

**RECRUITMENT MANUAL**



**2020**

Table of Contents

[INTRODUCTION 3](#_Toc41585124)

[THE HIRING PROCESS – AN OVERVIEW 3](#_Toc41585125)

[SEARCH COMMITTEES 5](#_Toc41585126)

[PREPARING THE AD 6](#_Toc41585127)

[JOB DESCRIPTIONS 6](#_Toc41585128)

[DECIDING WHERE TO ADVERTISE 7](#_Toc41585129)

[SALARY 7](#_Toc41585130)

[GUIDELINES FOR DEVELOPING SELECTION CRITERIA 7](#_Toc41585131)

[SCREENING RESUMES 8](#_Toc41585132)

[INTERVIEWING 9](#_Toc41585133)

[SAMPLE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS 9](#_Toc41585134)

[REASON FOR NON-SELECTION – GUIDELINES 9](#_Toc41585135)

[THE IMPORTANCE OF REFERENCE/BACKGROUND CHECKING 10](#_Toc41585136)

[MAKING THE JOB OFFER 10](#_Toc41585137)

[NEW EMPLOYEE ORIENTATION 11](#_Toc41585138)

[EMPLOYMENT LAWS 11](#_Toc41585139)

[WORK PERMIT 12](#_Toc41585140)

# INTRODUCTION

This Recruitment Manual provides procedures for administrative staff recruitment.

Finding and retaining quality and skilled employees is of tremendous importance to hiring departments, especially because of the high costs associated with employee turnover and the increasing legal liability for negligent hiring practices and wrongful termination. These factors, and others, make it imperative that employers effectively identify those applicants who are qualified, honest, dependable, skilled, motivated and likely to be highly productive. This process begins not with applicants, but with a broad, strategic look at the department’s staffing needs.

-----------------------------------------------------------

The employment laws dictate much of what you do in a search process. As a supervisor, department head, search chair or a member of a search committee, you have the responsibility to assure that the selection process is in compliance with these laws. The Office of Human Resources (OHR) has developed this guide to be used as a tool in the recruitment process. It provides clear, concise information pertinent to the recruitment/interview process.

The most important thing for Search Chairs to remember is the responsibility to conduct a structured interview process. While structured interviews may reduce spontaneity, they ensure that similar information will be gathered from all candidates. This makes it possible to compare qualifications and reduce equity concerns. In other words, every applicant should be treated the same, asked the same interview questions, and given the same considerations.

# THE HIRING PROCESS – AN OVERVIEW

***Initial Steps***

The American University of Armenia (AUA) strongly believes in the internal promotion of its administrative employees and gives due consideration to the advancement of deserving employees who have demonstrated outstanding performance and dedication in their prior work at the AUA when new positions become available.

Internal promotion can be considered in cases when an employee will continue to perform her/his scope of duties in the same department with certain upgrades that would not typically exceed 20% of the previous duties using time and importance criteria (see **“AUA Administrative Staff Promotion Policy”**).

In cases when, as a result of department expansion and/or restructuring, a need for a new position arises, and the job analysis done by OHR shows that it will include new scope of duties, then open announcement should be made.

The Department/Unit Head/Director or Academic Program Chair seeking to fill a new or vacant position, must get the approval of the corresponding Dean and Vice-President to initiate the search process. For this, the Department Head in dialogue with the Dean or corresponding Director, complete the **New Position Opening Form** via 1C HR software and discuss staffing options with the Director of Office of Human Resources, or designee.

Next, the Director of Office of Human Resources will forward the form to their respective Vice President for signature/approval. The Vice President then takes the form to the Executive Team for approval.

If approved, the form is signed by the President and sent to the Office of Human Resources to initiate the search process. Following it, a Search Committee is established.

Positions are typically advertised with a 3-4-weeks application period (unless sufficient justification can be provided to support a shorter application period).

**Every effort will be made to advertise position vacancies with professional organizations, publications, web sites, and list servers that are most likely to produce an applicant pool reflective of the needs of the hiring department and the institution.**

The positions are typically advertised via AUA website, AUA Alumni list, if relevant, career and recruitment web sites.

NOTE: *Advertisers are identified depending on the position being advertised.*

**Equal Opportunity and Non-Discrimination in Employment**

AUA is an affirmative action, equal opportunity employer. No person employed by or seeking employment with the University shall be discriminated against because of race, religious creed, color, national origin, ancestry, physical disability, mental disability, medical condition, marital status, sex, age, or sexual orientation.

