



**LAKE WASHINGTON
INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY**

Practical. Purposeful. Promising.

Screening Committee Training

Mission and Vision Overview

To Become the Employer of Choice is the goal of the human resources department and provides the groundwork to align our HR strategies to Lake Washington Institute of Technology's mission and vision.

- By providing job candidates with the best possible recruiting experience, we enhance the reputation and image of the college.
- To ensure a fair and equitable process, a hiring committee is called upon to evaluate job candidates. At the same time, a job candidate is also evaluating the committee members, the department, and ultimately, the college. The impression a candidate receives of the college will be amplified through the candidate to many individuals, potentially influencing the college's reputation.
- Specific aspects that may influence a candidate's perception include: being candid and forthright; meeting timelines and creating a sense of urgency around the process; being professional in correspondence; politely answering telephone inquiries; conducting interviews that are probing, yet cordial; and having campus visits that are well planned and executed.
- As a result of these efforts, the hiring process can be seen as highly professional, and the college as a healthy, positive place to work.

HR Responsibilities

- Oversight for recruitment, hiring, promotion, retention, and other employment related issues.
- Responsibility for ensuring compliance with state and federal laws.
- Sets an expected time of completion and scope of search.
- Communicates expectations for committee conduct.
- Oversight of advertising and outreach efforts.
- Facilitates an orderly and effective recruitment process consistent with college policies and procedures.
- Provides guidance and advice to screening committees, administrators, and the Appointing Authority on recruitment and hiring policies, processes, and regulations.

Diversity in the Search Process

LWTech recognizes the benefit of diverse perspectives and experiences, and seeks to build and sustain an inclusive community in which all members are valued and appreciated.

Diversity in the Candidate Pool: Job Postings

- In addition to the minimum qualifications and requirements, consider educational background, experience, publications, service, and/or community involvement.
- Think of how the candidates contributions will benefit the college's mission and strategic plan to create a diverse learning environment and campus community.
- Request candidate address their commitment to diversity in the application process or during the interview if diversity issues are applicable to the job responsibilities and duties. You can do this by:
 - Asking the candidate to address their commitment to supporting and enhancing a diverse campus community.
 - Asking the candidate to describe how they have addressed issues of diversity and/or multicultural skills in the workplace or classroom.
- Develop advertising and outreach strategies with the goal of diversifying the candidate pool.

Diversity in the Hiring Committee

- Wide range of individuals whenever possible including women, minorities, and individuals from other underrepresented groups.
- Appropriate persons outside of the department or college may be sought to serve on a hiring committee including students.
- May expand abilities of the hiring committee to identify and reach qualified diverse candidates.

Hiring Committee Responsibilities

- Promote a fair and equitable process.
- Put aside personal agendas, biases, or political position so that each candidate has an honest and fair evaluation.
- Represent the institution as a whole rather than individuals or group stakeholders.
- Disclose all conflicts of interest to the entire committee.
- Ensure that no member of the committee intends to become a candidate for the position.

Hiring Committee Responsibilities, cont.

- Screen and evaluate the candidates based upon application materials submitted, setting aside any biases or pre-conceived opinions regarding the candidate.
- Protect confidentiality of applicants and the decision-making process.
- Act promptly and efficiently to ensure that top candidates are not lost to other employers.

EEO/AA in the Search Process

LWTech is an equal opportunity employer committed to providing equal opportunity without regard to race, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity/expression, religion, age, color, creed, national or ethnic origin, physical, mental, or sensory disability, marital status, genetic information, and/or status as a veteran.

EEO/AA in the Search Process

- The hiring committee is to use good faith efforts to achieve compliance with EEO/AA including but not limited to:
 - Outreach and recruitment strategies to broaden candidate pools to include ethnic/racial minorities, women, and individuals from other underrepresented groups.
 - Systematic efforts to ensure that hiring selections are made without regard to race, gender, or other prohibited factors.

Preparing for the Interview

Know and understand:

1. The position details.
2. Official title or working title of the position.
3. Primary responsibilities and duties of the position.
4. Position configuration: academic or annual appointment; FTE; temporary or permanent; tenure-track, non-tenure, etc.

