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# HUMAN RESOURCES STAFF MANUAL FOR RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION

March 2011

Contract No. 263-I-03-06-00015-00 (REDI Task Order No. 3)

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# Legislative Strengthening Program

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## HUMAN RESOURCES STAFF MANUAL FOR RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION

March 2011

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## 1. Recruitment and Selection Policy and Procedure

### Policy

#### 1. Purpose

- 1.1. This policy sets out the COR's commitment and approach to recruitment and selection. The COR is committed to a policy of treating all its employees and job applicants equally and to recruit the most qualified person for each vacancy.
- 1.2. No employee or potential employee shall receive less favourable treatment or consideration during recruitment and selection by way of tribal origin/religious belief, gender, maternity/pregnancy, age, disability, or will be disadvantaged by any conditions of employment that cannot be justified as necessary on operational and/or technical grounds.

### Related policies and procedures

- 1.3. This policy is to be read in conjunction with the COR's equality and diversity policy. No decisions regarding recruitment or selection should be made by a person who has not read and understood this policy or without the involvement of the Human Resources (HR) department.

### Scope

- 1.4. This policy is applicable to the recruitment and selection of all employees engaged to provide services for the COR, irrespective of whether such a contract is for a temporary or fixed term or is of a permanent duration. The policy will be made available to all employees and applies to both internal and external recruitment.

### Policy statement

- 1.5. This policy seeks to ensure that the best candidate is chosen for each job vacancy. Existing employees will be invited to apply for transfer and promotion opportunities wherever possible.

### Principles

- 1.6. The following principles will apply whenever recruitment or selection for positions takes place:
  - Individuals will be screened against the job requirements as laid out in the job description and person specification.
  - Any qualifications or requirements applied to a job that have or may have the effect of inhibiting applications from certain groups should only be retained if they can be justified in terms of the job to be done.

- Voluntary information on sex and disability will be collected in order to monitor the numbers of applications from different groups. This information will not be used in the selection process or for any other use other than this purpose.
- Any selection tests should be specifically related to job requirements and should measure the person's actual or inherent ability to do or train for work.
- Any selection tests should be reviewed regularly to ensure they remain relevant and are free from bias, either in content or in the scoring mechanism.
- All recruiting personnel and HR team members taking part in recruitment and selection will have been trained in interviewing skills.
- Written records of interviews, reasons for decisions made at each stage of the process and reasons for appointment or non-appointment should be kept by HR for six months. Records should then be disposed of confidentially.
- Short-listing and interviews will assess candidates against job-related criteria only.
- All information held about a candidate must be used only for the purpose for which the information has been collected.
- All candidates will be asked at the first interview stage to provide documentary evidence of their right to work in Iraq. The HR department will provide a full listing of what documentation is acceptable.
- Reasonable adjustments should be made to reduce any disadvantage faced by disabled people in making an application in response to an advertisement.
- The recruitment and selection process for disabled candidates should take into account such adjustments to working arrangements or physical features of the work place/station/premises as are reasonable to accommodate their needs and be such that they are not placed at a substantial disadvantage compared with non-disabled candidates.

## **The Recruitment Process**

### **Fairness and Transparency**

- 1.7. As the COR symbolizes Iraq's democracy it is therefore, crucial that the whole of the recruitment and selection process is open, transparent, inclusive and that candidates are clearly selected on merit only. It is also important that the recruitment and selection process is applied consistently across the COR and in the provincial offices.
- 1.8. Where any decision is made as to whom to shortlist or appoint, the principle of equality must prevail and the gender, tribal origin/religious belief, marital status, if a women is pregnant or age of the applicants under consideration must play no part.
- 1.9. The recruitment process should be followed in accordance with the following steps:
  - Authority to recruit must be granted by the appropriate Director General before advertising a vacancy.
  - A job description should be produced with full details of the position, tasks, reporting line, responsibilities of the job-holder and number of subordinates, if applicable. The skills, experiences and qualifications of the jobholder should be laid out in the person specification.
  - Job advertisements will be based on the job and person specification. Internal vacancies will be posted on the Intranet and other forms of internal communication. For external positions a variety of advertising mediums will be used. Positions may be simultaneously advertised internally and externally.
  - All external applicants will be pre-screened by the HR department.
  - All applicants that meet the specified criteria will be sent to the relevant recruiting manager. Internal applicants' details will automatically be sent to the recruiting manager.
  - Prior to the interview candidates will be provided with information about the COR, the job description and person specification and any other relevant information.
  - All interview panels should consist of at least two or three interviewers, including the recruiting manager and ideally a member of HR.
  - Each interviewer should complete a scoring grid for each candidate in the interview debrief, recording a scoring level between 1–5 in ascending order of excellence.

