

**Non-Exempt Staff**

**Search and Selection Handbook**

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# Initiating Steps

## 1. Request to Fill

During the initiation step in the process, the Hiring Manager accesses the SUPER system and submits a request. You will need to enter your own credentials to access the document. The approval flow is as follows:

* Department Chair/Director
* AVP/PI (Optional)
* VP/Dean
* Provost on behalf of Executive Staff and/or the President

#### SUPER System

1. Submit “Staff Position”, via SUPER Requisition System in Gull Net: SU Custom > Human Resources > Personnel Requisitions > Staff Position Request. Set up the appropriate approvers on the position approvals page and submit for approval. An e-mail will be generated to the Department Chair/Director for his/her approval which the submitter is copied on. If you believe you submitted a new SUPER request, but did not receive an email, please ensure you’ve entered all approvers and submitted for approval. Please contact HR for assistance.
2. The AVP/PI (if applicable), upon receipt of the request for approval e-mail, will review the position request, enter any comments relevant to the position, check the box and sign the approval box; an email will be generated to the next level for approval.
3. The Vice President, upon receipt of the request for approval e-mail, will review the position request, enter any comments relevant to the position, check the box and sign the approval box; an e-mail will be generated to the next level for approval. If the Vice President checks the “one for one replacement” box, the Provost’s approval will not be needed (step 3 below will be skipped) and the SUPER system will not send the Provost an email for approval.
4. The Provost will review the position request check and sign the approval box; an e-mail will be generated to Human Resources for approval.
5. Human Resources communicates the approval process is complete and begins the Recruitment Plan process or follows up with any outstanding items.

## 2. Position Information Form (PI)

The first step in the process is to complete the Position Information form (PI) and submit it to Human Resources to be properly classified. If this is a new position, a hiring range, grade and job code will be assigned. This document will then be used by Human Resources to draft a position announcement.

## 3. Developing a Recruitment Plan

NOTE: A search committee is optional for a non-exempt search. If the Hiring Manager feels it is most appropriate to use a search committee, they may be on the search committee if they prefer. If a search committee is not used or if the Hiring Manager is on the search committee, then there is an option for either a two-level (two rounds-usually phone/skype and then on-campus) interview process or a one-level interview process. If a search committee is used and the Hiring Manager is not on the search committee, then a two-level interview process is necessary (committee conducts first level and forwards top candidates to Hiring Manager for second level). The Hiring Manager may also involve other campus constituents in the interview process.It is also acceptable to involve another supervisor or colleague in the application review process so long as everyone reviewing applications is using the same assessment criteria and applying it consistently

The Hiring Manager will identify advertising sources (see below for strategies for attracting applicants). This information will be documented on a completed Recruitment Plan form which will be submitted along with the draft PI to the HR Office.

Each department is responsible for developing an effective recruitment plan and seeking the necessary approvals before any recruitment effort can begin. A draft Position Information (PI) form and recruitment plan must be completed and forwarded to the appropriate Authorizing Official (AVP/VP/Dean). Human Resources is available to assist departments with developing the recruitment plan, if necessary. The appropriate Authorizing Official will review the recruitment plan and upon approval, forward it to the HR Office who will then secure quotes from the advertising sources identified on the recruitment plan, forward the pricing information to the Hiring Manager for approval.

1. ***Strategies for Attracting Applicants***

Cast a wide net by recruiting from a wide range of local sources and using a variety of methods including print and web site ads, word of mouth, networking opportunities. Use publications that target specific populations – relying exclusively on typical mainstream publications will result in typical mainstream applicant pools. Utilize a pro-active search process in which management actively recruits for the position through networking opportunities. Contact other institutions for the purpose of recruiting candidates from programs for areas where there are underrepresented minorities. Be creative and be aggressive!

NOTE: As part of SU’s diversity initiatives and in support of its Affirmative Action Plan, all non-exempt staff positions will be automatically posted (at no cost to the department) on the Maryland Workforce Exchange website <https://mwejobs.maryland.gov/vosnet/Default.aspx>.

1. ***Screening Questions***

The recruitment plan allows a Hiring Manager to add three screening questions to the employment application to assist in the application assessment process. These questions should directly relate to the required or preferred qualifications for the position. There is also an option for requiring an explanation for the answer. For example, we may ask if a person has a valid driver’s license with 5 points or less if the job requires a driver’s license. The Hiring Manager and anyone else given access to applicant documents in PeopleSoft will be able to view the answers to the questions asked.

