

ISU Extension and Outreach Hiring and Search Committee Process

Initial Steps in the Process

When the Iowa State University Extension and Outreach Department/Unit has determined there is a need to fill a position, the initial steps in the process are to contact Iowa State University Extension and Outreach Human Resources (HR) to begin the process with Iowa State University's University Human Resources (UHR). The Hiring Authority/Supervisor will need to establish a search committee based on ISU Extension and Outreach Administrative Search Guidelines/Employment Search Guidelines. Once a search committee has been established, please submit the listing of names with a clear indication of the search committee chair to HR.

The Hiring Authority/Supervisor should conduct a meeting with the search committee prior to the beginning of the search to share pertinent information and the charge of the committee. HR will attend this meeting either in person or via telephone, depending on the type of meeting conducted, to share the guidelines as well as walk through the search process to ensure compliance.

Posting of Position

When the position has been approved by UHR, HR will notify the search committee chair that the position has been posted. HR will provide the search committee chair with a PDF vacancy announcement of the job posting for distribution and advertising purposes as well as the guest user access information to the ISU Online Classification and Hiring System (PeopleAdmin) for the search committee members to view the applications and applicant materials online.

Advertising the Position

The position is automatically posted on the ISU Job Site and the ISU Extension and Outreach Job Site. All other advertising is the responsibility of the search committee. HR can be utilized in providing recommendations for potential locations and can assist with written ad examples if needed. **A P37 or higher position must be advertised a minimum of 30 days on a national level. A P36 or lower position is required to advertise a minimum of 15 days and does not require a national advertisement.** The search committee will be responsible for advertising based on ISU Extension and Outreach Administrative Search

Guidelines/Employment Search Guidelines. A listing of advertisement locations will need to be supplied to HR for reporting purposes.

Screening the Applicants

Once the position deadline has passed, HR will screen all applicants received to ensure they meet the minimum requirements. The initial screening generally will be completed within 1-2 business days of the closing of the position. Any applicants that do not meet the minimum qualifications will be marked as such and moved to the inactive pool within the PeopleAdmin system. A matrix of all applicants will be generated by HR and forwarded to the search committee chair. The applicant matrix will list all applicants received with the required qualifications marked, with non-qualified applicants highlighted in gray. The applicant matrix also will include fields for all preferred qualifications, overall preferred rating, and comments.

The search committee should follow ISU Extension and Outreach Administrative Search Guidelines/ISU Extension and Outreach Employment Search Guidelines for the screening process. The search committee is responsible for screening the qualified applicants according to how well they meet all preferred qualifications. Ultimately, the committee must derive an overall ranking for each applicant, as well as a ranking for each preferred qualification for each applicant. The search committee will need to complete the rankings for each applicant on a whole number scale of 0-5; with 0 meaning the applicant met no preferred qualifications, and 5 meaning he or she met all preferred qualifications. **The rankings are the ONLY factor the committee may use for determining which applicants will be interviewed.**

The search committee has flexibility in deciding how much numerical weight to give to each preferred qualification, as long as all applicants are treated equally. The committee must determine the weight values for each preferred qualification *before* screening the applicants and provide clear documentation showing how the numbers were derived. The search committee can weight some preferred qualifications higher than others based on what has more value or importance for the position (for example, giving grant writing experience a higher value than a master's degree). However, the numerical weighting must be convertible to a 0-5 scale for the overall ranking. HR will need to approve the screening documentation process prior to the search committee beginning to screening of applicants. To do this, the search committee chair will need to submit the documentation to HR for approval.

Example 1. Search Committee X decides to give all of four preferred qualifications equal weight, using a 0-5 scale for each qualification. The highest total points for the four preferred qualifications would be 20 (4 qualifications x 5 points). The committee decided to convert total points to the following 0-5 scale: 0 points=0, 1-5 points=1, 6-10 points=2, 11-14 points=3, 15-19 points=4, and 20 points=5.

