

Instructions for Members of Interview Committees

1. The Oral Interview Committee

The oral interview committee has the serious responsibility of evaluating the training, experience, and personal characteristics of candidates relative to the requirements of the position. The following guide is designed to give the committee a common understanding of the Solano County Office of Education's interviewing and employment process.

- a. The oral interview committee generally consists of three to six persons. The chair of the committee will inform the candidates about the interview process, introduce the candidates to the committee members, regulate the interview time, perform the interview record-keeping functions, and guide the interviews by keeping them focused on evaluating the candidates for the job.
- b. The committee should function as a relaxed, informal team with equal participation in asking the assigned questions. The committee should try to help the candidates feel at ease so they will give relaxed and honest responses.
- c. The job description and the components of the total selection process will be discussed with the committee before the interviews.

2. Questioning the Candidate

- a. The objective is to explore the same areas of qualification with each candidate. Specific questions will be assigned. Additional questions may be asked regarding the résumé or as a follow-up to volunteered information from the candidate.
- b. Open-ended questions are usually included. It is important that the candidate be allowed to answer in his/her own way. Committee members should listen carefully to the candidate and show that they are trying to understand. If a committee member is not sure s/he understands a candidate's answer, questions may be asked to clarify and avoid any possible misunderstanding.
- c. Remember, in a good interview, the candidate does the talking. Avoid lecturing, teaching, and leading the candidate to an answer.
- d. Committee members may want to take notes during the interview, but it should be done discreetly to avoid distracting the candidate and other committee members. The rating form should not be marked until after the candidate leaves the room.

3. Evaluating and Rating a Candidate

- a. Committee members should not let personal biases influence their rating or recommend candidates who are not able to do the job.
- b. Immediately following each interview, committee members will rate each candidate with the assistance of a rating sheet. The committee chair will coordinate this activity.

Policy 4111.12 (Continued)

4. Other Factors of which to be Aware

- a. Committee members should remain alert in questioning and judgment to avoid a "halo effect" where they may be unduly influenced by a single one of the candidate's traits or characteristics, causing them to overlook others.
- b. Adopt a friendly, easygoing attitude to produce more useful information about a candidate's qualifications. Avoid seeming stiff, formal, and unsmiling.
- c. Use appropriate vocabulary and ideas which are at or near the candidate's level. Avoid the use of professional jargon during the interview.
- d. Maintain consistent standards. Applying standards consistently requires a conscious effort on the part of each committee member. If early ratings prove to be out of line, members should adjust them to reflect accurately a candidate's qualifications.
- e. Do not rate every candidate the same. If interview ratings are to carry their intended weight, committee members should use all grading factors on the rating sheet.
- f. The committee should make every effort to keep interviews on schedule. However, if the committee drops behind, no interview should be shortened in order to return to the schedule.

5. Nondiscriminatory Interviewing

- a. Evaluation standards should be job-related and should not automatically screen out applicants whose speech, dress, personal and work habits, gender, age, or ethnicity differ from those of the predominant group. Be aware that neat grooming provides no assurance of efficient job performance, age is not necessarily related to maturity in attitude or satisfactory performance on the job, and a firm handshake does not guarantee a strong character.
- b. The committee's inquiries must be clearly job-related. Do not ask questions addressing the following:
 - Age, date of birth, place of birth
 - Arrests
 - Children under 18, number of children, age of children
 - Child care
 - Citizenship
 - Credit record, charge accounts, home ownership
 - Eye color, hair color, height, weight
 - Language spoken in the home
 - Maiden name, Mr., Mrs., Ms., or Miss
 - Spouse's name, spouse's work, spouse's military rank
 - Widowed, divorced, or separated
 - Political or union membership
 - Religious beliefs
 - Race, national origin/ancestry

6. Affirmative Action

The Solano County Office of Education is an equal opportunity employer committed to Affirmative Action.