a candidate's talks/lectures. This is an important part of making candidates feel welcomed and respected.
- Remind interviewers and faculty members to treat each candidate as a potential colleague, and stress that you want every candidate to conclude their visit with a good impression of the university and its faculty. Point out that candidates who are not treated with respect and dignity can do lasting damage to a department's reputation by informing others of how they were treated.

- Allow sufficient time for follow-up questions, candidate questions, and breaks.
- Remind interviewers to complete evaluations.

### After the interviews:

- Meet with your search committee as soon as possible after the completion of the interviews.
- Follow the agreed-upon process for making hiring decisions. Evaluate candidates for their strengths and weaknesses on specific attributes.
- Raise awareness of unconscious assumptions and their influence on evaluation of candidates. Consider whether any such assumptions are influencing your evaluation of final candidates.
- Check references following an agreed-upon format. If phone calls are made, draw up a common set of questions to ask in all telephone interviews.
- Communicate with both successful and unsuccessful candidates in a timely manner.
- Decide how to proceed if your top candidate turns you down.