- All interview documentation must be returned to the HR department for secure storage. Only those that require access for specific and authorised purposes will be able to access this information.
- Upon selection of a suitable candidate, the recruiting manager will liaise with the HR department to identify the appropriate starting salary. The HR department will handle all offers to successful candidates. Under no circumstances should recruiting managers offer or infer to a candidate the outcome of the selection process.
- The appropriate Director General and Senior Director of Human Resources must approve all offers made to successful candidates.
- All offers are subject to two satisfactory references, medical clearance, a check on relevant qualifications and possession of an Iraqi ID number. HR will apply for and verify all references, which will be requested once applicants have indicated acceptance (subject to the conditions highlighted above).
- References will ideally come from current and/or previous employers, if applicable. If the references or medical clearance are not satisfactory, the offer may be revoked.
- Induction of new employees will start as soon as a candidate accepts a position. HR will send out a copy of terms and conditions of employment and all related new starter forms that need to be completed. All new starters will receive a timetable for their successful induction into the COR.

### **Appeals procedure**

- 1.10 Employees who have concerns about any aspect of this policy or its operation should consult the COR's Grievance Policy and Procedure.

Last updated: (insert date)

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## **RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION PROCEDURE**

All recruiters should follow the procedure set out below and any deviation should be agreed with the Senior Director of Human Resources:

### **2. Identification of a vacancy**

2.1. Whenever a manager identifies a vacancy they have to follow the steps set out below:

- Inform their line manager and/or the appropriate Director General to gain approval to fill the vacancy
- Fill in the Job Vacancy Form—Section 17, page 33
- Send the Job Vacancy Form to Human Resources

This is the first alert to the HR Department that a vacancy exists.

2.2. HR will contact the manager and assist them in drafting the Job Description and Person Specification.

2.3. This is also an ideal time to examine the role and responsibilities of the job and to change anything that is redundant or needs to be developed. This is called a job analysis and every time a vacancy occurs the manager with the help and support of HR should carry out this exercise.

2.4. Job analysis is an evaluation of the role, not the person doing it. A job evaluation scheme should be a fair system, understood by and communicated to employees. It should be transparent, and reviewed regularly to ensure business needs of the COR continue to be met.

2.5. First, HR needs to arrange a meeting with the line manager and anyone else who is appropriate and together make a list of all the tasks, duties or responsibilities that the job-holder has to carry out. The list can then be refined and this forms the basis of the job description and person specification. Every time there is a vacancy a job needs to be reviewed.

### **3. The Legal Framework**

3.1. Set below are the main set of laws and regulations that impact on the recruitment and selection function:

- Civil Service Law Number 24, 1960
- Health and Invalidity Law, no. 11, 1999
- The New Retirement Law, 2006 – the normal retirement age is 63 years unless extended by the appropriate Minister

- Political Dismissal Law
- Salary Structure for Employees. Law 22 2008

3.2. Civil Service Recruitment Law:  
Before employment is offered all candidates have to comply with the following:

(A)

- Must be at least 18 years of age
- Must hold an Iraqi identification number
- Must pass a medical and health check
- Must pass a criminal record check

3.3. Prior to the appointment of a candidate, the organization has to comply with the following:

(B)

- There must be an open job vacancy
- There must be a specific financial allocation for the post
- The potential employee must be assigned to a specific grade and pay point within that grade– there are 10 grade levels with 1 being the highest to 10 being the lowest. Each grade has a pay point ladder comprising 11 steps

## 4. Role of the Recruiting Manager

4.1 The recruiting manager is normally the line manager of the post to be recruited. They are responsible, with the support of HR personnel, for ensuring that all members of the shortlist and interviewing panel follow the correct procedure throughout the selection process.