\*\*\*

All application materials are submitted to the OHR, typically in electronic format. Upon receipt of application materials, the OHR will do the following:

* Assure that each application package is timely;
* Applicants are sent an electronic acknowledgment advising that, unless selected for interview, they will receive no further correspondence from the University;
* Once the application deadline has passed and all timely materials have been received, the OHR will electronically share application packages with the Search Committee members.

***Pre-Interview Activities by Search Committee***

* Screen applications according to the requirements, duties and responsibilities of the job and identify the candidates to be interviewed.
* Consider conducting telephone interviews with selected candidates. Provide the candidate with as much information about the position, University, as possible.
* Schedule interviews -- OHR to contact the candidates for interview.

***Interview Stage***

The interview stage is very critical in the search process.

The interview should be viewed as a fact-finding device, not as a behavior sample. The objective of the employment interview should be to obtain and evaluate factual and verifiable information. It should be noted that diversity of individuals’ personal preferences could be an asset if required criteria are fulfilled.

The interview format should be established and every committee member should understand it.

The OHR provides an Interview Evaluation Sheet (Appendix 1) based on job requirements and the recommended questions for structured interview. The Search Committee reviews and finalizes selection criteria and questions. All candidates should be interviewed according to the established structured selection criteria. All answers and observations should be documented.

***Post-Interview Stage***

The Search Committee meets to review the notes and identify the candidate to be selected.

The Committee Chair meets with OHR to discuss the salary to be offered in accordance with the salary ranges as defined in the existing AUA Pay and Position Classification Plan.

The evaluation sheet, *along with written documentation supporting* the individual selected for hire, and proof of reference checks, are circulated by OHR for the appropriate signatures/approvals.

Once the evaluation sheet is **completed (all appropriate signatures have been obtained)**, an offer of employment is made by OHR. All employment offers must be made contingent upon successful completion of the reference and/or background check conducted by OHR.

# SEARCH COMMITTEES

The Search Committee is a very important component of AUA’s hiring process. Because of its direct contact with the candidates, the candidates’ references and past or current employers, the Search Committee is in a position to enhance the reputation and image of AUA. While the Search Committee is evaluating a candidate, the candidate is also evaluating the Committee, the hiring department and the institution. Because of this unique position, members of the Search Committee must be thoroughly familiar with the requirements of the position to be filled and the mission and needs of the hiring department and the University.

**The Charge:**

The charge of the Search Committee will vary depending on the kind of position to be filled. Essentially, the Committee is to review and evaluate candidates’ credentials for interview and to recommend candidates for hire consistent with the University equal opportunity and non-discrimination employment policies. In doing so, they meet regularly with the OHR to assure that the hiring process is clean and in order.

**Positions required to have Search Committees:**

1. All full-time exempt positions are required to have Search Committees.
2. Search Committees for nonexempt positions are not required but encouraged. Committee membership may not be as expansive as that for exempt searches. OHR strongly recommends that at least two individuals be present during all interviews with candidates.

**Membership in Search Committees:**

**The Committee Chair may be the Department Head or can be assigned by decision of the Committee members or the Executive Team. OHR representative should be serving on the Search Committee to ensure that the policies and procedures are consistently adhered to.**

The names of individuals to serve on the Search Committee are identified in collaboration of the hiring Department/Unit Head/Program Chair, the respective Dean and/or Vice-President, and Director of OHR. Once the names are identified and agreed upon, the list is sent to the appropriate Vice President or Provost for approval. In case of variance in opinions, the appropriate Vice President or Provost would bring in his/her recommendations.
**The size of the Committee is usually five (in rare cases seven) persons.** The membership of the Search Committee should be as expansive as possible. It should be composed of individuals who bring to the search process a variety of perspectives and who are sensitive to diversity and equal employment opportunities.

**Confidentiality:**

The public nature of the search process may give the impression that confidentiality is not important. Confidentiality is important and must be honored in order to maintain the integrity of the search process. All members of the Search Committee assume a responsibility to limit discussion of candidates to only those persons within the institution from whom it is appropriate to seek input or who otherwise have a need to know, and to only those persons outside of the institution who serve formally or informally as references or recruiting sources.

# PREPARING THE AD

The OHR in close collaboration with the corresponding department head will compose language to be used in the position advertisement. It should include a description of duties, minimum qualifications (necessary skills, education, experience, etc.), and preferred qualifications, if applicable, and should comply with the provisions of the AUA Pay and Position Classification Plan.

