University of Delaware
Interview Guide

Purpose of the Interview ................................................................. Page 2

Types of Interviews ........................................................................ Page 2

Preparing for the Interview ............................................................ Page 3

Conducting the Interview ............................................................... Page 4

Interview Questions to Avoid ......................................................... Page 5

Tips for Conducting Skype Interviews .......................................... Page 7

Concluding the Interview ............................................................. Page 7

Sample Justifications for Selection Decisions .............................. Page 8

Faculty Recruitment Manual ....................................................... Page 9

“No Letter” to Candidate Examples ............................................. Page 9

Sample Interview Questions ....................................................... Page 10
Purpose of the Interview

The interview is a critical step in the process to hire the best, most qualified candidate for the opening. First impressions will come from the candidate’s application, resume/CV, and cover letter; however, interviews provide the opportunity to focus on specific details about the candidate’s experience and background. The purpose of an interview is to present a realistic description of the position, create a positive image of the department and the University of Delaware, ensure a fair selection process, establish adequate records in the event that the hiring decision must be justified and gather relevant information about the candidate.

Interviews must comply with the University of Delaware’s equal employment opportunity policy to ensure that qualified candidates are not discriminated against in employment decisions because of their age, race, color, sex, religion, national/ethnic origin, sexual orientation, gender identity/expression, disability or veteran status.

Prior to arranging for any interview or contacting candidates beyond recognizing that their material was received, you must first be “approved” by HR to conduct interviews. It is also important to ask candidates you are planning to interview if they need any accommodations to participate in the interview. If they request an accommodation, you can contact HR for assistance with the accommodation.

Types of Interviews

Screening

This type of interview can be done by the search committee chair or hiring manager to screen out candidates who do not meet basic position requirements. They are short interviews (5-10 minutes) used to screen for specific experience, skills and education to narrow the field of candidates. Job offers are not made after a screening.

Telephone Interview/Skype Interview

Telephone/Skype interviews are typically conducted before inviting candidates for an on-campus visit. It is important to schedule a time (20-30 minutes) with the candidate so both the candidate and the interviewer can be prepared, and to confirm the contact information and who is placing/receiving the call. This method of interviewing provides an opportunity to talk with the candidate for a few minutes informally and is useful for getting a first impression. The same few questions should be used for all candidates in a telephone/Skype interview, and it is important to have the same interviewers present for all of the telephone/Skype interviews. It is recommended that at least two people are present for a phone/Skype interview to help eliminate bias. During this interview, the interviewer can clarify a candidate’s educational credentials, relevant experience, and confirm salary expectations. This type of interview enables the candidate to ask a few questions about the job before committing to continuing in the application process. At the end of the interview, let the candidate know that he/she will be contacted if it is decided to bring him/her in for an in-person interview.
One-on-one or Individual Interview
One-on-one interviews are common, involving the hiring manager and/or search committee chair and the candidate. These interviews typically take place for at least an hour, and the interviewer has the opportunity to discuss the position further, assess if the candidate is the best fit, and talk more about the candidate’s background and experience. The candidate may ask more specific questions about the position, about the climate/atmosphere of the department/unit, and expectations of someone in the role. Questions about salary, benefits, and other functions may also be asked at this time.

Panel Interview
Panel interviews are conducted by small groups of campus representatives (faculty, staff, students, volunteers, etc.) which allows for various perspectives on the competencies required for the position. Panel interviews provide a more objective measurement of the candidate’s ability to do the job. Interviewers should be prepared with a list of questions to ask the candidate, limited to 2-4 questions each, to allow sufficient time for each member to ask questions. Interviewers should be asked to provide comments to the search committee or hiring manager about the candidate in terms of their disposition, attitude and strength of answers provided. Some departments use the panel interview during a meal with the candidate.

Sequential Interviews
Sequential interviews consist of a series of panel and individual interviews throughout a half-day, full day or multiple days visit on campus. This type of interview is the most common for many positions on our campus. The goal is to give different individuals and groups a chance to interview and assess a candidate, providing a recommendation to the hiring manager and/or search committee whether or not to hire the candidate. Candidates typically will meet with the search committee, the hiring manager, possibly the leader of the unit (the Dean or Vice President), and any other groups from across campus that the position requires contact with. The tips provided in the panel and individual/one-on-one interviews should be followed.