This includes:

- Selecting the shortlist and interviewing panel members
- Agreeing selection criteria for the Job Description and Person Specification and circulating this to all members of the short-listing and interview panel
- Arranging a short listing meeting for the panel and any other meetings that are necessary
- Deciding if there should be any appropriate assessment test to be used in addition to the interview

## 5. Job Analysis

- 5.1 Before recruiting for a new or existing position, it is important to invest time in gathering information about the nature of the job. This means thinking not only about the content (such as the tasks) making up the job, but also the job's purpose, the outputs required by the job holder and how it fits into the COR's structure. This analysis should form the basis of a job description and person specification.
- 5.2. An important concept of job analysis is that the analysis is conducted of the job, not the person. While job analysis data may be collected from incumbents through interviews or questionnaires, the product of the analysis is a description or specifications of the job, not a description of the person.
- 5.3 Job Analysis should collect information on the following areas:
- **Duties and Tasks** -The basic unit of a job is the performance of specific tasks and duties. Information to be collected about these items may include: frequency a task is performed e.g. daily, duration of the task, effort, skill, complexity, equipment, standards, etc.
  - **Environment** -This may have a significant impact on the physical requirements to be able to perform a job e.g. dealing with hostile and aggressive people or working with dangerous chemicals.
  - **Tools and Equipment** -Some duties and tasks are performed using specific equipment and tools. Equipment may include protective clothing or a uniform. These items need to be specified in the process of a job analysis.
  - **Relationships** -Supervision given and received. Relationships with internal and/or external people.
  - **Requirements** -The knowledge, skills, and abilities required to perform the job. A job analysis typically only states the minimum requirements to perform the job.
- 5.4. There is a questionnaire in Section 17 page 34 giving the kind of questions that should be asked. When the questions are answered, then this information forms the basis of the job description and person specification.

## 6. Job Descriptions

- 6.1. A good recruitment and selection process starts with an excellent job description. Job descriptions are crucial for hiring and retaining the best personnel. This is also important as it sets out the work duties and responsibilities so that both the member of staff and their line manager are clear about the job role. If a job description is not clear then this can lead to confusion and employees having different expectations of their role from their line manager.
- 6.2. A job description needs to include the following headings:
  - Title of the job
  - Job location
  - Grade
  - Nature of the work
  - Duties
  - Reporting relationship of the job-holder
  - Any direct reports to the job-holder

**This needs to be set out clearly and in simple unambiguous language.**

- 6.3. In Section 17 page 35 there is a template for a job description with some examples.

## 7. Person Specifications

- 7.1. Person specifications are concise descriptions of the qualities that post-holders need to possess to carry out their duties competently.
- 7.2. Therefore, having clarified the key duties and responsibilities of the post to be filled the next task for the recruiting manager is to produce a person specification, the purpose of which is to define the key characteristics of the person who could most effectively fill the role. The person specification therefore sets out the essential and desirable knowledge, skills, qualifications, experience and attributes that are required to carry out the role effectively and these are drawn from the key responsibilities and duties outlined in the job description.
- 7.3. The person specification also provides:
  - The core information for the advertisement
  - Transparency, by applying the criteria for the post consistently during the short-listing and selection of employees

- Comparison of candidates against the requirements of the post and not against each other
- A foundation for determining any additional selection methods other than an interview e.g. tests
- The basis for developing interview questions

7.4. The criteria set out in the person specification are the only criteria against which applicants should be assessed at the short-listing, test and interview stages.  
The criteria must be:

- Specific
- Measurable
- Justifiable

7.5. The criteria should be neither too vague nor too prescriptive. If the criteria are too vague this will not assist the recruitment process in that it will be hard to differentiate between applicants. On the other hand if the criteria are too prescriptive this may have the effect of significantly and unhelpfully restricting the number of applicants who can meet them. The person specification must relate to the job description and identify the essential and desirable qualities required for the post.

