INTRODUCTION

The tools and resources provided in the NJIT Staff Hiring Guide are designed to help hiring managers, search committee chairs, and search committee members take a proactive, intentional approach to the search and hiring process designed to hire the right person in the right position. NJIT’s goal is to help our students become leaders and innovators who shape industry and the nation- we believe that starts with hiring the best and most qualified, diverse, employees to join our team.

The hiring process begins with defining the position in context of your area’s strategy and ends with the successful onboarding of the new hire. Each step throughout the process is equally as important as the next, and if carried out, will mitigate barriers to achieving a high quality, diverse staff.

If you have any questions on the content or the process in this guide, please reach out to a member of NJIT HR’s Talent Acquisition team at: careers@njit.edu or (973)596-3140.

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Staff Recruitment Workflow

Planning the Search: Consult with your HR Partner to assist with determining your needs. Obtain VP approval before proceeding.

Defining the Position: With assistance from the HR Partner and Compensation, a job description is developed and classified.

Recruitment and Diversity Strategy: The Hiring Manager will work with Talent Acquisition to develop a recruitment strategy, designed to attract and solicit a highly qualified diverse pool of applicants.

Interviews: Conduct phone, virtual and/or campus visits to effectively assess the qualifications of the candidates.

Applicant Screening and Review: The Hiring Manager should develop an evaluation tool, which will help promote consistency on how the candidates are being evaluated, as well as weighing certain criteria that will help identify the most qualified applicants.

Making the Offer: Once a finalist has been identified, work with Talent Acquisition on extending a competitive offer.

Background and Reference Check: Once a formal offer is accepted, the background check and reference check process commences.

Onboarding: The Talent Acquisition team will work with the Hiring Manager to recommend onboarding activities to be completed by both the Hiring Manager, and the new hire, as well as make recommendations for other onboarding activities specific to the role, where appropriate.

Please refer to the Roles and Responsibilities Guide as a reference.

Before Recruitment

OBTAINING APPROVAL FOR SEARCH

Hiring the right person is an opportunity to evaluate and align resources with NJIT’s Strategic Plan, Building on a Strong Foundation—NJIT 205, as well as the vision and mission of the university and your department. Prior to posting a position, the hiring manager should obtain approval from the area Vice President or Dean before proceeding.
DEFINING THE POSITION

If the position is new or existing but undergoing significant changes, consult with your HR Partner. You will work together to perform a job analysis, which will provide a way to develop an understanding of the job by examining the tasks performed in the job, the competencies required to perform those tasks, and the connection between the tasks and competencies. Your HR Partner will work with you to develop a job description for the position. Information from the job analysis will be used to determine the position classification and hiring pay range. Your HR Partners will consult with the HR Compensation team for additional expert guidance on establishing the appropriate position classification.

A properly written job description will include responsibilities, essential functions and qualifications required for the position and will be a source document developing the recruitment strategy and selection criteria. When recruiting, a clear, detailed and enticing job description is essential for attracting the best talent. Top would-be employees will want to apply for roles which utilize their best skills or cover an area of interest; therefore, you should ensure that the job description covers the main responsibilities and aspects of the position. It details who performs a specific type of work, how that work is to be completed, and the frequency and the purpose of the work as it relates to the organization's mission and goals.

Please use this job description template to aid with writing the job description.

Once the job description is complete, the request to post should be submitted.

RECRUITMENT STRATEGY

The recruitment and diversity strategy is designed to attract and solicit a highly qualified diverse pool of applicants. Before a search commences, the Hiring Manager, in consultation with the Talent Acquisition team, should develop a recruitment strategy.

It’s important that Talent Acquisition fully understands the need for the position, the responsibilities and qualifications needed to successfully perform the position, as well as the specific attributes the successful candidate should have.

Talent Acquisition will also discuss the recommended advertising and sourcing strategy, pre-screening questions, interview format and length the position should remain open.

After the meeting, the Hiring Manager will receive an email which recaps what was discussed and agreed to during the meeting, as well as the costs of any external advertising.
Once this strategy is agreed upon, the search begins.

CONSIDERATIONS FOR JOB POSTINGS AND ADVERTISING

All positions must be posted for a minimum of 5 business days and have a defined end date. The end date will typically be 30 days from the date the position is posted, unless otherwise discussed, and will be extended in consultation with the HR Partner and Hiring Manager.

Positions for internal candidates only will be posted on the NJIT Internal Career Site, which can be accessed through the Highlander Pipeline. Additionally, certain positions that warrant an internal posting before an external posting will be posted first on the internal career site (example: AFSCME, PSA and OPEIU positions.)

A request to waive the recruitment process for certain positions, in certain situations, may be submitted. Please refer to the policy for more information.

Your Talent Acquisition team will work with you to post positions on additional external sites.

SEARCH COMMITTEES

Search committees are responsible for participating in recruiting, screening, and recommending candidates for hire to the Hiring Manager. Search committees play a critical role in shaping NJIT’s future by identifying promising candidates likely to increase the university’s success. Utilization of a search committee demonstrates a commitment to fairness in the process and creates a sense of shared decision making for those individuals likely to work with the successful applicant.