Preparing for the Interview
- Review the candidate’s application/resume. Make notes to follow-up on any information that needs clarification, i.e. gaps in employment.
- Select interviewer(s). There may be individuals the candidate will interact with who should be part of the selection/recommendation process.
- Review the responsibilities of the position. Agree on the necessary experience, education and behavioral qualifications. Identify the knowledge, skills and abilities that candidates should possess to perform the job.
- Develop a list of job-related questions. These questions should probe their education, level of related experience and other attributes required for the position.
- Measure all candidates against the same criteria. Ask each candidate the same set of pre-determined questions.
● **Eliminate any bias in the interview process.** It is important to focus on a candidate’s knowledge, skills & abilities.

● **Schedule the interview so the candidates have adequate advance notice.** Make sure you allow for restroom breaks, meals, and adequate time to get from place to place. Confirm the date, time and location, along with making arrangements for parking, travel and pick-ups, if necessary. Follow up with any requests for accommodations. Prepare the candidates with an agenda ahead of time, listing who they are meeting, when, where, and for how long, if possible.

**Conducting the Interview**

● **Establish rapport.** This can be done with a cordial greeting and friendly introduction. Express appreciation to the candidate for his/her interest in working for the University of Delaware. Create a pleasant atmosphere and allow for “small talk” to relax the candidate and help establish open communication. Adopt a friendly, conversational style when talking with candidate. Introduce the candidate to all of the individuals in the room and describe their role in the application process.

● **Choose a private location.** Make sure this location is free from interruptions and hold all calls. Allow for a casual seating arrangement that avoids putting the candidate in the “hot seat”.

● **Describe the agenda for the interview.** It is important to take control of the interview and explain what will occur, such as a tour or any other activities. If the interview is a sequential interview, let the candidate know the sequence of the interview and who else they will be meeting. Explain that the purpose of the interview is to discuss the candidate’s qualifications relative to the position the department is trying to fill and give the candidate an opportunity to learn more about the job and University.

● **Describe the job.** Give examples of the work to be performed, personal characteristics necessary to the perform job, working conditions (hours, travel, requirements) and determine if the candidate can meet these requirements. Describe the position/department in straightforward manner. Do not make any promises that cannot be kept and keep all promise that are made.

● **Treat all candidates consistently.** Ask all candidates the same core, job-related questions to ensure consistency of treatment and comparability of responses. Document the process and keep the interview records in a departmental file for at least three years.

● **Gather information.** Follow the 20/80 rule - only talk 20% of the time and let the candidate talk 80% of the time. Listen carefully, probe, reflect, summarize and evaluate the candidate’s skills. Keep reactions to yourself. Take good notes and in the beginning of interview, let the candidate know that notes will be taken. Avoid asking questions that require a “yes” or “no” answer, instead ask open-ended questions that encourage the candidate to express ideas and provide information. These questions can start with “tell me more about…, please discuss…, explain how…” Ask follow-up questions and allow sufficient time for the candidate to provide an answer and encourage elaboration.
**Questions to Avoid**