These will include:

- Knowledge: specific knowledge required to do the job
- Skills: communication skills, time management skills, the ability to prioritize, IT skills, etc.
- Experience: the type (breadth and depth) of experience which is indicative of the skills and knowledge required for the job
- Qualifications: professional qualifications, level of education, specific and/ or technical training
- Attributes: a characteristic or quality e.g. leadership, strategic thinking, interpersonal behavior
- Any other relevant information relating to the post.

- 7.6. Essential and Desirable qualities
- 7.7. Some qualities will be essential, for example a specific qualification may be required, or the job may require the ability to use certain equipment. Decide which qualities are essential. If candidates cannot demonstrate these they should not be considered for the post.
- 7.8. Other qualities may be desirable, for example that candidates have previous experience of working with a similar client group, or that they are familiar with specific legislation or committee procedure. These requirements are not essential, as carefully planned induction and supervision can ensure that the post-holder gains the relevant knowledge, skills and experience.
- 7.9. Thus, **essential** knowledge, experience and skills are the minimum level that a candidate will be called for interview and a decision made to hire. The desirable knowledge, experience and skills are the difference that assists the panel to rate each candidate's application against the selection criteria and to decide who to hire. Many good applicants are overlooked because they don't clearly address the selection criteria and they assume that the panel will be able to read between the lines in their application and at interview.
- 7.10. Compile a list of the qualities, experience and skills needed to undertake the job successfully, making sure that this only includes ones that are necessary for the post and can be evaluated during the selection process.
- 7.11. Consider each of the following areas when determining criteria: education, qualifications and training necessary for effective job performance
- Length and type of experience (ensure this is justifiable)
  - Skills, aptitudes and knowledge directly related to the job
  - Personal attributes
  - Any other skills or qualities necessary for features of the job e.g., language skills, knowledge of specific environments. or technical skills
- 7.12. When determining the criteria, try to ensure that they are not too strict as this would prevent people from applying, but it is also important not to make them too broad as this will make it difficult to select candidates at short listing stage. All criteria must be capable of being assessed through interview or any test.

7.13. All the criteria must be clear and relate directly to the requirements of the post. Set out below are some examples:

- Ability to maintain confidentiality
- Ability to work as part of a team
- Ability to work independently
- Ability to work under pressure
- Attention to detail
- Flexible and adaptable approach to work
- Initiative
- Keyboard skills
- Knowledge of the COR, policy and procedures
- Organizational/planning skills
- Problem-solving ability
- Sensitivity
- Supervisory skills
- Verbal communication/interpersonal skills
- Written communication skills.

Unnecessary requirements or measures must not be included as these have the potential to discriminate either directly or indirectly.

7.14. Ask the following questions when drawing up a person specification:

- Is a certain qualification such as a degree absolutely necessary to undertake the post effectively?
- What are the specific areas of knowledge required for the post and to what standard must the applicant possess this knowledge?
- Be aware about making assumptions. Be specific about what the applicant will be expected to do.
- Be careful about asking for a certain number of years experience, be specific what experience are you looking for and the breadth and depth of experience that is required.
- It is useful to indicate within the person specification how each of the criteria will be measured, for example from the application form, the interview, additional selection methods and/or references.

- 7.15. In recruitment or promotion procedures, it is important that person specifications are clearly understood by all involved, both the selectors and candidates. It is a good idea for the recruiting manager to hold a short meeting to explain the process to the short-listing and interview panel members. Also this needs to be made explicit in recruitment and selection training. It is highly desirable that anyone who is to be a member of a short-listing and/or interview panel attends a training course before they take on this duty.
- 7.16. Both the job description and person specification form the basis of the recruitment and selection process. Time needs to be taken to ensure that they are clear and well thought out. When the job description and person specification are agreed these two documents will inform the whole hiring process.