1. ***Responsibilities of the Hiring Manager***

The Hiring Manager is responsible for leading a fair and equitable search process. Some things that the Hiring Manager is responsible for are: coordinating administrative support, carrying out a fair and equitable screening process supporting University diversity initiatives. To this end the Hiring Manager will be required to acknowledge and sign the Search and Selection Certification of Expectations form prior to the commencement of the search process. Additional responsibilities include:

1. Ensuring that appropriate records and meeting minutes are maintained.

2. Communicating with candidates interviewed informing them of their status throughout the search.

3. Updating applicant status codes in PeopleSoft for appropriate record keeping.

# Commencing Steps

## Position Announcement

Once the draft PI submitted by the Hiring Manager is reviewed and finalized by the HR Office, HR will draft an ad/position announcement and submit it to the Hiring Manager for review and approval. The Hiring Manager and Human Resources will partner to complete the finalized ad/position announcement.

Ad templates typically consist of the following sections:

1. Introduction/overview,

2. Primary job duties,

3. Minimum qualifications, and

4. Required knowledge/skills/abilities

Additional language will be contained in the advertisement that complies with current employment laws. Consider broadening the pool of potential candidates by eliminating unnecessary minimum qualifications and including preferred or desired qualifications. Using broad language can attract a diverse range of candidates whereas rigid or restrictive language may exclude potential candidates from consideration. Also, please keep in mind it is important that the Hiring Manager can assign parameters around what each qualification means and how the criteria will be applied to the applicant pool. For example, if a requirement of three years of “related” experience is used, the Hiring Manager should be prepared to define what is considered related and consistently apply the standards to all applicants during the applicant assessments.

## 5. Search and Selection Certification of Expectations

To empower a Hiring Manager engaged in a search and selection, this document is provided with respect to accountability in this decision making role. To this end the Hiring Manager will be provided and must complete training prior to completing the form. The Hiring Manager is expected to adhere to and ensure any persons involved in the process follow the practices, rules and procedures as prescribed therein.

Once all parties approve the ad/job posting and approval to fill the vacancy has been granted per the appropriate approval process, HR will request the Hiring Manager complete and submit the Certification of Expectations form after which HR will coordinate the placement of the ad/job posting based on the approved Recruitment Plan.

## 6. Access to Applicant Pool

Upon posting the position, HR will grant the Hiring Manager and/or search committee (if applicable) access to the applicant database.

# Selection Steps

## Review & Establish Selection Criteria

Prior to reviewing the applications/resumes, the Hiring Manager should review the approved PI form and job advertisement and utilize the qualification spreadsheet provided by HR for the evaluation process. Selection criteria must be based on the job related and job success factors which are necessary to perform the job. The selection criteria/factors are then to be recorded on the qualifications spreadsheet which documents assessments of all applicants who are considered against the minimum and preferred qualifications for the position.

## Developing Interview Questions

The Hiring Manager will develop a set of telephone, Skype (virtual) and/or in-person interview questions that are based on job related criteria. Utilizing the Interview Question form will ensure consistency with notes on interviewee responses. Be prepared to:

* Ask open, probing questions that encourage candidates to open up and tell you as much as possible about their qualifications
* Include questions that allow you to evaluate candidates against the established selection criteria
* Consider including questions focused on discovering the potential the candidate can bring to the long-term objectives of the department
* Ask questions specifically aimed at assessing the candidate’s job related qualifications
* Make sure to include questions that allow you to evaluate candidates against the established selection criteria. Look at including questions focused on discovering the potential the candidate can bring to the long-term objectives of the department. Ask questions specifically aimed at assessing the candidate’s job related qualifications.

Determine the sequence of questioning and utilize a structured interview process in which the same questions are asked of every applicant - this type of interviewing ensures that similar information is gathered from all candidates, thereby making it possible to compare qualifications and reduce equity concerns. Follow up questions for clarification purposes are permitted. Utilizing Behavioral Based Interview Questions will assist the Hiring Manager with gaining useful information from the applicants.

## Analyze Applicant Materials & Determine Candidate Pool for Interviews

Utilize the applicant tracking spreadsheet to compare the qualifications of each applicant with those required (and desired) for the position. Determine if a sufficient pool of qualified candidates exists and then identify a short list of the most qualified candidates for interviews. Maintain a record of those who fail to meet the minimum qualifications and update the applicant status in the applicant system in PeopleSoft. Once the applicant status is updated, please notify Human Resources that non-select letters should be sent to non-qualified applicants at this time. All applicants who are not eliminated in this preliminary screening shall be included in the candidate pool.

