



Diocese of Owensboro

Protocols - Hiring Process

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Protocols for the Hiring Process

The Diocese of Owensboro is committed to providing equal opportunity in personnel policies, practices, and procedures. Pastors, employers, and principals must conduct all recruitment and hiring functions in compliance with federal and state law and Diocesan policies.

Posting of Job Positions:

- Before posting a job position, notify supervisors and receive their approval. Also, write a job description that supports the mission and defines the expectations of the role and responsibilities, the essential duties, and the education requirements and experience needed for the position.
- In general, list initial job postings for at least five business days, in-house or externally. The length of time a particular job posting remains open depends on the immediate need and significance of the open position as determined by the parish, school, or Diocese. Job posting should remain open and active until a successful candidate is hired.
- Post job in parishes, schools, parish bulletins, parish websites, school websites, the Diocese of Owensboro's website, and other area Diocese's websites if needed. Utilize outside postings on internet jobs and professional organizational websites until a successful candidate is hired.

Acknowledging Applications or Resumes received:

- It is best practice to acknowledge that you have received an application or resume.

Screening Applications and Resumes: The best way to determine which applicant to interview is to compare each applicant's qualifications to the job description and consider the following items when reviewing resumes or applications:

- Once you have received the bulk of applications and resumes, generally within a couple of weeks, separate resumes into stacks: call in for an interview, keep on file for an interview later, and "no thanks" stack.
- It is good practice to make a list of all the candidates, including a summary of each candidate's qualifications, and provide a ranking of (1) Top candidates to interview, (2) Interview, and (3) No interview.
- When you speak to a potential candidate on the phone, you can briefly discuss their skills. A phone call can sometimes be beneficial because it narrows your list of candidates to interview face-to-face. Also, you can get an intuitive feeling for the candidate when you talk to them on the phone.
- In reviewing their resume, how well does the applicant's employment history match the primary functions of the open position?
- Remember that a person's past job performance is a good indicator of their future performance.

- Does the resume indicate a pattern of staying with a job or company for a long time, or do they switch jobs every few months or years?
- Does the resume show too much personal information, which indicates no job experience?
- Does the resume show quality companies they have worked for in the past or currently?
- Does their resume or application show gaps in employment?
- Does their resume or application show signs of achievement and results?
- Is there evidence of volunteer activities?
- Does the applicant's pay history match the pay range for the position?
- Does the resume contain grammatical or typographical errors?
- Is the application complete? Is there incomplete and unclear information?

Suggested Format for an Interview: Interviews are much more productive and effective if they follow a consistent format.

- **Interviewers—Depending on the position, it** may be helpful to form a search committee. The search committee can be composed of a pastor, principal, staff, working peers, and someone who is knowledgeable about the requirements of a position. At least two people must interview a candidate before hiring the applicant for a job position.
- **Be Prepared**—You will make a better decision if you take the time to prepare. To get ready for an interview, review the job description, list of key responsibilities, list the experience needed, and list the personal attributes required for the job. Have your interview questions ready in a written format.
- **Open the Discussion** – Thank the applicant for their time. Introduce the interviewers and explain the structure of the interview. Ask if the candidate has any questions before starting the interview questions. This should take 10% of your time.
- **The Body of the Interview** –Utilize the Diocese of Owensboro_Candidate Interview Questions and Comments_to complete the body of the interview. This form helps you stay on task and is a consistent way to interview all candidates. Modify this form to the questions relevant to the position. Be especially attentive to the candidate's first response because it could alert you to what they have on their mind.
- **Close the Interview**—Explain any next steps to the candidate and give the candidate an idea of when a decision may occur. Ask the candidate whether anything is not covered, unclear, or if there are any questions. ***If the candidate has not completed an application prior to the interview, make sure you have them complete one.***
- **Thank the Applicant**—It is always important to thank the applicant for coming to an interview. You want to make a good impression on the potential candidate, so leave them with positive interview experience and a positive impression of our parish, school, or Diocese.