They will be used:

- To design and place the advertisement of the post
- Provided to the candidate so that they can submit their application in line with the requirements for the job
- As the tool to shortlist
- As the measurement of any tests that maybe required of the candidate
- To examine short-listed candidates at interview
- To make the decision on whom to hire
- To provide any feedback to candidates on the decision reached.

Post recruitment and selection the job description and person specification:

- Will be used to measure the day to day performance of the member of staff
- Be used as the basis of the performance appraisal process
- Act as the assessment for training, development and mentoring

### **How to draft a Person Specification**

#### **7.17. Identify the required experience, knowledge and skills**

Describe what the post-holder needs to do, the standard to which work must be carried out, and the knowledge and skills required. Use this information to make a list of the experience, knowledge and skills required.

### 7.18. Identify the required qualifications

Be clear what qualifications are needed as a minimum level to perform in the role and which qualifications are acceptable. It is essential that the successful candidate has the appropriate experience and possess the necessary knowledge and skills to perform in the job or to quickly attain these.

Basing the hiring process on the job description and person specification will not only help selectors and candidates to understand the duties and responsibilities of the job, it also will create transparency and confidence that the COR is hiring staff only on merit. This will support an increased level of professionalism across all Directorates by matching the skills, knowledge and experience of staff with the job they were hired to perform.

### 7.19. Dos and Don'ts

- **Don't include criteria, which are not relevant to the job.** Only include skills, knowledge, abilities, and education if they are directly relevant to the job, and be able to justify them. Too expansive or too limited criteria can broaden or restrict applications respectively or reduce the likelihood of certain groups applying – requiring a number of years experience may discriminate against applicants on the basis of age and/or gender
- **Don't include criteria that can't be objectively assessed,** such as a good sense of humor
- **Don't overstate the requirements of the job.** This may result in suitable candidates being put off or in appointing an over-qualified candidate who then becomes frustrated in the job and moves on. Giving candidates an accurate impression of what is required of them can improve staff retention
- **Do make clear the relative importance of requirements** that are essential and desirable and be able to justify them
- **Do make clear the importance of any biographical information you request** such as educational attainment and validity of certificates
- **Do have the person specification checked by someone else,** including HR personnel and the line manager to remove any personal preferences
- **Do review the person specification(s) over time** for potential revisions
- **Do be explicit** about what is required and why

7.20. In summary, when drafting the Person Specification consider the essential and desirable elements:

- **Essential** means the minimum requirements without which an applicant would be unable to perform the role the role properly.
- **Desirable** criteria help to identify the ideal person for the post, they are qualities which will enhance performance in the job but which are not fundamental to successful performance.

Desirable criteria can be very helpful at short-listing stage to differentiate between applicants where a large number meet the essential criteria.

7.21. Person Specification template is in Section 17, page 36 use this when developing the person specification.

## 8. Advertising the Post

8.1. When the job description and person specification are agreed with HR and the recruiting manager, the next step is to the draft an advertisement. You can use the information in the Job Description and Person Specification to draw this up. It should include:

- A couple of sentences about the COR
- The job title
- The location
- A short outline of the main duties and responsibilities
- The closing date (allow at least 2 weeks after the publication of the advertisement)
- Where and how to apply
- Contact details of the recruiting manager

### Advert placement

8.2. The recruiting manager with the support of HR should explore where the advertisement should be placed, including the COR website and appropriate newspapers. Also internal notice boards and/or house bulletins should be used. It is good practice to place job adverts in a wide a range of media as possible (subject to cost). It is usual to set the closing date at least 2 weeks after the placement of the advertisement.