# JOB DESCRIPTIONS

A crucial task when beginning a search is the development of a job description to document the job’s essential functions or duties, responsibilities and/or other features, such as skill, effort and working conditions. Job descriptions consist of these basic parts:

* Job title;
* A detailed definition of tasks, typically shown in chronological sequence of performance or by functional areas;
* Supervisory tasks or responsibilities (if applicable).

# DECIDING WHERE TO ADVERTISE

Once ad language is prepared and the position has been approved by the Executive Team, the OHR will prepare to advertise the position. All open positions are posted on the AUA website.

# SALARY

All positions are paid according to the assigned salary range in accordance with the AUA Pay and Position Classification Plan.

When dealing with newly established or restructured positions, it is extremely important to remember that the duties and responsibilities of the position determine salary; not available funds. For example, if a grant has identified 1,500,000AMD for a coordinator position, this position needs to be reviewed by the Office of Human Resources and the salary determined accordingly. Do not assume that you may pay a coordinator 1,500,000AMD a month. For exempt and non-exempt positions, the OHR will review the job description and assign the appropriate range in accordance with the AUA Pay and Position Classification Plan. The actual starting salary (within the assigned band) will be determined based on the position responsibilities and requirements (knowledge, skills, and abilities).

The employees serve a three-month probationary period. Upon successful completion of this probation (Meets Standards or above), the employee may receive a merit adjustment (typically not exceeding 10%), which is added to their base pay.

# GUIDELINES FOR DEVELOPING SELECTION CRITERIA

When an open position is being filled, applicants are to be judged according to certain standards or criteria in order to find the best-qualified applicant for the job. Two sets of standards are used:

**MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS:**

Minimum qualifications are used to sort out applicants who may have more than the minimum qualifications. *Minimum qualifications will be determined in accordance with Job Descriptions*. An individual who does not meet the minimum qualifications cannot be considered for the position.

**SELECTION CRITERIA:**

Selection criteria recognize the quality and amount of education, experience, knowledge and skills that each applicant possesses.

Thus, minimum qualifications are used to screen; selection criteria are used to sort and select. Selection guidelines explain that all standards used as minimum qualifications and selection criteria must be applied uniformly to all applicants and must be:

* **JOB-RELATEDNESS:**

Job-relatedness means that every standard must be specifically connected to the work to be performed on the job.

* **MEASURABILITY/ DEMONSTRABILITY:**

When a standard is measurable/demonstrable, it can be measured somewhat objectively and demonstrated by the applicant.

* **NECESSARY TO PERFORM THE WORK SUCCESSFULLY:**

All standards used in the hiring process must be necessary for successful performance of the work.

**After the position has been well defined by using the requirements explained above, the selection process begins with minimum qualifications used to screen and selection criteria used to sort and select.**

# SCREENING RESUMES

**Minimum qualifications and selection criteria work together in the hiring process like this:**

**SCREEN OUT UNQUALIFIED APPLICANTS BY USING:**

* Minimum qualifications (degree requirement, # years of experience, knowledge of specific University procedures) and;
* Selection criteria (relevance of education, degrees, previous experience, extent & application of knowledge of specific University procedures, level of interest in the field, etc.).

**RED FLAGS** – Some of the key “red flags” to watch for that may eliminate a candidate from further consideration are:

* Insufficient education or experience to fulfill the minimum job requirements.
* Significant unexplained gaps in employment history.
* A downward spiral of jobs with less and less responsibility and authority.
* Being clearly overqualified for the position at hand.

Applicant qualifications should always be compared to the job requirements identified in the job description.

**SELECT THE BEST QUALIFIED APPLICANTS BY USING:**

* The best combination of qualifications considering relevance, amount, and quality of standards presented in the applicant pool.

**Once minimum qualifications and selection criteria have been developed, the Search Committee will need to determine the following:**

**NUMBER OF CANDIDATES TO BE INTERVIEWED**

Prior to inviting candidates to campus for interview, the Search Committee may first conduct telephone interviews. Telephone interviews will give the committee the opportunity to ask clarifying questions, provide more information about the position, the University, and the area, and allow the candidate to ask any questions they may have. It will also allow the candidate to raise any concerns they may have regarding the position, area, or University. The OHR may conduct pre-interview or post-interview test for selected positions to check certain skills and knowledge such as language proficiency, calculation, logic, writing/editing skills, etc.