Interview Questions: (The Body of the Interview – See Suggested Format for an Interview above)

- Complete the Diocese Candidate Interview Questions and Comments Interview Form.
- Make necessary comments next to each question.
- Try not to conduct the following interview until all interviewers have completed their form. It is good to have discussions among the interviewers about the candidates interviewed *but wait until all interview forms are completed so there is no bias favorably or negatively.*
- After all the interviews, rank candidates on the Diocese Interview Question Form.
- File the Interview Question Forms with the candidate's application.

Interviewing Mistakes: Listed below are common interviewing mistakes:

- **First impression error** –Interviewers decide whom they want to hire during the first five minutes of an interview. Also, interviewers prejudge applicants based on their employment application even before the interview starts. Such quick decisions are based on first impressions of someone or something, and you should hold judgment until the end of the interview. Give an applicant a chance to see if they have the skills to do the job.
- **Help candidates feel comfortable** – If you make an applicant more at ease, they will talk more freely.
- **Bias from a co-worker**—Avoid making assumptions based on a co-worker's negative or positive comment about a candidate. Withhold judgment until the interview is over; remember, you want to hire the right person.
- **Bias toward a family member or friend—Avoid** making a mistake by hiring a friend or relative without considering each applicant's qualifications for the job. The goal is to hire the best person to do the job.
- **Control the situation** – Remember it is your interview; do not let the interviewee control it.
- **Spend more time listening than talking.** Interviewers mistakenly talk about half the time. If possible, get the candidate to talk to the interview group. But remember, it is your interview, so control it by asking questions and do not let it get out of hand.
- **Do not telegraph the correct response.** Avoid making statements like this one: "It's critical that anyone in this position be able to work as a team member. Tell me about an experience you had working in such a setting." Just ask, "Tell me about your experience working on a project with others."
- **Stereotyping** – At times, interviewers have preconceived notions about groups of people. Any biases can lead to illegal employment discrimination. Do not stereotype.
- **Be consistent** – Ask all applicants the same fundamental questions. Their responses to a standard set of questions will put you in a better position to compare candidates. Variation is acceptable when exploring answers given by candidates. It is best to use the Diocese Interview Question Form for consistency.
- **Comparison error**—A common error is that interviewers compare applicants to each other or to the current employee to determine who to hire. Compare the applicant's

qualifications to what the job requires, not to the qualifications of the other candidates or the current job holder.

- **Be aware of "Just Like Me"** We tend to hire people who are most like us, which replicates our own strengths and weaknesses. Our goal should be to hire the best person and focus on the objective of the job.

Questions You Can Not Ask in an Interview: When hiring, there are questions you cannot ask.

A list of those questions is as follows:

- "Are you disabled?"
- "Do you have frequent doctor visits or take medications?"
- "Have you had any major illnesses in the past year?"
- "Do you have alcoholism or any drug addictions?"
- "How much do you weigh?"
- "How old are you? What is your date of birth? When did you graduate from high school?" You can ask legally if a person is under the age of eighteen.
- "Do you have adequate childcare?"
- "What is your ancestry or nationality?" Do not make the mistake of saying, "Your last name is interesting; what kind of name is it?" Or do not ask, "Do you speak English at home?"
- "Where is your place of birth?"
- Never ask about a person's race. Never ask an individual to submit a photograph with his application or resume.
- "What is your marital status?"
- "What is your maiden name?"
- "Have you been arrested?" You can ask about convictions but not arrests; cover this on the application.
- "Are your wages being garnished?"
- "Where does your spouse work?"
- "Do you have children? How old are your children? Do you intend on having children?"
- "Where did you live growing up?"
- "How many years do you plan to work before you retire?"
- "Do you smoke?"
- "Are you a citizen of the US?" You can ask, "Are you legally authorized to work in the US?"
- "What is your religion?" Questions about the Roman Catholic Faith can be asked if employment necessity and work-relatedness establish them as a required occupational qualification. Religion can be a required qualification, which will positively affect the staff member's ability to perform the ministerial duties of the position. If you hire a math teacher but also want her to teach a religion class, clarify in the employment ad, then you can ask about religion during the interview.
- **Note** – If there is any simple advice in the "don't ask category" it is this: ***If your question does not relate directly to the job at hand, DON'T ASK IT.***

Selecting the Final Candidate:

- Evaluate the applicants as objectively as possible.
- Use your interview form to narrow down the choice of candidates.
- Review the interview forms, looking for any inconsistencies or issues you had or had not considered.
- Make the selection based on their ability to perform the job.
- Do not favor friends and relatives over a more qualified candidate.
- Be aware of applicants who quit a job without another job or worked jobs over a brief period and carefully examine their answers to interview questions.