Preparing for the Interview, cont.

5. Minimum/required qualifications: criteria that is required for the position such as educational level, field(s) of study, years of experience, and/or additional mandatory licenses or credentials.

6. Preferred qualifications: desired criteria that may enhance the effectiveness of the incumbent performing the job, but are not required.

- Know the salary range available for the position.

Hiring Steps

- HR gives access to hiring Manager to open job requisition in Neo-Gov.
- Timeline from job posting to first review of applications is at the discretion of the hiring manager.
- At the first review date, HR reviews all completed applications for minimum qualifications and communicates candidates to the hiring manager.
- Committee members then review candidate materials individually.
- Committee meets and selects candidates for next step of the process.

Hiring Steps, cont.

- The hiring committee determines finalists; invites finalists for on-campus interviews.
- Hiring committee conducts interviews, campus tours, then meets to complete a decision-making scorecard.
- Verbal offer to be extended by HR.
- Unsuccessful candidates notified of outcome by HR.
- The entire process can take up to 60 days from posting to offer.

Candidate Evaluation

- Evaluation methods/tools should be as objective and measurable as possible; clearly understood by the screening committee.
- Ensure the evaluation criteria matches the job posting.
- Ensure the evaluation criteria is applied consistently to each candidate. Adherence may assist in defending against allegations of unequal treatment.
- Refrain from making assumptions about the candidate and/or the application materials; evaluate only the actual information provided.

Candidate Evaluation

- Ensure application materials clearly demonstrate requisite education, experience, and skills outlined in the job posting.
- Discussion – ensures no candidate is eliminated by a member based upon non-job-related reason or bias.
- Be aware of the “moving target” syndrome – changing the requirements as the search proceeds in order to include/exclude certain candidates.

Interviews

- In general refrain from the following:
 - *Soliciting information not related to the person's ability to perform the duties and responsibilities of the position; and*
 - *Seeking information that could potentially be used to discriminate against the candidate based upon his/her race, color, religion, gender, age, national origin, sexual orientation, marital status, disability status and/or veteran status.*

Interviews

- All communication and interaction with the candidate should be courteous and professional.
 - Cell phones off, arrive early to the interview.
- Remember, the candidate is also evaluating the screening committee, department, and college during this time.
- Critical to treat all candidates the same; visits should be similar in structure.

Interviews

- Visit may include:
 - formal interview with the screening committee
 - lunch or dinner with the candidate
 - campus tour
 - benefit presentation
 - teaching demonstration/presentation by the candidate
 - meeting with the President and/or VP
 - meeting with other staff/faculty/students.

Interviews

- In the formal interview, ask the same core questions of all candidates. Follow-up question asked of the candidate will vary as will questions asked of the screening committee by the candidate.
- Remember, allow the candidate time for debriefing after the campus visit. Provide an estimated timeline of the search process. Communicate the next steps.

Interview Questions: Do's/Don'ts

It's unreasonable to expect managers not to engage in any conversation with the individual, but you must avoid:

Personal politics, religion, ethnicity, race, or gender topics

Marriage, children and family responsibilities

If an applicant's resume mentions that they participate in a club or affinity organization with some connection to race or ethnicity, don't ask questions about it.

It's unrealistic to think there will be absolutely no unexpected conversation during an interview with a candidate and sometimes, candidates will disclose too much information in an interview. If you find yourself in an interview where the candidate is having conversation that is bordering on problematic:

Do not ask follow-up questions.

Promptly redirect conversation that strays back to the person's ability to perform the essential functions of the job.

Essential Job Functions

Sometimes an applicant has an obvious disability or medical condition that may cause the employer to wonder if the person can perform the essential job functions. **But what if someone has a cast on his leg?**

It would be fine for one of the interviewers to ask, "Are you OK? Comfortable sitting there? But, you must not go any further in the conversation about it other than to find out if the applicant can perform essential duties. Otherwise, the college could be viewed as violating the Americans with Disabilities Act's prohibition on pre-offer disability-related questions.

