

Tips for Conducting a Search

1. Candidate files should always be reviewed on basis of the requirements in the Position Statement. These should be grouped by minimal requirements and additional positive factors. These may be refined and elaborated, and a specific rating system should be used to weigh them. If the criteria change midstream, candidates eliminated previously may have to be reevaluated on the basis of those changed criteria. For this reason, the initial input on the Position Statement is important.
2. All candidates for a position should be reviewed and processed the same until they are eliminated from the pool. All candidates at the same level should be afforded the same opportunity to answer similar questions, interview with the designated interviewers, and given the same opportunity to present, socialize, or be given a tour.
3. A list should be made of the questions to be asked at the interview stage. While follow-up questions obviously may occur, there should be some evidence of what generally was discussed or not discussed at the interview stage.
4. If a topic comes up with one candidate in an interview, and not with others, but it is deemed a critical factor in evaluating the candidates, it could be asked of the other candidates by phone. This can be done by the search administrative person and conveyed to committee members.
5. If reference contacts are made through the use of telephone or non-listed references, each of these should be documented with notes. A common source of complaint is a negative reference about which the candidate is uninformed. While it is permitted to contact persons who are not listed, the utmost sense of fairness should govern such contacts. If an unlisted reference is contacted for one finalist, for example, it is recommended that unlisted references be contacted for all finalists—otherwise the person has an argument they were treated differently because of a discriminatory reason. The questions and the responses should be noted.
6. Late candidate referrals are discouraged, particularly after the pool has been reviewed. This may require that the search be extended and reposted.
7. While confidentiality cannot be guaranteed to any candidate, contacts and discussions regarding the candidate pool should not occur with anyone outside the search committee. If a need arises, it should be discussed with the committee.