Do not ask questions which are not relevant to the candidate’s ability to perform the job. If the candidate volunteers personal or irrelevant information, immediately indicate to the individual that the information is not relevant to the ability to perform the job and will not be considered in the hiring decision. Then, continue with your next prepared question related to the position. Below is a list of inappropriate questions that should never be asked during an interview, along with the appropriate questions to ask instead.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Examples of Inappropriate Questions</th>
<th>Examples of Appropriate Questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NAME</td>
<td>What is your maiden name? Have you ever legally changed your name? What does your name mean?</td>
<td>Are there other names under which you have worked that should be used to verify your academic credentials or prior work references?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AGE</td>
<td>How old are you? How many years before you plan to retire?</td>
<td>Are you 18 years of age or older?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIRTHPLACE</td>
<td>Where were you born? Where were your parents born?</td>
<td>Are you eligible to work in the United States?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CITIZENSHIP</td>
<td>Do you hold citizenship in any country other than the United States?</td>
<td>Are you eligible to work in the United States?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS</td>
<td>How tall are you? How much do you weigh? What color are your eyes or hair? What is your race?</td>
<td>Can you perform the essential functions of the job with or without reasonable accommodation?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HEALTH /DISABILITY</td>
<td>What is your medical history? Do you have any disabilities? What are your disabilities? How will your disabilities affect your performance? Have you ever filed a Workers’ Compensation claim against a former employer?</td>
<td>Can you perform the essential functions of this job with or without reasonable accommodation?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MARITAL STATUS</td>
<td>Are you married, single, divorced, separated, widowed? Are you living with anyone?</td>
<td>No appropriate questions with regard to marital status.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FAMILY</td>
<td>Where does your spouse work? Are you the primary wage-earner for your family? Do you have children? What are your child care arrangements?</td>
<td>No appropriate questions with regard to family.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RELATIVES</td>
<td>What are the names of your closest relatives or friends?</td>
<td>Are you related to anyone employed by this University, or to a member of the University Board of Directors?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NATIONAL ORIGIN</td>
<td>What is your lineage, ancestry, national origin, descent, parentage, nationality, or the nationality of your parents or spouse?</td>
<td>Are you eligible to work in the United States?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RELIGION</td>
<td>What is your religious affiliation? What holidays do you observe?</td>
<td>Are you available to work on the days/shifts expected of this position?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LANGUAGE</td>
<td>What is your native language? What language do you speak at home?</td>
<td>What is your fluency level in the language(s) required to effectively perform this job?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FINANCIAL STATUS</td>
<td>How is your credit history? Have you ever declared bankruptcy? Have your wages ever been garnished?</td>
<td>Questions regarding financial status are usually not job related so should generally be considered inappropriate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MILITARY SERVICE</td>
<td>Was your discharge honorable or dishonorable? Why did you serve with a foreign military?</td>
<td>What training or experience that you gained in your military service is relevant to this job?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ORGANIZATIONS</td>
<td>Are you a member of any social clubs, fraternities, sororities, lodges, teams, or religious organizations?</td>
<td>Are you a member of any professional, trade, or service associations that are directly related to this job?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SUBSTANCE ABUSE</td>
<td>Do you have a history of alcohol or drug addiction? What medications are you currently taking?</td>
<td>Do you currently use any illegal substances or any legal substances illegally?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SALARY LEVEL</td>
<td>What is the lowest salary you will accept?</td>
<td>Are you interested in the position at the level it is budgeted?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REFERENCES</td>
<td>What is the name of your pastor or religious leader?</td>
<td>What is the name of an individual who would serve as a character reference?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Tips for Conducting Interviews via Skype (or other Internet software)

- **Check your technology and setting**
  - Be familiar with your equipment and its functions. Practice and test your connection.
  - Use Skype’s FAQs to troubleshoot issues and plan for back-ups.
  - Make sure you have a secure, solid broadband connection. Wi-Fi is not recommended.
  - Use a quiet environment (private office, conference room, etc.) that is well-lit.
  - Check out your background setting – what is the candidate seeing (UD logo, office culture, your personal style/clutter) and what does it represent?
  - Think about how you’ll handle any disruptions or disconnections. Will you call the candidate back, wait for them to connect with you, etc?

- **Set the standard and pace for the interview**
  - Be prepared with questions and any information you need to share.
  - Speak at a regular tone/pace and ask if the candidate can hear you clearly. Adjust as required.
  - Just like any other interview, you’ll want to introduce the candidates to the others in the room, review the amount of time you have and what will be accomplished (for example, “today, each of us are going to ask you a set of 5 questions, which should take about 20 minutes to cover. You will then have 5-10 minutes to ask us any questions or share any additional information. We will conclude the call at XX time.), as well as timelines and follow-up.

- **Pay attention to details**
  - Don’t forget about time zones! Clarify what time zone you are operating from to be clear about start time when scheduling Skype interviews. Be conscious of international candidates who may be interviewing in the middle of the night.
  - You can record a Skype interview, but be sure to let the candidate know they are being recorded and why.
  - Eye contact is important, even in Skype interviews. Look directly into the camera to best establish eye contact with the candidate.