You can say this: "If you get past this round and are hired, we'd want you to start May 1. Is that a problem?"

If it's a desk job, the crutches and cast may not be a problem. But for other positions, there may be an insurmountable barrier. If the candidate isn't able to start on the suggested date, but the employer is still interested, the manager could offer to have the individual join the company when they are available to start. Otherwise, the candidate can be told to apply again when there is another job opening.

Always be clear about expectations, including working overtime, weekends, and holidays if applicable.

Reference Checks

- Conducted by either committee members or the HR Office upon request.
- A minimum of 2 professional references must be contacted.
- Reference checks can be conducted in writing, by fax, in person, by email, or by telephone.
- Whenever possible, reference checks should be conducted by the same person using the same method.

Reference Checks

- Letters of recommendation do not take the place of reference checks but can be used as part of the decision process.
- As a courtesy, candidates should be notified prior to contacting their references.

**Screening Committee members cannot provide references for a candidate in the pool. Committee members should remove themselves if there is conflict of interest.*

After the Interview

Upon completion of the interview process, committee members will meet to discuss the strengths and weaknesses of each candidate, the results of the reference checks, and any other information gleaned during the screening process. This information should be summarized in a memo.

**Be aware that written communications are subject to the Public Records law.*

Finalizing the Search

- HR will finalize the offer. Generally the verbal offer of employment should come from the supervisor or HR (Please note - this topic is presently under discussion).
- A written offer, along with contracts, are distributed by HR.

Finalizing the Search

- HR notifies all unsuccessful candidates that the position has been filled.
- Typically, notification occurs after the offer has been accepted or on the first day the successful candidate begins work.
 - Internal candidates are notified of the status of their application at the point they are no longer considered to be a viable candidate for the position.

Records Retention

- List of Screening Committee members
- Application materials
- Materials produced during the process
- Reasons indicating why candidates not selected for hire
- Copies of all internal and external advertising
- Candidate evaluation tools
- Hiring recommendation sent to the Appointing Authority
- Copy of final offer letter

Summary

- An effective and efficient committee helps ensure the hiring process is handled in accordance with LWTech policies and procedures.
- It is important for the screening committee to be objective, fair, and impartial throughout the process.
- The ultimate goal is to hire the best candidate for the position!

Hiring Committee Training Completed

Questions?

Please don't hesitate to ask Human Resources anything that may need clarification.

Thank you!

Makeup of the Search Committee

Q. Who serves as chairs on search committees?

A. The best approach is to have the supervisor serve as the committee chair, or have the supervisor delegate that responsibility to another manager in the department. The supervisor then selects a committee responsible to review candidates for potential initial interviews and recommend candidates as finalists to the hiring authority. The supervisor and hiring authority participate in the 2nd/final interviews.

Q. Is there a required number/makeup of search committee members?

A. No. Generally, a committee may have 3 to 5 members. We do encourage employees with different backgrounds, perspectives, expertise, and who have demonstrated a commitment to diversity, to serve. It's also important to try and ensure a cross-section of employees from around the campus – such as a faculty member, a classified member, a prof-tech, etc. Please note: the larger the committee, the harder it may be to coordinate schedules, which may lengthen the overall process.

Q. Can people outside the college serve on the search committee?

A. In some cases, yes. For faculty and administrator searches, an advisory committee member or other industry partner, Foundation member, or college community member, may serve. Please notify HR as soon as possible about non-employees serving on committees. We will work with them individually to ensure they have the information they need to participate on the committee.

Q. Is it OK to share the names of the search committee members with applicants?

A. Yes, if the applicant asks for the information, it's fine to share the information. It demonstrates the applicant is engaged in the process.

Screening Applications

Q. Does the search committee have to use a scoring matrix to help determine applicants for interview?

A. Yes. To screen the applications (in the online NEOGOV application system), the committee should use a 2-pt. pass/fail scale:

- 1 = fail = I do *not* recommend for initial interview.
- 2 = pass = I *do* recommend for initial interview.

