

REDI BEST PRACTICE

Designing a Faculty In-Person Interview Experience for Success

A typical faculty in-person interview process often includes a series of activities, such as a traditional Q & A session, teaching demonstrations, meals and meetings- with leadership, all faculty, and more. It is important to ensure the candidate's experience is inclusive, and upholds UBC's reputation as an excellent place to work. Candidates, too, will be assessing UBC, future colleagues, department culture during the process.

Designing an inclusive process allows all candidates to showcase their skills and talents, increases the likelihood of selecting the candidate who is most likely to succeed in the position and makes it more likely that the best candidate will accept an offer.

Have a clear purpose for each step of the process



- Evaluating without a rubric; evaluating nebulous criteria, such as "group chemistry" and "fit"
- Repeating the same process as before without reflecting and making changes
- Doing a so-called "holistic evaluation," without specific criteria and indicators



- Understanding the needs of the position
- Reflecting on previous hiring processes and applying lessons learned to improve the current process
- Developing a shared vision for excellence across all criteria, with all committee members
- Using a rubric to fairly compare candidate's performance in different components of the in-person process

Put it into action:

- Revisit the criteria listed on the job posting
- Identify the specific criteria that necessitate having the candidate appear in-person
- Select questions and activities that will demonstrate the specific job-posting criteria you want to evaluate in-person
- Discuss the purpose for each stage of the process
 - For example, why have dinner with a candidate? Is it evaluative? Where is it measured on the rubric?
- Start a conversation about developing an in-person interview rubric:
 - Example: What would a "good" or "excellent" response to a question look like? What types of experiences or reflections are we hoping for in an "excellent" response to the question on accessible communication of research findings?

Design a standardized process



- Inducing unnecessary stress by including activities or ambiguous questions without clear relevance to the criteria being evaluated
- Asking questions that are off limits or having department members make comments in the search process that are off limits
- Contaminating the process with conflicts of interest, hearsay, outside information, and other random factors
- Allowing just one person to be the final decision-maker
- Letting bias and factors unrelated to the rubric influence decisions



- Having purposeful, meaningful activities and questions
- Training everyone who meets with the candidate in off-limits questions, implicit bias, conflict of interest, etc.
- Giving each candidate a standardized experience- same order of activities, same questions, same agenda, same timeline
- Planning time for the committee to reflect and discuss
- Having a diverse committee of deciders consisting of at least three (3) well-qualified people

Put it into action:

- Look for gaps in the interview experience, activities, and questions- will the process provide you with everything you are seeking to evaluate?
- Communicate what the proper channels are through which non-committee team members can provide input, such as an online form
- Identify and transparently communicate to the candidate the following: who on the search committee, who will contribute to the decisions by providing feedback related to specific topics (such as teaching), who is engaged in the process but does not make adjudication decisions (e.g.: perhaps an administrative assistant or equity advisor for the search).

Support all candidates so they can shine



- Shrouding the process in mystery, surprise questions or activities the candidate could not prepare for
- Penalizing candidates for factors outside of their control
- Overburdening candidates, using pressure tactics
- Expecting the candidate to take care of their own arrangements to be available
- Requiring a 10-hour process with no breaks



- Helping candidates to showcase their strengths
- Communicating the supports available- accessibility supports, transportation, childcare, breastfeeding rooms,
- Being transparent about their experience: the schedule of the day, who will be present, the purpose of each activity, who is deciding, etc.
- Providing clear instructions, clear directions, dietary preferences, breaks in the process, etc.

Put it into action:

- Examine the process through the lens of members of historically, systemically, and persistently marginalized groups.
 - Are you doing what is reasonable to ensure the process seems inclusive to them?
- Greet people in a warm and friendly manner, thank people when they arrive, make introductions
- Create a process that takes the least amount of time, energy and effort from candidates that will allow the committee to evaluate the extent to which they meet the qualifications
- Develop an interview information packet that each candidate receives, which includes the following:
 - Parking locations, reimbursement information, maps, restroom locations (including accessible and gender-neutral restrooms), dress guidelines, how to get accessibility supports, etc.
 - The job posting for the position, short bios of each member of the search committee
- A sample of the interview questions that will be asked
- Designate a space where the candidate can rest, pray, and take a break as needed throughout the process
- Have water, snacks and coffee/tea available throughout the entire process
- Allow candidates to make choices about the process, where possible
 - With restaurants, for example, some people won't feel comfortable in pubs, or they may find a noisy environment overwhelming— ask them what kind of place they might want to meet in so they have agency
- Follow principles of universal design to create a process in which most people can thrive
- Designate a student or university/department representative to follow the candidate, help them get around, and be a friendly support person they can go to

