



Hiring Reform: Human Resources Practitioners Training





Assessment Tools





TOPICS

- Resumes/Optional Cover Letters
- Determining Minimum Qualifications
- Vacancy Announcement Approaches
- Types of Experience
- General Experience
- Specialized Experience
- Human Resources Responsibilities
- Occupational Questionnaires
- Essay-Style Questions
- Structured Interviews



Resumes/Cover Letters

- Accepted in any format
- Determine basic qualifications including any selective placement factors
- Validate responses to assessment tool(s)
- HR professionals have ability to change applicants self assessment response if not supportable



Resumes/Cover Letters Evaluation Requirements

Eligibility

- Time after competitive appointment
- Time In Grade requirements, if applicable
- Citizenship
- Selective Service, if applicable
- Other Qualification Requirements
- Selective Factors

Minimum Qualifications

- OPM Qualifications Standards Handbook
- Job Qualification System for Trade and Labor Occupations



Determining Minimum Qualifications

- OPM Operating Manual - Qualification Standards for General Schedule (GS) or equivalent
- OPM Qualification Standards – Job Qualification System for Trade and Labor Occupations



Other Eligibility Qualification Requirements (if applicable)

- Medical/Physical
- Age
- Licensure, certification
- Languages



Various Approaches

- One-Phase Approach:
 - Resume/cover letter and occupational questionnaire
 - Cannot ask essay-style questions
- Two-Phase Approach (1):
 - Resume/cover letter to determine basic qualifications
 - Invite applicants who meet basic qualifications to take assessment tool (i.e., occupational questionnaire, essay questions, scored structured interview, or any combination)
- Two-Phase Approach (2):
 - Resume/cover letter and occupational questionnaire
 - Invite those who meet basic qualifications to respond to another assessment tool (i.e., another occupational questionnaire, essay-style questions, scored structural interview, or any combination)



Types of Experience

General Experience

- At lower grades and entry levels
- Typically does not require specific experience

Specialized Experience

- Used for positions above entry level
- Related to work of position to be filled
- Equivalent to next lower grade or band level



General Experience

- KSAs not a prerequisite
- Applicants must indicate ability to acquire KSAs
- Descriptions vary from one series to another
- For some occupations any progressively responsible work experience may be qualifying
- Other occupations require experience that provided familiarity with subject matter

Example - entry level medical technician position requires experience that provided a basic knowledge of procedures and equipment in a hospital or clinical laboratory



Specialized Experience

Relevant information related to duties/responsibilities found in:

- Job description
- Job objectives
- Position classification standard
- Grade-level criteria

Standards with specialized experience requirements state that minimum amount of qualifying experience be at level of difficulty and responsibility equivalent to:

- Next lower grade or band
- Lowest level in grade or band



Specialized Experience

Three Rules

Applicable to ALL “Specialized Experience” requirements/definitions:

1. Must be related to major duties of position/ occupation;
and
2. Must be expressed in terms of knowledge’s, skills and/or abilities (related to major duties/occupation of the position); *and*
3. Must be written and defined using clear, straight forward language that is **easily understood by applicant pool**



Specialized Experience References

- Classification Standards –
- Classification Occupational Definitions –
- Consultation with Hiring Manager/Subject Matter Expert



Human Resources Responsibilities

- Read Qualifications manual especially the introduction - **must** have working familiarity with rules!
- Know how to properly use qualification standards
- Know differences between generalized and specialized experience
- Use common sense, if in doubt, ask!



Occupational Questionnaire: Behavior-Based

- Identify content areas (e.g., competencies) you plan to measure based on job analysis
- Select five competencies as the focus of the occupational questionnaire

Competencies must be both observable and verifiable



Occupational Questionnaire: Behavior-Based

Writing a good-quality item includes:

- Clearly distinguishing competencies
- Considering level of experience required
- Using observable (verifiable) terms
- Writing clearly and succinctly

Items should distinguish among candidates



Occupational Questionnaire: Rating Scales

Types of rating scales:

1. **Yes-No**-Applicants select Yes or No
2. **Multiple choice**-Applicants select one answer from the options provided
3. **Select all that apply**-Applicants select as many answers as appropriate



Essay Style (KSA) Questions

May no longer request applicants to respond to essay style questions when submitting initial application materials

- If multi-phase approach is used, essay style questions (KSA's) may be asked during the second phase.
- No mandatory character limitations except for system limitations or as limited per vacancy announcement.



Validation of Essay Questions

- Applicants resume and optional cover letter will be used to validate responses to essay style questions.
- HR Professionals have the ability to change an applicant's self assessment if the information in the resume and or/cover letter do not support the answers in the self-assessment.



Structured Interviews

Interview questions based on specific job competencies identified through job analysis are critical to job success

- Can be conducted in person, over the telephone, or via video conference
- **Validity-Situations presented are highly representative of situation encountered on the job. Good indicator of job performance**
- **Face Validity/Applicant Reactions-More favorable applicant reactions compared to other popular selection measures**



Structured Interviews-Considerations

- Administration Costs - Typically not costly to administer but depends on costs related to training, rater time, and number of applicants to access
- Utility/ROI - High return on investment if you need applicants who possess specific, critical competencies upon entry into the job.
- Common Uses - Recruitment, selection and promotion purposes. Frequently used late in the assessment process as a final screen where applicant pool is moderate or small in size.



Interview Development Checklist

- Determine the competencies to be assessed by the Interview
- Choose the interview format and develop questions
- Develop rating scales to evaluate candidates
- Create interview probes
- Pilot-test the interview questions
- Create the interviewer's guide
- Document the development process



Thank You!