Verifying Personal and Work References:

- Once you have selected a candidate and obtained the proper internal approvals, you make a verbal offer contingent upon a clear personal/professional reference and criminal background check.
- Before you can begin checking references, the applicant should have a signed application indicating references. Also, verify with the candidate if you can check with their current employer to verify their work references; this is important. Most candidates will ask that you DO NOT contact their current employer. If you cannot contact their current employer, you can verify this information once they have notified them.
- You want to check at least three references listed on the candidates' application.
- It is best to document each personal/professional reference contacted on the "New Hire Reference Form." This form has the questions you can ask for each reference. Ask the candidate for additional references if you do not speak to all references. Document on the application that you received approval from the candidate to contact additional references.
- You should contact at least two to three work references on the candidate's application. Checking work references will enable you to verify their work history and validate positions held.
- You must document each work reference contacted.
- When speaking with a reference, try to pick up clues as to areas of concern. It is best to pause to see if a reference will comment on a problem or issue the candidate has had in the past. Professional references are not likely to be very forthcoming about an applicant; they fear any negative comments could get them in legal trouble.
- Keep professional/personal reference checks in a section separate from the personnel files. This way, if an employee wants to view their personnel file in the future, they will not have access to personal reference comments. People contacted as references assume their comments are confidential.
- Once hired, a candidate must complete the Safe Environment training online before the first day of work.
- The Safe Environment Training material can be located at [Becoming-safe-environment-compliant](#).
- Teachers and coaches cannot teach or coach until they have completed the online Safe Environment Training.

Hiring the Candidate:

- After verified references and a clear background check, make a final offer to the candidate.
- The Pastor, Principal, or Chancellor must review and approve all final hiring decisions.
- Ensure the rate offered is an acceptable pay range for the candidate's experience and job position.
- A written confirmation or offer letter is appropriate for certain key positions.
- When making the final job offer, consider the following: starting date, job title, pay rate, and benefits.
- If the candidate selected declines the offer for any reason, you should offer the position to the second person on your list. You will also have to complete reference and background checks on this candidate, following the guidelines above.
- If no other viable candidates apply for the position, you will have to continue posting it and restarting the hiring process.

Notifying Applicants not selected:

- After the search process, there should be communication with applicants not selected.
- The applicant's letters are brief and do not express why the applicant was not hired.
- Keep a file of all candidates who apply. Retain completed applications, resumes, interview questions, and notes for at least one year after the position is filled. These are confidential legal records and are secured in a confidential location.

Terminations:

- **The Pastor, the Chancellor, and the HR Director at the Diocese must approve terminations and notify before the termination.**

Diocese of Owensboro
New Hire Reference Form

Candidates Name _____

Reference's Name _____

Date Reference Called _____ Date Interviewed _____

How long have you known the applicant? _____

Do you know the applicant through work or personally? Please verify position if through work.

If colleagues; what were the applicant's duties? Did they complete the duties satisfactorily? Did they go above and beyond? Please explain.

In your opinion, does the applicant work well as a team member? Please explain.

How would you describe the attitude and cooperation related to others, work, and co-workers?

Was the employee punctual? Were there any issues with tardiness or absenteeism?

Anything else you would like to share?

Person checking references and date: _____

Thank you for your resume for the position of _____ at
_____ Parish/School.

Within the next few weeks, we will be reviewing resumes and applications comparing the qualifications of the candidates with the requirements of the position to select which individuals to interview.

We will contact you if we need additional information or wish to schedule a phone or personal interview. We will let you know whether you are among the final candidates as soon as we make that decision.

On behalf of _____, we want to thank you again for your interest in employment with us.

Sincerely,