## 9. Managing Paperwork

- 9.1. **As soon as a request to fill a vacancy is received ensure that all paperwork and documentation is securely managed from this date.**

Open a file for the recruitment process and ensure that all relevant documentation is kept in one place. There should be copies of the job description and person specification, the advertisement and where it has been placed; copies of applications; panel members and contact details; short-listing information, letters of invitation to interview; interview documentation; the decision sheet; letter of offer and contract and the recruitment and selection checklist.

## 10. Short-listing

- 10.1. No one should be a member of a recruitment and selection panel until they have received appropriate training and are familiar with the policy and procedure.
- 10.2. The aim in short-listing is draw up a manageable list of candidates for interview, all of whom could do the job in terms of the qualifications, experience, skills and knowledge in their application.
- 10.3. Short-listing is best done methodically by comparing each application with the previously prepared job description and person specification and nothing else.
- 10.4. The key to ensuring a quality short-listing is to make decisions that are based on an assessment of the facts provided on each candidate's application as measured against the stated criteria.
- 10.5. Wherever possible, more than one person should be involved in the short listing in order to reduce the chances of one individual's bias affecting the process.
- 10.6. Care should be taken to avoid assumptions about individual candidates and the type of work they would be capable of doing. For example, a candidate is automatically rejected at the short-listing stage just because he or she has a disability and this cannot be justified then the COR is discriminating against that person.
- 10.7. Rejection for employment for a reason related to a person's disability might be open to justification. An example of this would be the rejection of a candidate who had indicated that he or she was visually impaired and where a necessary element of the job involved checking security. This would be a rejection on the grounds that the person could not meet the essential criteria for the job.

10.8. However, it first has to be considered if any reasonable adjustments can be made to accommodate the needs of a candidate with disabilities for example providing a larger computer screen or an adapted chair and/or desk.

### **Reasons for Rejecting Applications at Short List stage**

10.9. It is essential that the reasons for rejecting an applicant relates to the requirements for the job as described in the advert and further particulars and can be justified.

10.10. When giving reasons for rejection it is better to give brief, clear reasons e.g. do not have five years managerial experience. It is not necessary have to go into a lot of detail, a summary of the main reasons for not selecting will be sufficient.

## **11. Selection Tests**

11.1. Decide if candidates need testing on any area of the job description and person specification, such as specific knowledge or IT skills.

11.2. If it is decided that a test is needed then any test used should:

- Assess only factors that are relevant to the job in question
- Measure an individual's actual or inherent ability to do the job, or be trained for the job
- Do not potentially discriminate, such as testing a level of assertiveness which generally tends to be different between a man and a woman
- Are designed and assessed by people who have been properly trained, such as a test for word processing ability.
- Are not used as the only method of selection

11.3. If a recruiting manager wishes to use a test, check that the test is relevant to the post and pitched at the minimum skill level to do the job.

11.4. HR should oversee the test and ensure that the assessors have the relevant qualifications to mark the test.

## 12. Interviews

12.1. The key purposes of a selection interview is to:

- Assess the suitability of each candidate's qualifications, experience, skills and knowledge in relation to the vacant post.
- Judge each candidate's likely level of motivation and enthusiasm for the job
- Assess each candidate's likely future performance in the job
- Convey key information about the COR and the scope of the job
- Convey a positive impression of the COR

12.2. The process of interviewing needs to be carefully managed and planned. It involves:

- Sending an invitation to interview letter to all shortlisted candidates, giving reasonable notice of the date and time of the proposed interview and informing them who will be conducting the interview and how long the interview is expected to last.
- Being flexible about timing of interviews as some candidates may not be able to attend at a particular time, for example, due to existing work commitments, childcare or travelling difficulties.
- Enclosing instructions of how to get to where the interview will take place and clear instructions about the various ways of travelling to the location, including information on checkpoints.
- Ensuring that the COR's security requirements are met and that they are informed well in advance so that candidates are not turned away
- Informing candidates of any documentation they should bring with them to the interview.
- Asking candidates if they require any special arrangements for the interview for example, those with disabilities.
- Ensuring that there are arrangements in place to meet the candidate and that there is a place for them to wait for their interview. Also that they are informed where the toilets are located and any other relevant information.
- Checking that the room is booked well in advance and that a large notice is placed outside that door that interviews are taking place and for passers by to respect this and to be quiet. The notice should also state that there should no interruptions.