The Search Committee should decide in advance how many candidates to invite for interview. You may decide to interview the two to three top-ranked candidates and allow that if a larger number of the top candidates have identical scores, extend an interview to those candidates who are “tied” with or closely ranked to the third ranked candidate.

# INTERVIEWING

Following the initial screening and selection of the best candidates, the Search Committee uses the interviewing process to communicate to the interviewees that AUA is a university that practices shared governance where the departmental leadership is combined with developmental leadership, engaging excellent performance with innovative, critical and creative thinking about the university´s role and functions. It is also important to verify with applicants that they stand behind and support the AUA values and standard.

**Ask questions**

Plan, in advance, what questions to ask. Focus on asking open, probing questions that encourage candidates to open up and tell you as much as possible. Avoid closed questions unless you need a specific answer to a specific question.

* **Open questions** – elicit more of a response and typically begin with what, where, why, when, or how. Other good open probes include “Tell us about” …” Explain” …” Describe for us…”.
* **Closed questions** – can usually be answered simply “yes” or “no”.

**Take notes**

Note taking is strongly recommended. There is no way to remember each and every candidate’s responses without a record of the interview. Notes will be used to document the qualifications of the candidate.

**Summarize**

Conclude the interview with a brief summary, telling the candidate what will happen next.

* Candidates who have been interviewed and determined to be unsuitable for employment at AUA by virtue of the relevant qualifications and experience **shall no longer be eligible for an interview for a similar job in the future, unless new evidence is presented.**

NOTE: Inform the candidates that only the individual selected for employment will be subject to the background and/or reference checks.

# SAMPLE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Please see Appendix 3 for sample interview questions.

# REASON FOR NON-SELECTION – GUIDELINES

Reasons for non-selection of an applicant must be specific and job-related. Reasons for non-selection **should** be related to:

* The specific (advertised) requirements of the job.
* Unsatisfactory references.
* Applicant’s refusal or inability to accept job duties, work schedule, salary, or other job-related conditions.
* Appearance below the standard required for the job (only if the job involves meeting the public).
* Better applicant available (specify in what way).
* Criminal background investigation indicates the applicant may pose a threat to other employees, the University, customers, the public, etc.

Reasons for non-selection **should not** be related to:

* Race, gender, age, color, religion, national origin, political affiliation, sexual orientation, or veteran status.
* Physical or mental handicap which does not interfere with the applicant’s ability to perform the major advertised duties of the job.
* Other factors which have no bearing on the specific requirements (advertised) of the job.

These guidelines do not cover every situation that may arise in the selection process. If you have any questions about acceptable reasons for non-selection, please contact the Office of Human Resources.

***NOTE: It is imperative that individuals brought to campus for interview but not selected for hire are notified of their status ASAP. This should be done via personal telephone call or formal email by OHR.***

# THE IMPORTANCE OF REFERENCE/BACKGROUND CHECKING

Prior to making a job offer, an employer should check an applicant’s references, both prior employers and personal/professional references (Appendix 2). Verifying applicants’ qualifications is the process of corroborating the information that applicants furnish, determining if any important facts were omitted, and obtaining other relevant information about the applicants’ employability. The applicants should be informed in advance about reference/background checking, during the interview process or before (stated in the announcements).

In addition to reference checks, the new hires may be subject to a civil and/or criminal background check. If this is the case, the OHR should send the selected applicants the “**Background Check Authorization Form”** after the interview. The background check will only be run on the individual selected for hire. Depending on the position, a more extensive background check may need to be considered. For example, if the position will have access and authority concerning money and finances, perhaps a credit check should be performed.

# MAKING THE JOB OFFER

Upon the final decision of hiring, the OHR shall make an offer of employment to the selected candidate. Initially, this offer may be made verbally, usually via a telephone call. At this point the following issues may be addressed:

* Starting Salary;
* Starting Date;
* Probation Period;
* Benefits, etc.

It is important that the applicant be advised that the verbal offer of employment is contingent upon reference and/or background checks. While a verbal offer is permissible initially, it is vital that any and all offers of employment be finalized in writing. A written offer helps to ensure that the terms are properly communicated, and enables the applicant to give careful consideration to important aspects of the job offer. The written offer also provides the applicant with a greater sense of security and finality. The OHR originates the letter of appointment, typically via email.