While not necessary at this time, members of the candidate pool who are not chosen for the finalist pool may be notified that interviews are being conducted and that they are not in the finalist pool; however, they should not be notified of rejection at this stage.

## Conduct Candidate Interviews

Consider using either telephone, on-site, or virtual interviews (Skype) to determine or clarify whether applicants meet the requisite and desirable qualifications. The same process should be utilized for each candidate (see below for information on conducting initial interviews and evaluating candidates). A set of common job related questions should be used for this purpose. The interview process serves two primary purposes:

1. Allows the assessment of candidates’ qualifications for the position.
2. Allows candidates to assess their interest in employment at Salisbury University.

The goal of an interview is to obtain sufficient job-related information in order to make an informed recommendation for an employment offer. Interviewers should take notes on responses to interview questions on the interview form, and complete candidate interview evaluation forms both provided by HR.

Ask only for information that can legally serve as a basis for the hiring decision. Use the same questions, setting, time allotment, and interviewers for every candidate interviewed. Allow time for the candidate to ask any questions they may have. Be sure to provide complete and frank answers to all inquiries and conclude by explaining what will happen next. Provide a realistic job preview to the candidates.

## Evaluating Candidates

Evaluation of candidate interviews should focus on the candidate’s possession of the knowledge, skills, and abilities required for the job as well as the candidate’s work ethic, professional character, interpersonal skills, and match with the position and organization.

Avoid exclusionary thinking – when evaluating candidates for “best fit” keep in mind that this does not necessarily mean screening for individuals who are “like us” in terms of having the same experiences, philosophies, values, and perspectives as the Hiring Manager and other faculty or staff in the department. Rather, look for those candidates who will serve in the best interests of the university. Use diversity related experience and expertise as selection criteria where appropriate. This can be valid criteria if it is required to successfully perform the functions of the job, also, consider what affect diverse experiences and expertise may have on the ability to meet organizational objectives. Consider unconventional career paths such as someone whose background includes employment in industry, service organizations, charitable organizations, or government agencies. If the Hiring Manager involves others in the interviewing process, each individual should give his/her honest input on each candidate interviewed.

Avoid falling victim to the following interviewer biases:

**Stereotyping** involves forming generalized opinions about how people of a given gender, religion, or race appear, think, act, feel, or respond. EXAMPLE: Presuming that a woman would prefer a desk job over working outdoors.

First-impression error occurs when the interviewer makes snap judgments and lets his or her first impression cloud the entire interview. EXAMPLE: Giving more credence to the fact that the candidate graduated from the interviewer’s alma mater than to the applicant’s knowledge, skills, or abilities.

**Negative emphasis** involves rejecting a candidate on the basis of a small amount of negative information. Research indicates that interviewers give unfavorable information roughly twice the weight of favorable information. Negative emphasis often happens when subjective factors like dress or nonverbal communication taint the interviewer’s judgment.

**Halo/horn effect** occurs when the interviewer allows one strong point that he or she values highly to overshadow all other information.

**Nonverbal bias** is undue emphasis placed on nonverbal cues that are unrelated to job performance. EXAMPLE: Hair length or distracting mannerisms.

**Contrast** effect takes place when strong candidates who interview after weak ones appear even more qualified than they actually are because of the contrast.

**Similar-to-me** involves picking candidates based on personal characteristics that they share with the interviewer rather than job-related criteria.

## Finalists/Finalist Interviews

Scenario 1

If a one-level (one round) interview process is used, then upon completion of the interviews, the Hiring Manager and search committee (if applicable) should identify the best qualified candidate (s) and update the applicant status in the applicant system. The Hiring Manager should discuss the process to-date with the Authorizing Official (AVP/VP/Dean) and determine if there was an equitable process with a sufficient pool of qualified candidates before proceeding. Once the Hiring Manager and Authorizing Official are satisfied with the screening process, the Hiring Manager should complete the Candidate Pool/Finalist Report and obtain the Authorizing Official’s approval on the form who will forward the approved form to Human Resources.

Scenario 2

If a two-level (two rounds) interview process is used (whether a search committee is used or not) and once the Hiring Manager and the Authorizing Official are satisfied with the screening process, prior to inviting finalists for campus interviews, the Hiring Manager determines the qualifications of candidates interviewed and forwards a completed Candidate Pool/Finalist Report along with an explanation of the decision making process to the Authorizing Official (AVP, VP or Dean) for approval. The Authorizing Official will forward the approved form to Human Resources.

