

Ten Steps in the Hiring Process

- 1] The first step is to create a job description. This will be the basis for the performance planning that you will do with your new hire and, most immediately.....
- 2] It will clearly define the required functions of the job which will direct the questions in your hiring process and will establish the minimum qualifications that you will set for this job.
- 3] Many small county directors complain that it is very difficult to fill vacant positions. The best way to attract qualified applicants is to run a high quality program that is administered in an enlightened way. Good people are attracted to good programs. Beyond this important foundation:
 - Are the salary/ benefits competitive? [Call neighboring directors to learn what they are paying]
 - What venues are most productive for advertising: schools of social work, system wide e-mails, local papers, community events.
- 4] Design a useful application form. Information should be gathered that identifies the applicant, details their education, experience and special skills, and provides contact information. Additionally, you may want to include sign-off sections that allow you to contact former employers, colleges, etc.
- 5] Once the application period is closed, screen all the applications against the minimum requirements that were developed from the job description. Evaluate each applicant against the high priority items. If there are areas that are unclear, call the applicant for clarification.

Eliminate those who do not meet the minimum qualification, even if they show promise. [see Ten Ways to Manage Liability]
- 6] Ground rules for interviews must include a review of what can and can not be asked. For instance, you can ask if a person is 21 years of age or older if the age is a requirement for the job [e.g.: bartender] but you can not ask about a person's age in an open ended way.

Check with your personnel office or the State Department of Labor and Employment, the State Department of Regulatory Agencies, or the US Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. Also, a good current list is available at www.dora.state.co.us/civil-rights/Publications/JobDiscrim2001.pdf .
- 7] Essential questions to ask your applicants:

- a. Why do you want this job? [by exploring what they can give and what they will get, you can learn their motivation.]
- b. Of all the jobs you've had, which one did you like best? Why?
[look for parallels between the example and the job you are offering]
- c. Where do you want to be in three years? Five Years?
[a person with a plan usually produces more]
- d. What are your strong point? Weak points? A capacity for self assessment [both ways] is a strength in itself.
- e. Why did you leave your last job? Would you go back?

8] Call references and previous jobs [if not listed]. Make sure that you obtained the authorization to do so on the application form before you contact anyone not listed as a reference. What you want to learn is how the applicant will perform if hired. You have found out how they perform in an interview, but that is not a predictor of job performance.

Because of fear of litigation, many previous employers will only give limited information. Do not be afraid to ask questions about their experience with this person. Often, what is not said can be as helpful as what is. Beyond wanting to make a good hire, it is essential that you try to get information on the person's previous performance because you have a responsibility to avoid putting your customers and other employees in danger. Hiring someone without trying to obtain available information may subject you to negligent hiring claims.

9] Before rejecting the applicants that you have not chosen, make your job offer to your top candidate. S/he may not accept your offer and you won't want to start over again. The job offer should include salary, benefits, and terms of employment. You should be reasonably flexible about the start date. The person who leaves their previous employer with little or no notice may do the same thing to you. Make sure that you have coordinated with your personnel department before making the job offer and once you have an agreement and start date.

10] Once you have a written agreement, notify the other candidates, thanking them for their interest.