

PATH TO SUCCESSFUL HIRING: HELPFUL HINTS

For those who are responsible for hiring educational personnel, the following information should prove useful in assuring a thorough hiring process from start (search) to finish (hiring). Careful consideration and implementation of the suggested steps will not only facilitate greater diligence in the search and hiring process, but will demonstrate sensitivities to the party hired.

School: _____

Available Position: _____

Superintendent/Principal Assigned: _____

SEARCH/PRE-INTERVIEW PROCESS

- (1) Prepare a specific job description for the open position that has been carefully reviewed with and, if necessary, revised by with the search committee.
- (2) Consider all sources and/or avenues for securing names of qualified individuals to fill an administrative or teaching opening:
 - Network with other superintendents and union directors.
 - Post the job description on the NAD education website.
 - Post openings on your own organizational website.
 - Careful review of:
 - Union education directories
 - SDA school websites
 - Adventist Yearbook
- (3) When the preliminary list of potential candidates has been secured, be sure to...
 - reinforce, if necessary, the understanding that a representative of the conference office of education **must** be present in each step of the hiring process and that the conference is the employer.
 - ask for a copy of current teaching certificate and endorsements.
 - establish and employ standards, in collaboration with the local school board to “narrow” or prioritize the list and set dates for search committee meetings.
 - take the necessary steps to:
 - determine interest levels in the opening.
 - secure and prioritize resumes of candidates in which you have interest,
 - extend the courtesy of contact with top candidates’ current employing organizations.
 - assign colleagues (*search committee/office of education*) to check references of top candidates.

- set date(s) and time(s) for search committee to review reference data and consider possible interviews.

- (4) Prior to actual interviews, set a schedule for interviewing top candidates? *(see below)*
- Secure all necessary contact information.
 - Determine order of interviews.

<u>Candidates' Names</u>	<u>Assigned Conference Rep.</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>
(1)				
(2)				
(3)				

- (5) Determined the inquiry approach to be taken in the interview process:
- Use of discriminators, i.e., *(certification)*
 - Standard questions
 - Random questions
- (6) Inform candidates/interviewees of the date, time, and place of his/her scheduled interview and make the necessary arrangements, re: travel, hotel, reimbursement *(per diem)*, etc.
- (7) Be sure to establish an understanding with candidates of whether expenses for spouses will be covered in the event a candidate brings him/her and whether the spouse is to be present at the interview.
- (8) Pre-arrange for candidates *(and spouse)* to:
- meet the constituent pastor(s) to:
 - understand expectations, re: holding church office(s).
 - establish preliminary understandings, re: church-school relations.
 - be briefed on children's Sabbath School departments, re: candidates' children.
 - tour the school *(including possible classroom he/she will be assigned)* and meet faculty.
 - meet key leaders *(H&S, Board Chair, etc.)*.
 - check for/tour available housing.
 - visit the school where his/her school-aged children might attend, i.e., special needs.
- (9) Arrange the interview setting in advance to facilitate:
- physical comfort.
 - eye-contact.
 - privacy.

- (10) The conference office of education should check with the hire's current employer to determine if the hire has any residual financial obligations or expectations, i.e., existing debt, owed vacation, etc. Such matters should be resolved before the hire joins the workforce of the hiring conference.

INTERVIEW PROCESS

- (1) Before actual interviews ensue,
- search committee members should be provided candidates' resumes and a briefing on the findings of respective reference-checks.
 - resumes and data from references should be compared against the establish position profile and job description.
 - the questioning process should be determined in advance (if a standardized approach to comparing candidates' responses is desired), re: who might ask what question and when.
 - the search committee should determine how long each interview should, at maximum, last (*no more than 90 minutes is recommended*).
- (2) Start each interview with prayer – offered by a search committee member. The candidate should also be asked if he/she would like to offer a prayer as well.
- (3) Before the start of the candidate's interview, the conference representative should introduce the candidate to search committee members and provide a brief description of the candidate's experience, education, and certification(s)/endorsements.
- (4) During the questioning period:
- follow the pre-determined order of questions.
 - do not allow any one search committee member to dominate questioning.
 - ask questions that require more than a "yes" or "no" answer. The best questions are open-ended, requiring the candidate to provide substantive responses in how he/she might apply skills to the unique needs of the school.
 - questions should, at the very least, cover such topics as:
 - spiritual vision and commitment.
 - professional mission and vision.
 - leadership qualities (*faculty meetings*).
 - facilities/program management skills.
 - understanding/management of school finances, i.e., budgets, financial statements, accounts, etc. (*particularly important for administrators*).
 - interpersonal skills (*relating to faculty, parents, students, and community*).
 - understanding/expectations of board governance (*board roles, responsibilities, and relationships, re: candidates for principalship*).