* Once the individual has been offered a position, accepted, he/she is being informed of the list of necessary documents to be submitted to the OHR beforehand,
* The newly hired employee fills in a Personal Information Sheet and signs an Employment Contract prior to the first working day of employment,
* After the probation period (three months established by RA Labor Code) line manager/supervisor of the employee fills in the Probation Performance Evaluation Form and submits it to OHR. Upon successful completion of the probation period an employee is transferred to regular status.

# NEW EMPLOYEE ORIENTATION

Orientation of new employees should begin immediately – even before the employee has started to work. Orientation is a natural extension of the search process – once an individual has been hired, they should be thoroughly prepared and introduced to the organization and its employees.

OHR conducts orientation session prior to the employment starting date to communicate “need-to-know” information to the newcomer in order to provide a broad understanding of the organization, policies and procedures as well as clearly state work and behavior expectations. After that, the department heads and employees in the units also take their parts in the orientation of new employees. Departments may wish to break orientation into various components. A good orientation program can go a long way toward developing positive motivation, productivity, and retention of the new employee. Orientation session also includes informing the new employee about exit interview as an important tool for collecting feedback on job satisfaction and leaving reasons.

# EMPLOYMENT LAWS

Employment laws play a crucial role in the recruitment process. Increased litigation over the past several years has made it imperative that employers adhere to the law when recruiting to fill vacant positions within their organizations. The following is an overview of several laws that are prominent in the employment process.

* **Labor Code of the Republic of Armenia adopted on 9 November 2004**

<https://www.arlis.am/documentview.aspx?docid=66489>

<http://www.translation-centre.am/pdf/Translat/HH_Codes/Labour_code_en.pdf>

* **Republic of Armenia Government Decree N 201-Ն adopted on 1 February 2007**

<https://www.arlis.am/documentview.aspx?docid=42571>

* **Republic of Armenia Government Decree N 1599-Ն adopted on 11 August 2005** <https://www.arlis.am/documentview.aspx?docID=64272#66489_0>

# WORK PERMIT

As a general rule, a holder of an [Armenian visa](https://armenian-lawyer.com/visa/) is not entitled to work in Armenia unless s/he also holds a work permit.

The work permit has to be applied for on behalf of the legal employer and is issued for the duration of the employment contract. OHR needs to be consulted on work permit regulations.

**Appendix 1: Interview Evaluation Sheet and Interview Guidelines**

*Position*

*Interview Date and Venue*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **EVALUATION CRITERIA****(on 1-5 scale)** | Educational background | Work experience | Degree of Professionalism | Minimum Salary expectations | Comments |
| **NAME (time)** |
| 1. |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 2. |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 3. |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 4. |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 5. |  |  |  |  |  |  |

1. Sample Interview Questions
2. Job Description with Duties, Requirements, Qualifications and Skills

**INTERVIEW GUIDELINES**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Category** | ***May Ask*** | ***Potentially Discriminating*** |
| Gender and family issues | * If applicant has relatives already employed by the organization.
 | * Marital status
* Number of children
* Spouse’s occupation
* Child care arrangements
 |
| Race |  | * Applicants race or color of skin
* Photo to be affixed to application form
 |
| National origin or ancestry | * Whether applicant has a legal right to be employed in Armenia
* Ability to speak/write English/Armenian fluently (if job related)
* Other languages spoken (if job related)
 | * Ethnic association of surname
* Birthplace of applicant or applicant’s parents
* Nationality, ancestry, national origin
* Nationality of applicant’s spouse
* Applicant’s native tongue
* Maiden name (of married woman)
 |
| Religion |  | * Religious affiliation
* Religious holidays observed
 |
| Age | * If applicant is over age 18
* If applicant is over 21, if job related
 | * Date of birth
* Date of high school graduation
* Age
 |
| Disability | * Whether applicant can perform job-related functions
 | * If applicant has a disability
* Nature or severity of handicap
* Recent or past surgeries and dates
* Past medical problems
 |
| Applicant referral | * “How were you referred to this position? For example, current employee, advertisement.”
 | * Questions inquiring as to the name of the person who referred the applicant
 |
| Hours of work/attendance | * “Are you able to work overtime?”
* Questions regarding ability to work the employer’s normal work hours
* Questions regarding attendance record at previous employers
 | * Questions regarding number of sick days taken at previous employers
 |
| Qualification/previous work experience | * Questions related to previous experience and/or skills that are relevant to the job applied for, names and addresses of former employers, dates of prior employment and reason(s) for leaving previous employer.
 | * Inflated experience requirements, which are not strictly job related
 |
| References | * “List those persons willing to provide personal and/or professional references.”
 | * Questions directed to applicant’s former employer(s) or personal references which elicit information regarding applicant’s race, color, religion, creed, sex, age, national origin or disability
 |

NOTE: If a question is job-related, it is probably legal. If it is not job-related, be careful. Questions that involve race, creed, gender, national origin, marital status, number of children, handicaps, and so on are illegal.

