TOOLS FOR CONDUCTING AN INCLUSIVE INTERVIEW

INTRODUCTION

A district partnered with Hanover Research (Hanover) on a series of research projects—in a variety of methodologies—to inform recruitment, retention, and development practices throughout the district. This mini-toolkit can be used to evaluate the inclusiveness of your interview questions and support interview committees in reinforcing inclusive hiring practices.

Effective strategies for recruiting diverse candidates include alternative outreach methods; creating an inclusive hiring team comprised of individuals with diverse backgrounds; including, as opposed to excluding, applicants, disregarding assumptions about a candidate's "culture fit;" and offering financial incentives (e.g., relocation assistance, signing bonuses).

Inclusive job postings and descriptions contain language that welcomes all individuals regardless of background. Historically, women and people of color are less likely to apply to a job unless they meet all of the qualifications. Additionally, inclusive job postings only include the needed minimum requirements and education, and avoid gender, racial, or ability-biased language.

A standard interview format with identical questions for all candidates reduces interviewer bias and promotes diversity. Standardized questions focus on employees' past performance and remove employers' preconceptions of candidates. Standardized formats also allow employers to quantify interviews through methods such as rubrics and scorecards.

Behavioral interviewing enables districts to learn about and assess diverse candidates' previous employment experiences in a structured and inclusive manner. Common question themes include the candidate's commitment to diversity; handling uncomfortable workplace environments and situations; and collaborating with diverse colleagues.

TOOLKIT CONTENTS

INTERVIEW QUESTION EVALUATION RUBRIC

REFLECTION QUESTIONS FOR CONDUCTING INCLUSIVE INTERVIEWS

TEACHER CANDIDATE EVALUATION RUBRIC

SAMPLE BIASES THAT MAY INFLUENCE HIRING DECISIONS

BIAS	DESCRIPTION
First Impressions	The tendency to make snap judgments about a job candidate upon meeting or speaking with them.
Non-Verbal Behaviors	Misreading, misinterpreting, or placing too much emphasis on non-verbal behaviors that have nothing to do with a candidate's ability to perform the job for which they have applied (e.g., eye contact, firmness of handshake, presence of a smile).
Personal Discomfort	Allowing discomfort with a candidate—based on factors such as race, ethnicity, physical appearance, or disability status—to influence one's own interactions with and assessment of that candidate.
Affinity Bias	The tendency to view those like oneself positively regardless of their qualifications.
Racial or Ethnic Bias	The impact of stereotypes based specifically on race and ethnicity on one's assessment of a candidate's ability and qualifications.
Gender Bias	The influence of stereotypes based specifically on sex or gender identity on one's assessment of a candidate's ability and qualifications.
Confirmation Bias	The tendency to seek and assign greater weight to evidence that supports one's initial assessment—positive or negative—of a job candidate at the expense of considering contradictory evidence.

Source: Turner Consulting Group

INTERVIEW QUESTION EVALUATION RUBRIC

Directions: Use the following rubric to score each interview question according to its inclusivity. Circle the appropriate response on a scale of one, least inclusive, to five, most inclusive, for each of the seven criteria.

Question #:

Criteria	1 Least Inclusive	2	3	4	5 Most Inclusive
Screening	Interview question explicitly "screens out" diverse candidates by only focusing on prior experience.	Interview question potentially "screens out" diverse candidates.	Interview question may eliminate diverse candidates.	Interview question avoids unnecessarily eliminating candidates.	Interview question "screens-in" diverse candidates through a growth-mindset.
Behavioral	Interview question does not elicit the candidate's experiences or behaviors.	Interview question does not directly elicit—but leaves answer option open for—the candidate to potentially share example of past behavior.	Interview question may elicit the candidate's experience or past behavior.	Interview question partially focuses on candidate's behaviors and teaching philosophies.	Interview question uses a behavioral approach focusing on candidate's attitude and philosophy.
Language	Interview question uses multiple gendered, racially-coded, or ability-coded terms.	Interview question uses a few gendered, racially-coded, or ability-coded terms.	Interview question has a slightly biased slant with some non-inclusive language.	Interview question uses mostly neutral language.	Interview question uses neutral, un-coded language, inclusive terminology, and avoids gender, racial, religious, ethnic, or ability bias.
Bias	Interview question includes direct references to biases or assumptions based on candidate identity.	Interview question includes some indirect biases and assumptions about candidate's identity.	Interview question includes slight assumptions about candidate's identity.	Interview question has room for biases and assumptions.	Interview question does not show any biases or assumptions based on candidate identity.
Relevance	Interview question does not relate to the skills, abilities, and experiences that the position requires.	Interview question mostly includes content unrelated to the skills, abilities, and experiences that the position requires .	Interview question partially relates to the skills, abilities, and experiences that the position requires but may mention content unrelated to the position requirements.	Interview question mostly relates to the skills, abilities, and experiences the position requires but answer options could elicit content unrelated to the position requirements.	Interview question directly relates to the skills and abilities the position requires and avoids content unrelated to the position requirements.
Answer Options	There is one "correct" answer for the interview question with one expected way to answer where candidates who answer differently are screened out.	Interview question includes one preferred answer but candidates with alternative answers may still be considered.	Interview question has one preferred answer but allows for alternatives.	Interview question includes more than one appropriate answer.	Interview question includes multiple appropriate answers or acceptable means of answering the question.
Off-Limits Topics	Interview question directly asks about the candidate's personal life, race or ethnicity, genetic information, gender, sexual orientation, religion, family status, age, or disability.	Interview question indirectly asks about the candidate's personal life, race or ethnicity, genetic information, gender, sexual orientation, religion, family status, age, or disability.	Interview question indirectly touches on one off-limits topic.	Interview question does not explicitly ask about off-limits topics but invites answers that could touch on these topics.	Interview question avoids asking about the candidate's personal life, race or ethnicity, genetic information, gender, sexual orientation, religion, family status, age, or disability.