- candidates' views of organizational expectations/relationships (*union and conference*).
- professional growth expectations (*of faculty and self*).
- expectations of principals (*for teacher candidates*).
- capacities (*greatest strengths, challenges, meeting physical demands of the position*).
- previous employment, re: non-renewals, terminations (*reasons*), expired certifications, etc.
- education needs of/plans for candidate's children (*homeschooling, special needs, etc. – to avoid surprises or unmet expectations*).
- immigration status.
- Give each candidate an opportunity to ask questions of the committee.
- Close each interview with prayer.

POST-INTERVIEW PROCESS

- (1) Upon completing interviews, and if interested in the candidate (*after sufficient discussion and vote*), a date should be set for the school board to meet to consider the recommendation(s) of the search committee. The board should make a decision to extend a call at its earliest convenience.
- (2) Search committees and boards should anticipate a possible call rejection. If more than one candidate appealed to the committee/board, prioritizing candidates and determining how the call process should be done in the event the initial placed call is rejected.
- (3) The conference office of education should be prompt in reimbursing candidates for travel expenses to and from interviews.
- (4) A called candidate should need no more than 72 hours to either accept or reject a call. Giving candidates more than 3 days, or a week at most, places the calling organization at a disadvantage, particularly in pursuing other candidates that appealed to the search committee/board.
- (5) Only a conference superintendent or associate (or in the case of academies, a designee – principal) should place a call, given the fact that the conference is the employing organization.
- (6) Some boards will offer a gesture of encouragement to a potential hire, perhaps sending flowers/fruit basket to the candidate's spouse and/or family.

- (7) Neither the conference nor the school board should hire a candidate for a position if his/her acceptance is contingent upon the hiring of, or the provision of a job for, a spouse. Spousal employment should not be the responsibility of the hiring organization.
- (8) If the candidate accepts the call, the conference superintendent or associate should inform the school board chair and board members as soon as possible.
- (9) Other candidates in the running for the open position should be extended the courtesy of being informed of the board's decision. Candidates who did not qualify from the outset of the search process should be informed at the earliest possible time of their status.
- (10) A hire is not official until voted by the conference K-12 board of education.
- (11) Upon official hiring, the candidate should be provided all hire-related details, re: pay, vacation, ERI, retirement, and any and all other entitlements.
- (12) As soon as possible, the conference office of education should proceed with a criminal background check **BEFORE** a contract is issued. The contract should be contingent upon a "clean" check from the appropriate legal authorities.
- (13) The conference office of education should carefully review, **BEFORE** the contract is issued, the hire's certification and endorsements to determine expirations, and discuss with the hire his/her plans to recertify **BEFORE** certifications/endorsements expire.

POST-HIRE CONSIDERATIONS

- (2) The conference office of education should contact the union registrar (*Christine Greene*) as soon as possible, in order that an official request for the new hire's certification records can be placed with his/her previous employing organization. The hire should also immediately request and provide official transcripts to verify earned academic credits for purposes of certification/recertification.
- (3) The conference office of education should work through the conference secretary or human resources director to secure the hire's service record as soon as possible.
- (4) The conference office of education should work with the hired educator to arrange for the move from his/her present locale to (*or near*) the community in which the hire will work. The hire should have a clear understanding of what limitations, if any, are related to reimbursed moving expenses, weight limitations for furnishings, re: moving van, etc.

- (6) The conference office of education should provide a job description to the new hire upon his/her official hiring. The job description should be the fundamental basis of the hire's future performance evaluation.

This would also be an appropriate time for the new hire to understand the conference's position/policy, re: outside part-time employment during the contract year; church attendance; pertinent CODE items, re: administrator/teacher responsibilities, etc.

- (7) Where possible, conference office of education and/or local school board members should assist the hire, re: housing; providing tips of available homes/apartments in or near the school community for purchase/rent that might help the hire and his/her family locate.