- Setting up a suitable room for the interviews – one that is well lit, at a comfortable temperature and uncluttered by equipment
- Considering the arrangement of furniture for example, setting the room up so that the interviewers and applicant face each other
- Ensuring that the room is free from all kinds of disruptions, distractions and background noise.
- Ensuring seating is comfortable and that the level of seating is the same for both the interviewers and the interviewee.
- Where a candidate has indicated that they have a disability ensure that they are treated as fairly and transparently as possible. This may involve making special arrangements such as:
  - Moving the place of the interview with easier access for the candidates
  - Rescheduling the timing of the interview
- Permitting a deaf applicant to bring a sign language interpreter to the interview

### **Preparation for Interviewers**

12.3. It is very important to prepare thoroughly for each interview so that the time spent interviewing can be used to the best effect. To determine what questions to ask it will be necessary to study each shortlisted candidate's application carefully.

12.4. It is good practice for all members of the panel to meet beforehand and prepare a list of key job-related questions with the intention of asking such questions (in the same order and the same way) of every candidate. Whilst this helps to ensure consistency and fairness in interviewing, there will also be a need to ask questions that are specific to each candidate, this is to obtain more evidence and relate to each candidate's specific background, skills and knowledge.

HR personnel should be closely involved in preparation.

12.5. Panel members should look for features of each application that:

- Do not meet the requirements of the post
- Require clarification
- Require verification
- Appear inconsistent with something else, for example, if a statement or the written application appears to contradict something stated at interview
- Is expressed in vague terms

- Is missing

12.6. Further short-listing panel members should not be influenced by information such as:

- Educational qualifications, except if specified in the job description or person specification as essential/desirable criteria
- Personal knowledge of the candidate or what they may have heard about them
- Who they have quoted as referees
- The presentation of the written application unless it is directly relevant to the selection criteria e.g. assumptions about hand written or word processed applications, unless candidates are requested to supply written information in a specific way.

12.7. Question will be viewed as discriminatory if they:

- Imply a biased view on the interviewer's part against a particular candidate
- Put the applicant at a disadvantage against other candidates, such as asking a woman about caring or family responsibilities and not asking the same of male candidates.

### **At the Interview**

12.8. Panel members should seek to:

- Normally restrict the number of people on the panel between 2 or 4 at the most
- Elect someone who is skilled at chairing meetings to be the lead interviewer
- Take time to familiarize themselves with the job description as well as the criteria listed in the person specification.
- Take time to study each candidate's application and discuss in advance of the interview any areas that might be of concern or that will require clarification.
- Ensure that they have agreed the interview structure and the part each is to play in the interview and the area of questioning each one is responsible for.

- Allow sufficient time between each interview for them to have a short discussion about the candidate, make notes and prepare for the next candidate.

12.9. Also it is the panel's responsibility to check the following:

- Is it clear that qualifications have actually been obtained?
- Have there been any failures, and if so how does the candidate view the circumstances surrounding the failure?
- Does it appear that there has been a change of direction (and if so why)?
- Do the educational qualifications and training match the requirements of the job?

12.10. Although an applicant's qualification, experience and knowledge can be assessed objectively, it can be more difficult to assess personal motivation, attitude and flexibility in approach. To achieve maximum effectiveness from the interview process the interviewer should:

- Relax the candidate and build rapport at the beginning of the interview
- At the beginning of the interview the chair/lead interviewer should outline the interview process, introduce the other panel members and their role, such as the potential line manager, a member of HR or a note-taker and explain to the candidate how long the interview will last and that they will be given an opportunity at the end to ask any questions
- If there is to be a presentation by the candidate to the panel then this should be delivered at the start of the interview. The chair/lead interviewer should time the presentation and stop the candidate if they run over the stated time.
- Focus on the job and the skills the job-holder will need to perform effectively.
- Deploy open questions that allow the candidates to express themselves in an unrestricted way.
- Be prepared to probe for more information where appropriate, for example, to gain more insight into a candidate's skill level; their reason for applying for the post; why they think they would be suited for the post; challenges and difficulties in their current and previous jobs; the reasons for previous career moves and their past and present ambitions and aspirations.

