

UUFB Hiring Best Practices 11-9-21
UUFB Personnel Committee
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Note: This is a draft of best practices for hiring at the UUFB. It is intended to cover examples of hiring new staff that are 1.0 FTE where there would be a large number of applicants. In cases of a part-time position that would attract only a small number of applicants (3-5), the approach potentially could be scaled down keeping in mind the goals of maintaining equity, confidentiality, and fair hiring practices. It should be standard practice to advertise the job, collect and review applications, and check references.

1. **Board assesses** the need to hire for a position in a particular area.
2. **Board charges** a task force to evaluate the position.
3. **Task Force** – evaluates the need for and benefit of a position, may come up with a pay range, and proposes position description.
4. **Finance committee** reviews the range of possible costs of appointment for fiscal feasibility.
5. **Board votes on position.** If the position goes forward, a search committee 3-5 UUFB members and friends is appointed by the Board. In certain circumstances, staff members may be ex officio members of a search committee.
6. **Search Committee reviews and finalizes the position description**, including 1) required qualifications, 2) preferred qualifications, and 3) pay range. The job announcement notes that all candidates will be expected to undergo a background check. The Minister is an ex officio member of all search committees. The search committee should review best practices for unbiased and fair searches prior to commencing their efforts.
7. **Position description** is reviewed and approved by the Board.
8. **Application materials** – Search Committee identifies what materials are required of applicants (e.g., resume, professional references, examples of previous work) and how they are to be submitted. Search Committee establishes a timeline and sets application deadline. If the number of job applicants is not adequate, the application deadline may be extended.
9. **UUFB office staff advertises** job (local newspaper, UUFB website, UUA regional newsletter, etc.)
10. **Applications are collected** and receipt of applications is acknowledged to applicant (Note: depending upon the position, the responsible party may be the office manager or Search Committee chair).
11. **Search Committee creates a matrix for evaluating candidates, and then reviews, and ranks applications**, scoring each applicant relative to a standardized matrix of 1) required qualifications and 2) preferred qualifications. A subset of the pool is determined to be the set of candidates to be interviewed based upon the rankings. Candidates may be categorized as highly qualified, qualified, minimally qualified, and not qualified in particular aspects of the qualifications. Note that information shared within the search committee regarding process and candidates should remain confidential except when reporting to the Board.
12. **A list of standardized questions are developed** for the phone/zoom and/or in-person interviews. The same exact questions should be used for each person interviewed. Note that there are certain types of questions that are not allowable related to marital, ethnic, racial, and health related questions. Federal and state laws have been established regarding the types of questions that are allowed to be asked. The search committee should refer to federal and state guidelines on what questions are considered unlawful.
13. **Initial Phone/Zoom Interviews** — Multiple applicants are interviewed via phone/zoom. Allow time at the end for candidates to ask their own questions. A minimum of two people from the search

committee should always be present for each phone/zoom interview and at least one person should take notes and/or score each applicant relative to the pre-determined interview questions.

14. **Reference checks** - A list of standardized questions are developed by search committee and used in reference checks. Two members of the search committee should always be present for each call and at least one person should take notes. At the end of the questions ask reference if they have any additional comments they would like to provide. (Note that this can occur before or after phone/zoom interviews; there are good reasons for either option, but we should discuss and settle on one approach.) Note: It is best practice to use only the references listed by the candidate; if an additional reference is needed, permission from the candidate should be obtained prior to contacting the additional reference.
15. **In-Person Interviews** – The agenda for each candidate should be the same, with a standardized group of people to meet (e.g., search committee members, board members, minister, office staff, etc.). Questions asked of the candidate during their in-person interview should also be drafted and agreed upon by the search committee before any of the candidates arrives for an interview. Note that due to the fact that there are some informal interactions during an in-person interview, it is especially important for all UUFB members and staff to understand what types of questions should not be asked of the candidate. Identify a mechanism for all those who meet with candidates to provide feedback to search committee in a standardized and timely manner.
16. **Ranking of Candidates** – Each search committee member individually ranks the candidates based upon required & preferred qualifications as well as any other criteria agreed upon prior to evaluation of all candidates (e.g., interpersonal skills, etc.). Ranking can be categorized, for example as “meets”, “does not meet” or “exceeds” each qualification. Only after each individual has ranked each of the candidates should the Search Committee discuss rankings as a group.
17. **Background checks** (Note that this is usually done at the end of the process but before the position is formally offered in writing). It is assumed that the candidate must pass a background check to be offered position. The candidate should be notified of this requirement early in the process.
18. **Final Ranking** - Search Committee recommends the candidate to be hired to the Board and discussion of candidates occurs. In some cases the Board may meet with the candidate before a final decision. The Board votes on hiring candidate.
19. **Board makes the offer** via phone, followed by a written offer letter.
20. **Offer is revisited if top candidate declines.**
21. **Applicants are contacted for regrets**

Throughout the Search Process:

Always treat applicants with the Golden Rule: as you would want to be treated.

Remember that application information and discussions of candidates are confidential.

We need to sell ourselves as a workplace—the interview goes both ways.

Note about order of items:

In some hiring situations it may be appropriate and beneficial for some of the steps delineated above to occur in a different order than they are listed.