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DISCUSSION QUESTIONS FOR CONDUCTING INCLUSIVE INTERVIEWS

Directions: Use the following discussion questions to reflect upon and discuss attributes and behaviors that may contribute to or prevent an inclusive interview. Prior to the start of the discussion, the facilitator should introduce that the purpose of these discussion questions is for the panel to discuss strategies to ensure that the interview is inclusive and comfortable for the incoming candidate.

? What hiring prejudices and biases might we posses related to gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, and ability within the recruitment process?

? What does it mean to "screen in" candidates? How can we "screen in" diverse candidates rather than screening them out?

? How might our implicit biases impact the interview and hiring process?

? What criteria might we be looking for that are not critical to this position? How can we let these go?

? What are some examples of how confirmation bias or affinity bias may emerge during the interview?

? Are we using the same interview questions and process for each candidate? Why is this important?

? What practices and behaviors do we need to "unlearn"?

? How can we make the candidate feel comfortable and welcome during the interview? What kinds of behaviors, language, and non-verbal cues could make them more comfortable? What could make them less comfortable?

? What strategies can we to address any instances of implicit bias that may surface during the interview?

? Do we need to like the candidate personally? Why or why not? Should likability be part of the hiring criteria? If so, how would we define this?

TOOLS FOR CONDUCTING AN INCLUSIVE INTERVIEW

CANDIDATE EVALUATION RUBRIC

Directions: Use the following rubric to score each candidate based on their interview responses. Circle the appropriate response on a scale of one, does not meet expectations, to four, exceeds expectations, for each of the five criteria.

Candidate Name:

Criteria	1 *Does Not Meet Expectations*	2 *Partially Meets Expectations*	3 *Meets Expectations*	4 *Exceeds Expectations*
Instructional Delivery Styles	Candidate speaks to experiences with and preferences for exclusively teacher-centered approaches and has no experience with or knowledge of culturally sustaining pedagogy.	Candidate's responses speak more to teaching than student learning and show limited knowledge of or experience with evidence-based instructional strategies or an attempt at culturally sustaining teaching.	Candidate speaks to experiences with a mix of teacher-centered and student-centered approaches, but responses show preference for student learning over teaching. Candidate is somewhat familiar with at least one evidence-based instructional strategy and culturally sustaining teaching.	Candidate uses mostly student-centered instructional approaches and is familiar with multiple evidence-based instructional strategies. Candidate can describe techniques used to teach in a culturally sustaining manner.
Interpersonal Skills and Commitment to Diversity	Candidate is unable to demonstrate positive communication, teamwork, or cooperation skills. Candidate shows a lack of willingness to work with students, colleagues, and families from diverse backgrounds.	Candidate is unable to provide specific examples demonstrating solid interpersonal skills, or responses show room for improvement on communication, teamwork, or cooperation skills and limited experience working with diverse stakeholders or colleagues.	Candidate's responses demonstrate that they understand the importance of communication, teamwork, and cooperation skills and the ability to work well with diverse colleagues, students, and families but are unable to provide specific examples of using these skills or adapting their teaching or communication style to work with students, staff, or families different from them.	Candidate provides multiple, specific examples that demonstrate excellent communication, teamwork, and cooperation skills in situations with colleagues and parents or families. Candidate demonstrates the ability to work with others when opinions differ, provides examples that demonstrate a commitment to diversity, and can provide examples of adapting their style to work with students, staff, or families different from them.
Content Area, Grade Level, and Curriculum Experience	Candidate lacks relevant teaching or content area experience.	Candidate has content area knowledge but no teaching experience., or some teaching experience in a different content area.	Candidate is familiar with content area knowledge and can offer an example of relevant experience but has limited teaching experience.	Candidate has multiple years of experience teaching the content area and grade level and can speak to multiple specific experiences.
Learning Environment and Classroom Management	Candidate is unable to describe their approach to classroom management and discipline, or their approach contrasts with the school's values and practices. Responses do not mention a positive, engaging learning environment.	Candidate can describe their intended approach to creating an engaging learning environment, classroom management, and discipline, but lacks relevant examples or experience.	Candidate can describe their approach to creating an engaging learning environment, classroom management, and discipline, including specific techniques and strategies, and describes experiences appropriately deploying classroom management techniques	Candidate clearly describes examples showing their approach to creating an engaging learning environment, classroom management, and discipline, including expectations, rules, rewards, and consequences and describes experiences appropriately deploying classroom management techniques.
Monitoring, Assessment, and Grading Practices	Candidate struggles to explain monitoring, assessment, and grading practices and style and has no experience with monitoring or assessing student progress.	Candidate lacks experience with assessment and grading but can discuss appropriate assessment and grading practices.	Candidate demonstrate understanding of and experience with more than one type of assessment as well as the purpose of assessment and grading.	Candidate's responses demonstrate experiences with and knowledge of multiple methods for monitoring and assessing student progress, including formal, informal, summative, and formative assessment, and progress monitoring. Candidate demonstrates understanding of the purpose of grading and of different assessment types, as well as assessment planning.

SOURCES

Introduction

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