These scores are compiled and averaged; the committee chair will review the results and discuss them with the committee at the first committee meeting to help inform decisions about potential candidates for interview.

Search committees should review applications before the first committee meeting, where a decision will be made as to who will be invited to interview. The goal is for the committee to have a discussion about candidates and their experience and education, based on the qualifications in the job posting.

Also, initial interview questions the committee develops at group meetings should have a "look-for" rubric for each question – what makes a good answer? What makes a poor one? Is the candidate's response vague, limited, substantial, detailed (etc.)? Did they provide specific examples? Here's an example of what that might look like:

Please describe your most advanced use of databases and spreadsheets or other complex computer/data systems.

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Vague description, enter/format text/data	Limited experience; Modify some text, data	Descriptive, specific create/modify/analyze
	Modify tables, formulas	tables, charts, databases,
		reports, macros, etc.



Q. Can you exclude an applicant that appears to be over-qualified?

A. Applicants should not be evaluated lower if they appear overqualified. You must evaluate applicants based on how they compare to the qualifications stated for the position, even if they exceed them. For example, if a qualification for a position is a Bachelor's degree, and the candidate has a Bachelor's degree and a PhD, then the candidate has successfully satisfied this qualification.

Initial Interviews

Q. Does the committee have to conduct interviews to determine who to submit as finalists for interview with the hiring authority?

A. Yes. The interviews can be in-person, over the phone, or over teleconference (Skype).

Q. Do we have to ask applicants the same questions?

A. Yes. It's important to ask the same initial questions so that each candidate has the same opportunity to respond to the questions established, to help the committee determine who to move forward in the process. It's OK to ask additional follow-up questions.

Q. When should the committee discuss whether or not to move an applicant forward in the process?

A. When scheduling interviews, the committee can allow time between applicants for this discussion or allow time to discuss after all of the interviews.

Q. How many candidates should the committee recommend for 2nd/final interviews?

A. Committees must forward 2+ *unranked* finalists to the hiring authority for 2nd/final interviews.

Q. What if the committee is not satisfied with any of the applicants interviewed?

A. The committee chair should work with the Executive Director of Human Resources to discuss the candidates and the committee's documentation of the interview process, to determine next steps.

Q. Are there questions the committee cannot ask during the interview?

A. Federal and state laws prohibit prospective employers from asking certain questions that are not related to the job they are hiring for. Questions should be job-related and not used to find out personal information.

Employers should not ask about any of the following, because to not hire a candidate because of any one of them is discriminatory:

- Race
- Religion
- Age
- Color
- National origin
- Disability
- Sex
- Birthplace
- Marital/family status

Examples:

	You may ask...	Don't ask...
Age	Are you 18 years or older?	When did you graduate from high school? You must be getting close to retirement age...
Gender	Do you have responsibilities other than work that will prevent you from performing specific job requirements such as traveling? What hours and days can you work?	Do you have plans for having children? How would you feel working for a man/woman?
Disability	Are you able to perform the duties of the job with or without accommodation?	Do you have any disabilities? Are you in good health?
Race	None	There aren't very many minorities in our department. Will that be a problem for you?



SEARCH COMMITTEE PROCESS - FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

		You look like you have an interesting family history. How would you define your race?
You may ask...		Don't ask...
Sexual Orientation	None	<i>You people</i> are so creative; you'd be just perfect for the job. This is a real family-oriented department. Is that OK with you?
National Origin	Are you legally eligible to work in the U.S.?	Where were you born? Yablonski, what kind of name is that?
Religion	Will you be available to work the required schedule?	What church do you attend? Will you need to take time off from work to observe (name of particular religious holiday)?

- Q. If the committee has 3 candidates from out of state, 1 in state, and 1 internal applicant, can we conduct interviews for the out of state over the phone/by Skype, and in person for the other candidates?**
- A.** Yes. However, please note the committee must treat every candidate fairly and consistently, provide reasonable accommodations as necessary, and ask the same questions of each candidate.

