

SCREENING COMMITTEE GENERAL INFORMATION *Supplement*

This outline is intended to supplement the “Screening Committee – EEO/Diversity Best Hiring Practices” training module.

Equal Employment Opportunity

Marin Community College District is an Equal Opportunity employer that provides each and every job applicant and candidate a fair and objective assessment of their skills. Please refer to MCCD’s “Screening Committee – EEO/Diversity Best Hiring Practices” training module for further information regarding the District’s EEO policies and practices.

HIRING PROCESS:

I. Pre-determination of Rating Criteria and Selection Information

The Human Resources Representative will assure that all phases of the selection process set-up will be completed prior to disclosing the names and/or application materials of any candidate. The selection process includes the following:

- Committee orientation and preliminary discussion,
- Prioritization, weighting, and finalization of KSAs and rating criteria to be used;
- Criteria rating forms and scales;
- Development of interview questions and skill demonstrations with Key Response Elements (see information below); and
- All other determinations related to the criteria to be used in the interview and selection process.

II. Interview Questions

The Screening Committee, with the assistance of the Human Resources representative, will develop a standard set of interview questions that will be asked of each candidate. Committee members will participate in the development of interview questions that are designed to elicit discussion with, and as much information as possible from, the interviewees on the various KSAs being tested at this phase of the screening process.

Interview questions, preferably open-ended in their design, will have all of the following characteristics:

- a. Job-related: questions will be based on the knowledge, skills and abilities required for the position, as identified in the job posting and as clarified by Committee discussion with the department administrator or designee. Interview questions will not include references to race, sex, national origin, marital status, childcare issues, arrest and/or conviction information, friends and/or relatives working in or associated with the District, or any other topic that subjects the interview and selection process to noncompliance with Equal Employment Opportunity policy and procedures.
- b. Free of bias: questions will not favorably or unfavorably focus on any one individual or group of individuals, and will provide an equal, fair and objective opportunity for candidates to respond
- c. Free of adverse impact: questions will not be designed to adversely impact the opportunities of any individual or group of individuals to succeed
- d. Include “Guideline Answers” (GAs): Committee members will pre-determine the specific, job-related knowledge, skills and/or abilities that are pertinent in a successful response to each interview question. The Human Resources representative will guide Committee members in the development of the “KREs” for each of the standard interview questions.

Because the interview process is designed to provide Equal Opportunity to all, follow-up questions are fair and effective only when they are asked for clarification or elaboration. Committee members must be cautious in order to avoid follow-up questions that result in unfair advantage or disadvantage to any candidate.

Pursuant to the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Human Resources representative will provide the Screening Committee with technical information regarding the use of essential functions to determine candidate qualifications.

III. Skill Demonstrations

Screening Committee members may determine that a practical demonstration of job-related skills would be an effective supplement to the interview process. The development of job-related skills demonstrations (e.g., mock presentation or teaching demonstration; or writing sample) will follow the same general principles as described above for interview questions. Skill demonstrations often referred to as “in-basket” tests or “practical exercises,” will have the following characteristics:

- a. Job-related: exercises will be based on the knowledge, skills and abilities required for the position, as identified in the job announcement and as clarified by Committee discussion with the department administrator or designee, when appropriate. Skill demonstration exercises will not include references to race, sex, national origin, medical information or disability, marital status, childcare issues, arrest and/or conviction information, friends and/or relatives working in or associated with the District, or any other topic that subjects the interview and selection process to noncompliance with Equal Employment Opportunity policy and procedures.
- b. Free of bias: exercises will not favorably or unfavorably focus on any one individual or group of individuals, and will provide an equal, fair and objective opportunity for candidates to demonstrate the specific job-related skills
- c. Free of adverse impact: exercises will not be designed to adversely impact the opportunities of any individual or group of individuals to succeed in the process
- d. Include “Guidelines Answers” (GAs): Committee members will pre-determine the specific, job-related knowledge, skills and/or abilities that are pertinent to each practical exercise. The Human Resources (EEO) representative will guide Committee members in the development of “KREs” for the knowledge, skill and/or ability to be tested by each skill demonstration exercise.

Pursuant to the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Human Resources representative will provide the Screening Committee with technical information regarding the use of essential functions to determine candidate qualifications.

IV. Packaging and Retention of Committee Materials

At the conclusion of the Committee process, the Committee Chair will be responsible for reviewing committee member rating forms to assure that they are complete and signed; forwarding finalists’ materials to the department administrator for final interviews; packaging and submitting to HR all committee materials, including rating forms, other documentation used, and all other written materials; and for assisting the department administrator with interview scheduling and other technical assistance as required.

The above-listed Screening Committee documentation, including candidate application materials, are the property of the District HR Office, and will be maintained in a confidential and sealed HR department file for a minimum of two years prior to disposal, pursuant to District records retention policy. The two-year retention timeline will correspond to the statute of limitations imposed by the California Department of Fair Employment and Housing and Federal Equal Employment Opportunity Commission for the filing of discrimination complaints by applicants and candidates, and will be modified should such agency limitations change.

V. Candidate Notification

The Office of Human Resources and/or Hiring Manager will be responsible for notifying all applicants and candidates of their status.

ATTENTION SCREENING COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

The assessment and rating of job applicants and interviewees is challenging at best. However, the District commitment to Equal Employment Opportunity for all means that we assure respectful, sensitive, fair and objective treatment to every job applicant and candidate throughout our screening and selection processes.

In addition to the Screening Committee orientation that begins the selection process, the Office of Human Resources is available to guide you throughout your work, and talk with you concerning the active listening and objective assessment skills required to fairly score all of our candidates.

COMMON RATER ERRORS TO DISCUSS AND AVOID

Screening Committee members must strive to avoid the following common errors that have occurred in some of our previous Committees. Some of these common errors include the following:

- **Contrast Effects:** the quality of candidates who are interviewed earlier in the process has sometimes produced an influence on the rating of candidates who follow. This effect has most often occurred when one candidate possesses a degree or type of experience, or a significant number of work years over and above what the Committee pre-determined for its selection criteria, and has occasionally served to inadvertently increase the qualifications for the position, because other candidates are judged to be “not as qualified.”
- **Halo Effects:** some raters hear good or bad news early in an interviewee response and tend to color all of the following responses with the same “halo,” regardless of their quality and applicability.
- **Order Effects:** interviewing candidates later in the interview day has sometimes resulted in judging that is different from the scoring of earlier-scheduled candidates. This may most likely be attributed to the repetition and strenuousness of the interview process, and the raters’ natural reaction to fatigue. In scheduling interview appointments, the Human Resources representative will consult with the Committee in order to avoid holding too many candidates on the same day, or appointments on the same day that are too closely or loosely scheduled.
- **Projection:** identifying with candidates who are similar to us in ethnicity, culture, appearance, education, lifestyle has resulted in projecting the success or failure of a candidate on the job, based on self-perception. Projection is often followed by prejudice that interferes with objective candidate assessment.
- **Rating Extremes:** using consistently high scores or low scores. Still other Committee members have rated all candidates using the mid-point on the scale!
- **Stereotyping:** using idealized perceptions of individuals, either positive or negative. Images that we are given of people in today’s media; previous negative or positive interactions, associations, and/or experiences that we may have had with an individual, or individuals from a certain group; and our own concepts of people can occasionally cloud judgment and prevent raters from actively listening and assessing each candidate as a unique individual. Stereotyping is often followed by prejudice that interferes with objective candidate assessment.

Are there any other “rater errors” that you have observed on previous Screening Committees?

Thank you again for your valuable service as a member of this Committee.