**Appendix 2: Reference Checking Form**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Candidate Name:** | **Reference Name:** |
| **Dates of Employment:** | **Company:** |
| **Position(s) Held:** | **Reason for Leaving:** |

*Explain the reason for your call & verify the above information with the supervisor (including the reason for leaving).*

1. Please describe the type of work for which the candidate was responsible.
2. How would you describe the applicant's relationships with coworkers, subordinates (if applicable), and with superiors?
3. Did the candidate have a positive or negative work attitude? Please elaborate.
4. How would you describe the quantity and quality of output generated by the former employee?
5. What were his/her strengths on the job?
6. What were his/her weaknesses on the job?
7. What is your overall assessment of the candidate?
8. Would you recommend him/her for this position? Why or why not?
9. Would this individual be eligible for rehire? Why or why not?
10. Other comments?

**Appendix 3: Sample Interview Questions.**

***CLERICAL/ADMINISTRATIVE POSITIONS***

“**How would you grade your ability to predict needs before they arise? In other words, how would you evaluate your intuition, timeliness, and proactive business style**?”

***Why ask this question?***

One of the most critical talents for anyone in an assistant role is to head off problems at the pass – to keep two steps ahead of every project so that snags are avoided and deadlines are met. This assures a smooth work flow and protects your flank, so to speak, as you speedily pass off work to your assistant without worry that it will be completed accurately.

“**Do you consider your technical abilities basic, intermediate, or advanced? What types of projects did you complete with each software program?”**

***Why ask this question?***

Given today’s advancements in technology, technical skills are commensurate with the ability to make a positive impact on the organization. Not every candidate needs to be a Windows guru but technical literacy is essential in the world of administrative support.

“**In what areas do you typically have the least amount of patience at wor**k?”

***Why ask this question?***

Very few business relationships are as close as the executive-assistant alliance. Finding compatible business styles is critical to the selection process because not only do your strengths and inclinations need to match each other, but your individual shortcomings need to be openly discussed as well.

“**How would you grade your ability to communicate with leaders, coworkers, faculty, students and collaborators?”**

***Why ask this question?***

Career experts rank communication skills as the highest priority in a successful business career. However, cultural and personality differences exist that reveal themselves in varying levels of persistence, aggressiveness, stamina, and stubbornness. Questioning the individual about his/her own personality assessment can reveal whether or not he/she is in sync with our university culture and leadership style.

***EXECUTIVE POSITIONS***

“**Give me an example of your ability to facilitate progressive change within your organization**.”

***Why ask this question?***

Real productivity change is often tied to new expectations established for the staff. Your focal point in assessing a candidate’s response will consequently target how the individual achieved buy-in for the new programs and established more of a performance culture.

“**How do you typically stay in the information loop and monitor your staff’s performance?”**

***Why ask this question?***

Most executives adopt a policy of hiring good managers beneath them and letting them manage. That’s because the strength of the senior manager’s directives is only as viable as the chain of command ordained to carry out those orders. Therefore, mechanisms have to be put in place to feed information back to the source.

“**How do you typically confront subordinates when results are unacceptable**?”

***Why ask this question?***

Confronting problem employees is daunting for even the most confident managers. Imposing discipline on under-performers, setting well-defined objectives, and then policing the plan is a necessary part of everyday executive business life. The consequences of inaction, after all, could be perilous.

***ALL POSITIONS***

“**Why do you want to work here**?”

***Why ask this question?***

A candidate should have some clear insights into why he/she wants to come to work for you and what he/she can contribute. Candidates will typically link their desire to join a particular company to one of three things: the company; the position; or the people. Individuals who compliment any of these things show respect and admiration for the organization and ultimately reveal a valid desire to join your team.

“**What do you know about American University of Armenia**?”