Reference Checks

- Q. Should the search committee or the hiring authority conduct the reference checks?**
- A.** The best practice is to have the supervisor of the open position perform the reference checks. The college requires professional references, *including current and former supervisors*. There are standard questions the supervisor should ask, as listed in the [Reference Check form](#), along with opportunity for additional follow-up questions and discussion.

Related Links

- [Reference Check form](#)
- [Interview Screening Documentation](#)
- [Interview Questions to Avoid](#)
- [Quick Guide to Applicant Screening \(NEOGOV\)](#)
- [Tips for Interviewing](#)
- [Sample Interview Questions](#)



**SELECTION PROCESS
CHECKLIST**
(for regular, ongoing positions)

1. ☐ Get Executive Cabinet Approval:
 - ☐ Requester (usually appropriate VP) fills out [Position Request](#) form.
 - ☐ Requester brings Position Request form to E-Cabinet meeting for review and action.
 - ☐ VP Administrative Svcs. and President must sign Position Request form to approve the position.
 - ☐ E-Cabinet member sends Position Request form to HR office for processing.
2. ☐ Start Online Requisition Approval Process:
 - ☐ Appropriate VP, supervisor, or assistant starts personnel requisition online in [NEOGOV](#).
 - ☐ Appropriate VP reviews/approves online requisition.
 - ☐ Budget reviews/approves online requisition.
 - ☐ HR gets approved online requisition.
3. ☐ Human Resources Opens Job:
 - ☐ Works with supervisor to create and finalize official job posting.
 - ☐ Opens job through [NEOGOV/LWIT website](#).
 - ☐ Notifies appropriate VP, supervisor, and assistant of job opening.
 - ☐ Works with supervisor and subject matter experts to identify and advertise with appropriate sources.
4. ☐ Application Review:
 - ☐ HR screens applicant pool for minimum qualifications through the job close date.
 - ☐ HR sends qualified applicants to interview committee members 1 business day after the job closes.
 - ☐ Interview committee evaluates and scores minimally qualified applicants.
 - ☐ HR finalizes and sends list of qualified applicants to supervisor.
 - ☐ Supervisor & committee select interview applicants from referred list of qualified applications.
5. ☐ Interview and Selection by Supervisor/Interview Committee:
 - ☐ Notify HR of applicants selected for interview.
 - ☐ Contact selected applicants to schedule interviews (or contact HR for self-scheduling option).
 - ☐ Draft interview questions.
 - ☐ Conduct interviews.
 - ☐ Select interviewed candidates for 2nd (final) interviews.
6. ☐ Supervisor & VP/Hiring authority (2nd round interviews & selection):
 - ☐ Schedules interviews with finalists.
 - ☐ Drafts interview questions & holds 2nd/final interviews.
 - ☐ Does 3 [reference checks](#) on finalists: **current & prior supervisor references required**; completes additional professional references as appropriate.
 - ☐ Selects an interviewed finalist for hiring recommendation & complete the [Hiring Approval & Salary Request](#) (for regular & PTF employees) form with the:
 - Name of candidate recommended for hire.
 - Recommended date of hire.
 - Recommended salary placement.
 - Approval signatures: 1. Supervisor/Dean 2. VP 3. President (faculty & administrator jobs).
7. ☐ Pre-hire review:
Committee returns these items to HR:
 - ☐ Completed/signed [Hiring Approval & Salary Request](#) (for regular & PTF employees) form.
 - ☐ Completed reference sheet(s) on the recommended candidate.
 - ☐ All printed interview and application documents, such as interview questions, notes, resumes, etc.
8. ☐ Complete selection process:
 - ☐ HR makes job offer to recommended candidate & notifies supervisor/VP of outcome.
 - ☐ Supervisor calls candidates from 2nd/final interviews not selected for hire & updates them on the job's closing. Call candidates only after HR notifies the supervisor the recommended candidate accepted the job offer.
 - ☐ HR sends offer letter and new hire paperwork to new employee.
 - ☐ HR sends the job's applicants a notice that the job was filled.