Once the Hiring Manager and Authorizing Official are satisfied with the screening process, each finalist identified for on-campus interviews shall be contacted to schedule a day and time. Although the initial contact may be made by telephone, each person should also be sent an email confirming the date, time and location of the interview as well as provided any additional pertinent information. If travel reimbursement will be involved with the interview process, please include an explanation of the terms under which travel expenses will be paid. All searches are required to adhere to university guidelines concerning reimbursement. Please visit the following Accounts Payable web site for details: <http://www.salisbury.edu/accountspayable/caninterview.html>

Scenario 3

Should a Hiring Manager determine that he/she does not wish to move forward with candidates from the interview pool; they shall consult the Authorizing Official presenting the reasons for wishing to reject all interviewees and request to conduct further interviews with the current candidate pool, re-advertise the position, or hold the position for another search. Then the Hiring Manager should consult with Human Resources and update the applicant status in the applicant system.

NOTE: All searches are required to adhere to University guidelines and the State of Maryland reimbursement policies and procedures concerning reimbursement for meals, travel or any expense related to search and selection. If you have any questions, please contact the Accounts Payable department or visit their website for details: <http://www.salisbury.edu/accountspayable/caninterview.html>.

## Reference Checks

All candidates are required to provide contact information for at least three professional references before the final stages of the search. It is not unusual for a candidate to request that you do not contact his or her references unless you are seriously considering making an offer. Such requests should be respected and candidates notified in advance that references are about to be contacted. Also seek candidate approval to contact persons not on his/her contact list. Reference checks should not be based on second-hand information. References should be conducted by the Hiring Manager using a set of reference questions that focus on the candidate’s job-related experience, qualifications, and accomplishments. Ask the same basic questions about each candidate so that all candidates can be evaluated fairly. Please utilize the Human Resources reference check form and ensure you’ve obtained three professional references including at least one current or former supervisor before making an offer of employment.

## Offer of Employment

After all interviews have been conducted, evaluation forms completed, references checked, and top candidates identified; the Hiring Manager will present to the Authorizing Official (AVP/VP/Dean) an [Appointment Request E-mail/Memo](https://secureweb.salisbury.edu/hr/searchandselection/samplelettersandforms/Appointment%20Request%20E-mail%20or%20Memo.doc) which shall include a brief narrative of the qualifications of all finalist candidates and an explanation of the rationale for a recommended offer of employment. Upon approval by the Authorizing Official, a verbal offer may be extended to the successful candidate after the Hiring Manager confirms the approved salary and other details (e.g. start date, probationary period) with Human Resources. If accepted, an official written offer of employment will be drafted by Human Resources and sent to the Hiring Manager for them to send to the new hire. If all candidates refuse University offers, or for some reason the pool of acceptable candidates is exhausted, the Hiring Manager shall request permission to either conduct further interviews with the current applicant pool or leave the position unfilled until a “new” search can be conducted.

The Hiring Manager should coordinate with Human Resources to ensure that all remaining candidates receive a letter/email thanking them for their interest in employment with the University and informing them that either the University has decided not to fill the position or that it was filled by another qualified candidate. The Hiring Manager is responsible for notifying any remaining finalists of non-selection. Human Resources will provide verbiage that should be used and guidelines that should be followed.

# *Post Selection Step*

## Retention of Search Materials

Hiring Managers must promptly turn over all of their notes and files to the HR Office at the end of the search. They should also collect and turn in notes and all search documentation from anyone else who was involved in the screening and/or decision making process. The Human Resources Office will retain all search documentation in compliance with Federal and State recordkeeping regulations.

The documents should include but may not be limited to:

1. Candidate Pool/Finalist Report
2. “Appointment Request” recommendation with documented approval
3. Original application materials that may have been printed out
4. Selection criteria spreadsheet (applicant qualification matrix)
5. Interview questions and candidate responses
6. Rating and evaluation forms
7. Meeting minutes
8. Completed reference check forms
9. Offer Letter signed and dated by the successful candidate
10. All other pertinent information and correspondence relative to the search

On behalf of the Human Resource Office and Executive Staff, thank you for your time and effort helping to ensure the hiring process at Salisbury University is understood and fully adhered to insuring all applicants are provided fair and equal consideration for employment opportunities.

Salisbury University (SU) has a strong institutional commitment to diversity and equal employment opportunities to all qualified people. To that end, the University prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex, gender, marital status, pregnancy, race, color, ethnicity, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, veteran status or other legally protected characteristics. Direct all inquiries regarding the nondiscrimination policy to: Humberto Aristizabal, Associate Vice President, Institutional Equity, Title IX Coordinator, 100 Holloway Hall, Tel. (410) 548-3508.