***Why ask this question?***

If the candidate is too generic and unable to paint a picture of the organization’s place in its market, its uniqueness, its corporate mission and culture, then that individual may lack the critical global reasoning and research skills necessary to provide solutions to your problems. On the other hand, if the interviewee goes into too much detail about issues that have very little bearing on the organization’s challenges today, then you might reason that he lays undue emphasis on less-than-critical issues.

**“Tell me about your understanding of the job you’re applying for.”**

***Why ask this question?***

A well-informed candidate should be able to rattle off the following issues clearly:

* Position’s title
* Reporting relationship
* Primary duties
* Secondary responsibilities
* Reason the position is open
* Key challenges within the first 90 days or one year

**SOFT SKILL IDENTIFICATION QUESTIONS**

**Conflict Resolution**

1. How do you ensure that you maintain good working relationships with your senior colleagues?
2. Give us an example of a situation where you had to deal with a conflict with an internal or external client.
3. How do you influence people in situations where there are conflicting agendas?
4. Tell us about a situation where you made a decision and then changed your mind.

**Adaptability**

1. Which change of job did you find the most difficult to make?
2. Tell us about the biggest change that you have had to deal with. How did you cope with it?

**Communication**

1. Tell us about a situation where your communication skills made a difference to a situation?
2. Describe a time when you had to win someone over, who was reluctant or unresponsive.
3. What is the worst communication situation that you have experienced?
4. How do you prepare for an important meeting?
5. Demonstrate how you vary your communication approach according to the audience that you are addressing.

**Conflict management**

1. Tell us about a time when you felt that conflict or differences were a positive driving force in your organization. How did handle the conflict to optimize its benefit?
2. Tell us about a time when you had to deal with a conflict within your team.
3. Tell us about a situation where conflict led to a negative outcome. How did you handle the situation and what did you learn from it?
4. Give us an example where you were unable to deal with a difficult member of your team.

**Creativity and Innovation**

1. Tell us about a project or situation where you felt that the conventional approach would not be suitable. How did you derive and manage a new approach? Which challenges did you face and how did you address them?
2. Tell us about a time when you had to convince a senior colleague that change was necessary. What made you think that your new approach would be better suited?

**Decisiveness**

1. What big decision did you make recently? How did you go about it?
2. Give an example of a time when you had to delay a decision to reflect onthe situation. What did you need to do this?
3. Give us an example of a situation where you had to make a decision without the input of key players, but knowing that these key players would judge you on that decision (e.g. superior unavailable at the time).

**Delegation**

1. What type of responsibilities do you delegate? Give examples of projects where you made best use of delegation.
2. Give an example of a project or task that you felt compelled to complete on your own. What stopped you from delegating?
3. Give an example of a situation where you reluctantly delegated to a colleague. How did you feel about it?
4. How do you cope with having to go away from the office for long periods of time (e.g. holidays)? Explain how you would delegate responsibilities based on your current situation.

**Flexibility**

1. Describe a situation where you had to change your approach half-way through a project or task following new input into the project.
2. Describe a situation where you started off thinking that your approach was the best, but needed to alter your course during the implementation.
3. Describe a situation where one of your projects suffered a setback due to an unexpected change in circumstances.
4. Have you ever been asked to do something illegal, immoral or against your principles? What did you do?
5. What would you do if your boss asked you to do something illegal?

**Leadership**

1. Tell us about a situation where you had to get a team to improve its performance. What were the problems and how did you address them?
2. Describe a change where you had to drive a team through change. How did you achieve this?
3. Describe a situation where you needed to inspire a team. What challenges did you meet and how did you achieve your objectives?
4. Tell us about a situation where you faced reluctance from your team to accept the direction that you were setting.

**Integrity**

1. Have you ever been asked to do something illegal, immoral or against your principles? What did you do?
2. What would you do if your boss asked you to do something illegal?

**Sensitivity to others**

1. What problems has one of your staff or colleagues brought to you recently? How did you assist them?
2. Tell us about an unpopular decision that you made recently? What thought process did you follow before making it? How did your colleagues/clients react and how did you deal with their reaction?
3. When is that last time that you had an argument with a colleague?
4. What steps do you take to understand your colleagues' personalities? Give an example where you found it hard to adjust to one particular colleague.

**Teamwork**

1. Describe a situation in which you were a member of team. What did you do to positively contribute to it?
2. Tell us about a situation where you played an important role in a project as a member of the team (not as a leader)
3. How do you ensure that every member of the team is allowed to participate?
4. Give us an example where you worked in a dysfunctional team. Why was it dysfunctional and how did you attempt to change things?