**Concluding the Interview**

- **Allow the candidate to ask questions about the position, department and/or University.** The objective of the interview for the candidate is to gather information about the position and promote him/herself, so allow them to ask any further questions or discuss anything else about him or herself. Pay attention to the kinds of questions the candidate asks; this can tell you a lot about his/her interest in the job. Questions may be asked regarding pay and the time frame for making the decision. Be prepared to answer these without making promises or indicating their success/failure in this process.

- **Provide an overview of the next steps in the process.** This includes additional interviews, the timeframe of when a decision will be made, how the candidate will be informed and if a reference check will be needed.
• Thank the candidate for interviewing for the position.
• **Complete interview notes.** Do not rely on memory. Assess the information gathered to determine which candidate best matches the selection criteria established. When analyzing each candidate, ask:
  o Does the candidate have potential? CAN he/she do the jobs?
  o Does the candidate have motivation? WILL he/she do the job?
  o Does the job fit in with the candidate’s career goals and challenge them? HOW does it fit?

**Sample Justifications for Offer Status Form**

**Candidate Selected:**
Candidate brings extensive prior work experience in directly related fields dealing with [relevant] issues. Also candidate brings knowledge and familiarity with services and programs available [state from where]. This knowledge and prior experience set candidate apart and make them the candidate of choice.

This is our candidate of choice. She possesses a level of skill that would be a considerable asset to the University of Delaware. She has successfully led a similar program. Her leadership skills and integrity would serve UD’s efforts extremely well. She was very balanced in her approach to managing a team.

Candidate of choice. He had has the strongest technical skills [insert skills] of the candidates interviewed. He works in a setting that is comparable to the work environment for this position. His previous customer service experience is relevant, as well. His responses to questions demonstrated his ability to [insert job requirements]. He also demonstrated outstanding verbal communication skills and tremendous enthusiasm for the position.

This candidate has the knowledge, experience and ability to be successful in this position. Her strong interpersonal and communication skills were evident in the interview. She gave examples demonstrating her strength in this area. She would be able to effectively deal with the cliental of this position. Because of her broad knowledge in higher education positions she will be able to [insert job requirements].

**Candidate Not Selected:**
Candidate’s work experience is primarily [insert topic not relevant] in nature. She did not articulate why she wanted this particular job, or how her skills and knowledge were transferable. Her communications skills were adequate. The adequacy of her [insert job requirement] skills was not demonstrated.

Candidate has the required skills for the position, but they are not as extensive as we prefer. His [insert experiences] have been very limited. His verbal communication skills are adequate, but his responses to several interview questions were limited because he lacks sufficient relevant experience.

The candidate stated his skills and abilities were a good fit, but he was unable to clearly demonstrate how they would fit. It was not clear that he could meet the demands of the job. He did not give specific answers to questions and often gave answers that had nothing to do with the question. The committee was very concerned with his ability to successfully deal with difficult people and those at a higher level.
His resume over stated his experience. The search committee did not think this candidate could be successful in this position.

This applicant never returned our calls and emails to schedule an interview. The lack of response indicated she was no longer interested in the position.

Applicant withdrew from consideration due to salary.

**Faculty Recruitment**

*UD ADVANCE: RRR (Resources for Recruitment and Retention) of Women Faculty in STEM Fields*  ADVANCE at the University of Delaware seeks to transform the culture for women (and all) faculty in STEM fields by educating STEM faculty and administrators in best practices in the recruitment and retention of faculty.

**Faculty Recruitment Manual**

**Sample Faculty Interview Rubric**

*“No Letter” Examples to Candidates*

- We have completed reviewing applications for the [position title] in the [department name] at the University of Delaware. We regret to inform you that you were not selected to be interviewed. We welcome you to visit our website [http://www.udel.edu/udjobs/](http://www.udel.edu/udjobs/) to explore other employment opportunities. Thank you for your interest in employment at the University.