The Talent Acquisition Team will discuss whether forming a search committee is appropriate for your search during the recruitment strategy meeting. If the decision is made to use a search committee, the Hiring Manager, in collaboration with the Talent Acquisition team, will identify potential search committee members. The Talent Acquisition team will work closely with the search committee during the recruitment process.

More information on search committee composition and responsibilities can be found here.

During Recruitment

APPLICANT SCREENING AND REVIEW

The review process should include the following:

- Use of an evaluation tool, which will help promote consistency on how the candidates are being evaluated, as well as weighing certain criteria that will help identify the most qualified applicants. Additional things to consider:
An initial screening of applicant materials is conducted to ensure that applicants meet the basic/minimum qualifications (level of education or job experience) specified in the posting, have submitted all required documents, and have fully completed their applications. Identify initial screening criteria to guide decision making. Consider the following questions when initially screening applicant materials:

- Did the applicant include all requested items (e.g., résumé, cover letter, professional reference list)?
- Did the applicant respond to supplementary questions?
- Does the applicant have the minimum degree requirements for the position?
- Does the applicant have the minimum relevant certifications/licenses for the position?
- Does the applicant have the minimum relevant professional work experience?
- If applicable, does the applicant have the equivalent combination of education, training, and experience in lieu of the degree requirement?

Identify Sourcing and Advertising Gaps: Monitor the applicant pool weekly to ensure you are receiving a suitable number of applicants. Conduct a brief review of applicant materials to ensure you are receiving qualified applicants. If needed, consider extending the advertising time period and/or make adjustments to your advertising plan and/or sourcing plan. Applicants who do not meet the initial screening should not be considered for the next stage. Applicants meeting the minimum qualifications will be reviewed to identify the most qualified candidates to move forward in the selection process.

INTERVIEWS

Types of Interviews

Once the top applicants have been identified, the next step will be conducting the interviews. The level of the position, and the interaction and collaboration the position will have, should dictate the interview process. In general, the interview process should include:

- **Phone Interview**: Initial screening of qualified candidates to discuss professional background, experience, [NJ First Act](#) and salary expectations. Please refer to the sample [Phone Interview Note Sheet](#).
- **On-Campus or Virtual Interview**: Structured interview, including behavioral and situational questions are asked
- **Second round interview**: If appropriate, the finalist may have a final interview with additional stakeholder, or decision-maker

Preparing for the Interview and Identifying Finalists
The following section outlines the steps in order to be successful during the interview process as well as how to conclude the search once a finalist has been identified.

1. Develop interview questions:
   a. Required skills can be identified by reviewing the job posting. All interview questions must be relevant to the performance of the applicable position.
   b. Required skills can also be identified by taking a look at top performers in the role or a similar role. Think about what professional qualities top performers have in common. What did the top performers accomplish prior to working at your organization?
   c. Required skills can also be identified by looking at the key relations and clients this position engages with. This will give an understanding of what would be required to build and maintain strong relationships. For example, this position works with very strongly opinionated professionals but also works closely with a manager with the opposite type of personality. Adaptability would be something to include.
   d. “Open ended” questions is another way to give candidates the opportunity to offer examples, and provide insight as to how they would approach challenges that highlight each skill. For example, if the required skill is flexibility, the open-ended question could be: how would you handle making an important decision for which no policy or procedure exists.
   e. Consider Competency-based questions. A competency is a particular qualification that is identified as desirable for an employee to possess. During the interview and assessment process, competencies are usually used as benchmarks that the interviewer can use to evaluate the candidate. For example, you may need to know about someone’s ability to deal with conflict. To do this, you can ask the candidate about their experience dealing with conflict and getting them to outline what happened, how they approached it, and the outcome.
   f. 7-10 interview questions are appropriate for a 45-60 minute interview.

Please review these sample competency-based interview questions as well as a Guideline for Non-Discriminatory Interviewing.

2. Schedule Interviews.
   a. Interviews are scheduled within the timeframe established in the resume review and interview planning process. The hiring manager, search committee chair, or designee leads the effort of scheduling interviews.
   b. All search committee members should attend the interview.
   c. Interviews should be scheduled at least one week in advance (This timeframe can vary depending on if the interview is virtual or in person).
Remember to be flexible when scheduling an interview. Some candidates may have current jobs without flexibility to attend an interview in the middle of the day. In these cases, early morning or late afternoon interviews may be best.

3. Schedule an additional 15-30 minutes after each interview. This gives time for the interviewers/search committee members an opportunity to complete their note taking, have thoughtful reflection, and determine if any follow-up questions are needed from the candidate.

4. Conduct the interview:
   a. Follow the established interview agenda
   b. Ensure success. The following elements of a successful interview are:
      i. Start and end on time.
      ii. Interviewers are prepared and have reviewed the interview agenda, applicant material, and interview questions.
      iii. Dividing interview questions up between interviewers and search committee members.

