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**TO:** Hiring Supervisors/Search Committee Members  
**FROM:** The Office of Human Resources  
**RE:** **SEARCH PROCEDURE GUIDELINES (A Supplement to the Search Committee Advisory Session)**

Please find below MSU's guidelines for conducting a lawful search. Take time to familiarize yourselves with this information before beginning your important work of identifying a new critical team member for your unit.

### Screening

1. Screen according to the knowledge, skills, and abilities criteria listed in the position announcement.
2. After minimum qualifications, use "desired/preferred" qualifications to help identify the best qualified candidates to interview.
3. Conduct telephone interviews, if desired, to determine those applicants to invite to campus interviews. No Affirmative Action approval is necessary prior to conducting telephone interviews. Ask each candidate what his/her salary expectation is for the position if not indicated on the application form. Contact Human Resources (HR) if you don't understand the salary range that can be conveyed to candidates. An applicant may or may not continue to have interest in the position once provided this information.
4. Reference checks should be conducted prior to interviewing, whenever possible. Verifiable job-related information should be requested (dates of employment, titles/duties, promotions/demotions, attendance, salary, termination reason, and other documented information pertaining to job performance). If subjective or discriminatory information is offered, ignore it. See attached *Interview Guide for Supervisors* for reference check information.
5. Prior to inviting candidates to campus for interviews, the Search Chair must transition short list candidates in the PeopleAdmin Applicant Tracking system to the Chief Diversity Officer (CDO). Please refer to the PeopleAdmin User Manual, found online in the PeopleAdmin system under the Home tab and then from the "My Links" section on the right-hand side of the screen.
6. Upon receipt of short list candidates, the CDO may ask for justification for the non-selection of certain candidates prior to authorizing you to proceed with interviews. Those candidates approved for interview will be returned to you from the CDO in the PeopleAdmin system with a workflow status of "Approved for Interview."
7. After CDO approval, proceed with inviting applicants to campus for interviews.
8. For candidates not interviewed, transition their applications appropriately to the status of "Not Interviewed" or "Phone Inquiry Only." Transitioning applicants to these statuses will trigger suitable emails to the candidates stating they are no longer under consideration for the position. During the process, if any of the candidates "withdraw" or "decline an interview," move those applications to these statuses as fitting.  
NOTE: You may hold some very qualified candidates in the status of "Under Review by Search Committee," by not transitioning them yet, should those on the Short List decline interviews or an offer. If you decide you'd like to interview these candidates at a later date, move them forward to the CDO as explained in #5 above and continue with #6, and #7.

### Interviewing

1. Search Chair shall coordinate interviews based on availability of committee members and applicants.
2. Search Chair/designee shall schedule a quiet location, free from distractions, to conduct interviews.
3. With regard to interviewing, the primary purpose is to collect additional information about each applicant's job-related knowledge, skills, and abilities that will be helpful in making an employment recommendation.
4. Develop interview questions prior to interviews. Consider three rules of thumb: 1) ask only for information relevant to the hiring decision (job-related); 2) know how the information will be used to make the decision; and 3) don't ask for information that will not or should not be used to make hiring decisions. See attached *Interview Guide for Supervisors* for information about screening and interviewing.

Search Procedure Guidelines; 1/1/18 mdh

5. Develop questions based on each major task and responsibility and on the knowledge, skills, and abilities required by the position. Include problem-solving questions that encourage applicants to think creatively. Open-ended questions are recommended to elicit more than a “yes/no” response.
6. Structured interviews are recommended, evaluating each applicant according to the same general criteria. These interviews follow a standard outline, produce more reliable and valid selection information, and are less likely to run afoul of laws/regulations governing the search process.
7. Create a positive image of our great institution. As you know, the best candidates are probably being recruited by multiple employers. Explain why MSU is a great place to work.
8. Present a realistic description of the position. Convey the essential functions of the position, the challenges, and why this role is important to MSU.
9. In the current job market, many U.S. citizens or permanent resident card holders may have an accent, appear different or speak another language. Proceed with caution during your job search process and focus on your strategy. Please remember that discrimination against a U.S. citizen or permanent resident because of national origin is strictly prohibited. Asking an applicant about citizenship is illegal but asking each applicant if he/she is eligible to work in the United States is lawful and should be asked of all candidates. If your candidate of choice happens to be a foreign national please note that sponsorship may be required in order for the candidate to work. Sponsorship is optional and should be decided based upon departmental needs, if funding is available for sponsorship and if the likelihood of securing work authorization exists. Therefore, those already eligible to work in the U.S. (U.S. citizens and permanent residents for permanent jobs; some nonimmigrant statuses for temporary jobs) can be preferred over those needing sponsorship. A foreign national without sponsorship is not qualified for the position because he/she is not eligible to work in the U.S. If a foreign national is the best qualified and can bring to the University unique talent, speak with an HR representative about the possibility of immigration sponsorship, likelihood of approval, and estimated time to obtain a decision (approval can't be guaranteed). A foreign national will only be permitted to work with approval by the USCIS.

#### **Securing Approval of Employment Recommendation**

1. Search Chair (if utilized) provides the committee's hiring recommendations to Hiring Supervisor (Department Initiator or DI) via a written report or email.
2. Hiring Supervisor (DI) makes a final decision regarding an employment recommendation by changing the selected applicant's workflow status to “Recommended for Hire” under the orange “Take Action on Job Application” button via candidate's MSU Application in PeopleAdmin. After changing the status, the supervisor will click on the green tab “Create PAR” button on that candidate's MSU Application and complete the recommended employment details. After completion, the supervisor will transition the PAR workflow status to “Move to Administrative Approver” under the orange tab “Take Action on PAR” button.
3. After the PAR is approved, the Hiring Supervisor (DI) may extend a verbal offer of employment after receiving an email from HR and state, “The offer of employment is contingent upon a satisfactory state and federal background investigation check required by Kentucky state law.”
4. Hiring Supervisor (DI) informs HR as to the applicant's decision regarding the verbal offer.
5. After the verbal acceptance, HR schedules the new employee for orientation, prepares/emails a written offer letter, emails benefit enrollment information, and initiates the background check. HR will provide the Hiring Supervisor (DI) with background results.
6. After verbal acceptance, the Hiring Supervisor (DI) shall transition all applications in the “Interview” status (except for any candidate(s) hired) to the status of “Interviewed on Campus, Not Selected.” This triggers appropriate correspondence to these candidates. If any of those invited for interview declined the interview invitation, those applications should be transitioned to “Declined Interview.”
7. Finally, to build better relations with highly qualified applicants, the Search Chair shall send a personalized letter (template attached) to those candidates interviewed by phone and on campus, with the exception of the candidate(s) being hired, thanking them for the opportunity to discuss the position.

If you have any questions regarding MSU's search procedures, contact the Employment & Training Manager at 606-783-2097.