- Thank you for your interest in the [position title] in [department name] at the University of Delaware. We have completed our hiring process and regret to inform you that you were not selected for the position. We welcome you to visit our website [http://www.udel.edu/udjobs/](http://www.udel.edu/udjobs/) to explore other opportunities.

- Thank you for taking the time to speak with us about the [position title]. We had a great pool of candidates and appreciate your interest in the position. We regret to inform you that we will not be furthering you in the interview process. We welcome you to visit our website [http://www.udel.edu/udjobs/](http://www.udel.edu/udjobs/) to explore other opportunities. Thank you again for your interest in the University of Delaware.

- Thank you for your interest in the [position title] in the [department name] at the University of Delaware. The search for this position has been cancelled. The position is being reevaluated and may be available at a future date. We welcome you to visit our website [http://www.udel.edu/udjobs/](http://www.udel.edu/udjobs/) to explore other employment opportunities. Thank you for your interest in employment at the University.
**Sample Interview Questions**

General
- What interested you in applying for this position?
- What strengths do bring to this position?
- What is important to you in a job?
- Describe a work-related accomplishment of which you are particularly proud.

Technology Skills
- What computing hardware and software have you used? How would you rate your level of expertise?
- What type of documents, reports, or products do you typically produce?
- How do you typically learn new technology applications?

Customer Service/Communication Skills
- Describe any customer service or public service experience you have had in your previous positions?
- What types of information or policies did you have to communicate in that position?
- Have you ever had to enforce a policy with which you did not agree? How did you handle that situation?
- Describe a time when you had to assist a customer/person who was angry or unhappy. How did you handle that situation?
- Describe a work or community experience when you worked with people from different backgrounds.
- How much interaction did you have with people outside your unit or organization in your previous position? How much interaction did you have with people at different levels of the organization?
- Tell me about one organization where you worked that placed a high degree of emphasis on customer needs and satisfaction. Describe how you felt about that.
- Describe a customer focus action or process that you have implemented that produced positive results.

Organization Skills
- Have you ever had a position in which you worked independently and manage your own time? What were your responsibilities? How did you enjoy that type of work?
- Describe a project you coordinated that went well and the strategies that you used.
- What methods do you use to prioritize your work?
- How do you handle interruptions?
- Describe some basic steps that you would take in implementing a new program/project.
Interpersonal Skills

- Describe a time when you had to communicate information in a difficult or awkward work situation. How did you handle that situation?
- Describe a time when you worked with a group of people to complete a project. What was your role? What did you like or dislike about that experience?
- How would you describe your ability to provide or receive feedback?
- There can be many inequities (perceived and real) that exist at work (e.g., workloads, compensation, expectations, etc.). Describe some inequities you’ve observed and how you have dealt with them.
- Describe a time when you had to get the support of a wide range of stakeholders to a proposed strategy or plan.

Supervisory/Leadership Skills

- Describe your supervisory experience in your previous position in terms of the number of people you supervised and your level responsibility (i.e. scheduling, payroll, training, coaching, goal setting, evaluating, performance appraisals).
- Describe a time when you had to work with an employee to correct or improve his or her performance.
- Tell me about a time when someone became more successful due to your feedback and guidance.
- Describe what you’ve done to link organizational objectives to your direct reports’ objectives.
- Describe the most significant change initiative you have led. Describe the steps you took to prepare for and execute the change.
- Describe a time when you recommended a plan of action in response to business/market trends. How did you come up with this plan?
- What are some of the typical obstacles or barriers you’ve encountered as a leader that have made it difficult to achieve your department’s objectives? Can you provide a specific example that shows when you were successful in removing an obstacle as well as an example of when you weren’t successful?

Motivational Fit

- [Developing Others] Tell me about a time when you had opportunities to develop others in your work area.
- [Interdepartmental Cooperation] Tell me about a time when the organization in which you worked supported collaboration among departments. What are some of the pros and cons when working with collaborators?
- [Intellectual Focus] What experience have you had with organizations that emphasized professional development, continuing education, and intellectual discussion/exchange of ideas? How did you feel about that?
- [Planning for Long Term Success] Describe one of your past employers that emphasized strategic planning to achieve long-term goals. How satisfying was that for you?