Example 2. Search Committee Z decides that one of four preferred qualifications has greater weight, using a 0-10 scale for one qualification and a 0-5 scale for the other three qualifications. The highest total points for the four preferred qualifications would be 25. The committee decided to convert total points to the following 0-5 scale: 0 points=0, 1-5 points=1, 6-10 points=2, 11-15 points=3, 16-20 points=4, and 21-25 points=5.

HR recommends the following best practices:

- Each committee member should individually review the materials for and rank each applicant for each preferred qualification.
- The committee chair (or designee) should compile all committee members' rankings to determine each applicant's preferred qualification scores and total point count.
- The committee members then should meet and review the applicant rankings and point counts to determine which applicants will be interviewed.
- After the committee has finished all conversations about the applicants, the committee should complete one copy of the applicant matrix, adding the rankings for all preferred qualifications, the overall preferred rating, and comments.

The rankings are the ONLY determining factor for interviews, but how the search committee weights each preferred qualification has flexibility as long as all applicants are treated equally. The search committee can weight different preferred qualifications higher than others based on what has more value or importance for the position (example: grant writing has a higher value than a master's degree, etc.). The scale used is left up to the search committee for each individual preference, but then the total ranking for the applicant would need to be translated down to the 0-5 ranking system that the online system uses. For example, in a scale in which the highest ranking for all possible preferred qualifications was 20, an approach would be scores of 0=0, 1-5=1, 6-10=2, 11-14=3, 15-19=4, and 20=5 for total rankings, etc. **The weight values for each preferred qualification should be determined prior to the screening of applicants with clear documentation to show how the numbers were derived.**

Reference Checks (Conducted after the Interviews)

If the search committee will be conducting reference checks after the interviews are completed, please skip down to the "Interview Process (Reference Checks to Be Conducted after the Interviews)" step.

Reference Checks (Conducted Prior to Interviews)

Once the search committee has determined the top candidates for reference checks, the completed matrix will need to be submitted to HR. The comments should clearly indicate the top candidates that will be reference checked and potentially interviewed; the applicants that are "still considered" as a second tier of applicants in

case of top candidates withdrawing, etc.; and the applicants who would not be “considered” even if others were to drop out of the applicant pool.

Once the matrix is received by HR, the information will be entered into the PeopleAdmin system and submitted to UHR for reference approval. This process generally takes 1-3 days for approval to be granted. After the approval is granted, HR will notify the search committee chair that reference checks now can be conducted. All of the candidates about whom reference checks are to be made first should be called by the committee chair, or other designated committee member, to inform them that they are still under consideration for the position. The chair can thereby confirm that they continue to be interested, as well as inform them that their references will now be called. The search committee should follow the ISU Extension and Outreach Administrative Search Guidelines/Employment Search Guidelines for reference checks. HR will need to approve the reference check questions that will be asked of all candidate’s references prior to the checks being conducted. The search committee chair will need to submit the documentation to HR for approval.

Interview Process (Reference Checks to Be Conducted after the Interviews)

If the search committee will be conducting reference checks after the interviews are completed, the next step in the process is to determine the top candidates for interviews. Once the committee has agreed on its recommendation to the hiring officer/supervisor, the recommendation is forwarded by the committee chair. The search committee should follow the ISU Extension and Outreach Administrative Search Guidelines/Employment Search Guidelines for recommendations to the hiring officer/supervisor.

Once the hiring officer/supervisor has provided the list of applicants approved for an interview, the completed matrix will need to be submitted to HR. The comments should clearly indicate the top candidates that will be interviewed; the applicants that are “still considered” as a second tier of applicants in case of top candidates withdrawing, etc.; and the applicants who would not be “considered” even if others were to drop out of the applicant pool.

