



# **Diocese of Owensboro**

## **Recommendations - Hiring Process**

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### **Recommendations 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 polices.

#### **Posting of Job Positions:**

- Prior to posting a job position, notify supervisors and receive their approval. Also prior to posting a job, write a job description which supports the mission and defines expectation 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 a minimum of five business days either in-house or externally. The length of time a particular job posting remains open is dependent on the immediate need and significance of the open position as determined by the parish, school, or Diocese. Job postings should remain open and active until a successful candidate is hired.
- Post job in parishes, schools, parish bulletins, on parish websites, on school websites, on the Diocese of Owensboro's website and other area Diocese's websites if needed. Utilize outside postings on internet job 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 position description and consider the following items when reviewing resumes or applications:

- Once you have received the bulk of applications and resumes which are normally within a couple of weeks, separate resumes into these 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, include 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; briefly speak to them about their skills. A phone call at times is beneficial because it narrows your list to interview face to face. Also, you can get an intuitive feel 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** - It may be helpful to form a search committee depending on the position. The search committee can be composed of a pastor, principal, staff, working peers and someone who is knowledgeable of the requirements of a position. At least two people must interview a candidate prior to 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 personal attributes required for the job. Have your interview questions ready in a written format.
- **Open the Discussion** – Thank the applicant for his/her 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 it 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 there is anything not covered, unclear or if there are any questions. ***Make sure you have the candidate complete an application if they have not completed an application prior to the interview.***
- **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; leave them with a 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.
- If possible, try not to conduct the next 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.*
- At the conclusion of 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 upon a comment negatively or positively stated by a co-worker regarding 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, and not looking at the qualifications of each applicant 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 the interview.
- **Spend more time listening than talking** – Interviewers mistakenly talk about half of the time. If possible, get the candidate to talk to the interview group. But remember it is your interview, so control it by asking the questions and do not let it get out of hand.
- **Do not telegraph the right 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 an experience you had working on 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 the same basic questions of all applicants. Their responses to a common set of questions will put you in a better position to compare candidates. Variation is acceptable to explore answers given by candidates. It is best to use the Diocese Interview Question Form for consistency.
- **Comparison error** – A common error is that interviewers will 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 most like us, which replicates our own strengths and weakness. Our goal should be to hire the best person, 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 do you take medications?”
- “Have you had any major illness 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 for 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 question 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 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, when being a practicing Catholic 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 that 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 candidate who is more qualified.
- Be aware of applicants that quit a job without another job, worked jobs over a brief period and carefully examine the answers to their 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 given notice to their employer.
- 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. If you do not speak to all references, ask the candidate for additional reference. Document on the application that you received approval from the candidate to contact additional references.
- You want to contact at least two to three work references on the candidate's application. Checking work references will enable you to verify their work history in validating 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, so 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.
- It is critical that the Pastor, Principal or Chancellor review and approve all final hiring decisions.
- Make sure the rate of pay 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.
- Cover the following items when making the final job offer starting date, job title, pay rate and benefits.
- If for a reason, the candidate selected declines the offer, you should go back and offer the position to the second person on your list. You will have to complete reference and background checks on this candidate as well, following the guidelines above.
- If you do not have any other viable candidates that applied for the position, you will have to continue to post the position and restart the hiring process.

### **Notifying Applicants not selected:**

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

### **Terminations:**

- **The Pastor, and the Chancellor, and the HR Director at the Diocese must approve terminations and notify prior to 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,

\_\_\_\_\_