5. Create an interview agenda. This sets a strict time schedule and helps stay on track to ensure the interview would be done in a timely manner. See sample interview agenda [here](#).

6. Ensure the candidate has details of the interview. For in-person interviews, please review the on-campus interview protocols.

7. Limit stressors. This involves making sure the interview location is comfortable and free of distraction. If it is a virtual interview, making sure the lighting is good, the background clean and as neutral as possible. Interviewers exhibit collegial behaviors towards the candidate. Candidates are provided with names and titles of interviewers and informed if they are required to bring additional materials to the interview, and provided clear and easy directions to the interview location.
   a. Ensure interviews are conducted fairly and consistently—what applied to one candidate should apply to all candidates. Additional follow-up questions or probes during the interview are acceptable to ask if they pertain to the position. Cover all planned questions with candidates.

8. Be aware of the following biases during the interview process.
   a. *Halo Effect:* This is when the interviewer lets favored qualification, trait, or experience influence all other factors resulting in an unduly high overall rating.
   b. *Horns Effect:* The interviewers let one unfavorable qualification, trait, or experience influence all other factors resulting in an unduly low overall rating.
   c. *Similarity Effect:* The interviewer judges a candidate based on characteristics the interviewer sees in themselves.
   d. *Stereotyping:* Assumptions that certain candidate traits will make them better or worse in the job.
Keep finalist(s) engaged! If the time between the conclusion of the finalist interviews by the hiring manager and the offer is longer than anticipated, the search committee chair (or designee) communicates to finalist(s) the status of the process. Consider sending a communication such as the following: I wanted to touch base with you so that you wouldn’t think I had forgotten you! The hiring manager expects to make decisions for their XXXX position by XXXX. I’ll be getting back to you as soon as I can after I hear from them. In the meantime, please let me know of any questions you have for me or anything new on your end that the hiring manager should know about.

MAKING THE OFFER

Once a finalist has been determined, and before a verbal offer is made, the Hiring Manager should discuss the finalist with their manager and then contact the Talent Acquisition team (careers@njit.edu) for guidance on determining an appropriate salary offer for the candidate. The hiring manager (or designee) communicates the conditional offer to the selected candidate, and once accepted, and a tentative start date is determined, a formal offer by way of official letter, will be sent to the candidate.

Responding to a counter-offer

The selected candidate may counter-offer. However, no final decisions as to salary, incentive amounts, or any other terms and conditions of employment are agreed upon in that first negotiation unless there is prior explicit approval from the appropriate NJIT stakeholders (i.e. department, HR). It is generally recommended that you extend a note of thanks to the selected candidate for their interest, note that their proposal will be presented for consideration, and let them know that you will be back in touch as soon as is practical.

The hiring manager (or designee) consults with Talent Acquisition to discuss if the counter-offer is possible. Once the counter-offer is finalized with NJIT stakeholders, the hiring manager (or designee) contacts the selected candidate and finalizes the offer.

Best Practice: Take an interest in the selected candidate’s decision process: reach out with a telephone call, asking “As you consider our offer, is there anything I can answer for you to help you make a decision?” Share NJIT prospective employee resources or put the selected candidate in contact with potential future colleagues who share an interest, or a future colleague who will assist the new employee on the first day of working at NJIT.

Notification to Candidate Not Selected

Within five (5) days after the selected candidate signs their offer letter, the hiring manager or search committee chair should communicate to the runner-up, and candidates that were not selected but not removed from consideration, via a telephone call or personal email, informing them that they are not the selected candidate. This communication is followed by the dispositioning of their application in Cornerstone by the HR representative. See Sample
Candidate Email Templates for sample final communications to the runner-up and/or candidates that were not removed from consideration.

BACKGROUND AND REFERENCE CHECK

Once a formal offer is accepted, Talent Acquisition initiates the background check and reference check processes.

Based upon a review of the information received through the background screening and reference check, the Department of Human Resources will advise the hiring department as to whether an offer can be finalized to the candidate.

The offer is contingent upon successful completion of the background and reference check.

After Recruitment

SUCCESSFUL ONBOARDING OF NEW STAFF MEMBER

Onboarding at NJIT is the process of strategically integrating new employees into their work environment, which helps them perform better in their roles, sooner. Effective onboarding promotes frequent communication with the new employee, boosts their engagement, and ensures a smooth transition into the university. Onboarding occurs in the period between acceptance of an offer and continues until the employee is fully integrated into the NJIT community.

The Talent Acquisition team will work with the Hiring Manager to recommend onboarding activities to be completed by both the Hiring Manager and the new hire, as well as make recommendations for other onboarding activities specific to the role, where appropriate. Please find below manager onboarding checklists which will be helpful:

- Pre-Boarding
- First Day
- First Month and Beyond

RECORD RETENTION

Based on several federal laws and our Records Retention Policy, NJIT must retain hiring records for each position for at least three years from the date of the hiring decision (i.e., the date the position was filled). Hiring records include, but are not limited to, all applications and resumes considered for the position, interview and search notes and reference and background checks.