Once the matrix is received by HR, the information will be entered into the PeopleAdmin system and submitted to UHR for interview approval. This process generally takes 1-3 days for approval to be granted. After the approval is granted, HR will notify the search committee chair that the committee now can proceed with applicant interviews. The search committee should follow the ISU Extension and Outreach Administrative Search Guidelines/Employment Search Guidelines for the interviews. HR will need to approve the interview questions that will be asked of all candidates prior to the initial interview for both telephone interviews (if conducted) as well as face-to-face interviews. The search committee chair will need to submit the documentation to HR for approval.

Interview Process (Reference Checks Already Conducted)

If the search committee has already conducted reference checks, the next step in the process is to determine the top candidates for interviews. Once the committee has agreed on its recommendation to the hiring officer/supervisor, the recommendation is forwarded by the committee chair. The search committee should follow the ISU Extension and Outreach Administrative Search Guidelines/Employment Search Guidelines for recommendations to the hiring officer/supervisor. HR will need to approve the interview questions that will be asked of all candidates prior to the initial interview for both telephone interviews (if conducted) as well as face-to-face interviews. The search committee chair will need to submit the documentation to HR for approval.

Once the hiring officer/supervisor has provided the list of applicants approved for an interview, and the applicants selected for interview were applicants already approved by UHR for reference checks, the search committee can proceed with interviews without any further approval. If any of the applicants were not approved by UHR for reference checks, please contact HR for further discussion before proceeding.

Evaluating the Finalists

If reference checks were not conducted prior to the interviews, the next step in the process would be to check references. HR will need to approve the reference check questions that will be asked of all candidate's references prior to the checks being conducted. The search committee chair will need to submit the documentation to HR for approval. The search committee's final responsibility is to advise the hiring officer/supervisor regarding the finalists. The search committee should follow the ISU Extension and Outreach Administrative Search Guidelines/Employment Search Guidelines for reference checks, evaluating the finalists, and making recommendations to the hiring officer/supervisor. The hiring officer/supervisor will discharge the search committee at this time.

Hire Approval (by Hiring Officer/Supervisor)

Once the top candidate of choice has been identified, the hiring officer/supervisor can contact the candidate and make an informal offer. The hiring officer/supervisor should let the individual know that he or she is the top candidate of choice to determine if he or she is interested in accepting. It should be made clear to the candidate that the hire is contingent upon a successful background check and UHR approval to hire. An informal salary offer for acceptance or negotiation can be made at this time. If the candidate accepts the informal offer, the hiring officer/supervisor also should inform the candidate that he or she will be receiving an email to begin the background check process in the next couple of days.

Once an informal offer has been accepted, the hiring officer/supervisor will need to submit the following information to HR:

- Name of top candidate with a short rationale for selection
- Listing of all additional candidates that were interviewed, but not selected, with a short rationale as to why they were not selected
- Listing of any candidates that were approved for interview, but did not actually interview with the reason, if known
- Salary amount for hire (If salary is higher than the 1st Third Hiring Range, then an additional justification will be needed for the rationale for a higher salary.)

HR then will submit this information through PeopleAdmin for UHR hire approval. This process on average takes about a week, depending upon how long the background check process takes. Once the official hire has been approved, HR will notify the hiring officer/supervisor to proceed with a formal offer to the candidate.

After the candidate accepts the official offer, a start date will need to be supplied to HR to begin the onboarding process.

For More Information

For more information, contact the Office of the Assistant Vice President, Organizational Development for Extension and Outreach, 1118 Extension 4-H Building, Ames, IA 50011-3630, (515) 294-1517.

IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY Extension and Outreach

... and justice for all

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, and where applicable, sex, marital status, familial status, parental status, religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, political beliefs, reprisal, or because all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at 202-720-2600 (voice and TDD). To file a complaint of discrimination, write to USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410, or call 800-795-3272 (voice) or 202-720-6382 (TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Issued in furtherance of Cooperative Extension work, Acts of May 8 and June 30, 1914, in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Cathann A. Kress, director, Cooperative Extension Service, Iowa State University of Science and Technology, Ames, Iowa.