- Listen actively and with an open mind to everything the candidate has to say
- Ask specific questions about the candidate's actual experiences, for example, 'tell me about a time when you experienced conflict with a colleague and how you handled it.'
- Recognise subjective views, opinions, biases and prejudices for what they are and learn to put them aside when interviewing. Lack of awareness of these can have a negative effect on the objectivity of the interview process and can have an impact on transparency.
- Avoid making assumptions about individuals. Instead seek to establish the facts. It is very dangerous, and inappropriate, to make assumptions about a candidate's ability to 'fit in' based on factors such as age or gender differences.
- Aim to select the candidate whose experience, skills, qualifications and abilities most closely match the job description and person specification.
- Only ask questions that relate to the needs of the job.
- Questions should be based on the requirements of the job and that the relevant issues should be discussed objectively without any assumptions being made by the interviewer about whether a candidate's personal circumstances could affect their ability to meet the requirements of the job.

12.11. Some of the advantages of panel interviews are that:

- Relevant matters are less likely to be forgotten or omitted
- People on the panel can focus on asking questions related to their own area of expertise
- While one panel member is asking questions, another can make notes, thus allowing the person asking the question to concentrate fully on listening to the candidate's answers.
- If the candidate asks a question in a way that is unclear, ambiguous or evasive, this is more likely to be picked up, allowing another panel member to ask for clarification or expansion.
- The likelihood of individual bias is reduced, as it will normally not be possible for the subjective or prejudiced view of one panel member to determine the outcome.

12.12. Some disadvantages include:

- Facing a panel can be intimidating, so interviewers as well as candidates may be nervous.
- It is more difficult to achieve rapport with a candidate at a panel interview and the candidate may therefore not feel relaxed enough to open up and talk freely about their background and what they can offer.
- It may be difficult to convene a panel if some or all of the potential participants have heavy work commitments.

### **Making the Decision**

12.13. The final selection for the job should be on the basis of the shortlisted candidates' relevant experience, skills, qualifications, knowledge and proven talent and attributes. The decision should be based on factual evidence.

12.14. When taking the decision as to which candidate to appoint, it is important to view all the candidates fairly and objectively following the completion of the interviews.

12.15. It is important, in making the selection to assess each candidate objectively against criteria contained in the job description and person specification, rather than comparing them against each other. It is also important to disregard any irrelevant factors about a particular candidate that may have come to light.

12.16. An effective and fair method of selection both at short-listing and interview is to apply a scoring system based on the skills, experience, knowledge and training required for the job. The scoring system has a numerical range from 1 to 5 with 1 indicating that there was no evidence provided by the candidate to 5 where the evidence is clear and wholly relevant to the job description and person specification.

In Section 17 page 44 shows a scoring template for shorting and interviews, together with descriptors for each numerical value.

### **Recording**

12.17. It is recommended that the HR department keeps a record of all selection short-listing documentation, interviews, the outcome of any recruitment tests and the reasons why the successful applicant was selected in preference to other candidates. If a candidate complains that they were not selected then there is factual evidence of how the selection process was carried out and why the decision was made. The documentation can also be used to give candidate's feedback on their written application and performance at the interview.

12.18. It is essential to keep records of:

- The job description
- The person specification
- The reasons why the successful candidate was selected
- The reasons why other candidates were rejected

### **Security and Confidentiality**

12.19. If the information is held manually, it must be structured in such a way that specific information relating to a particular individual is readily accessible and that steps are taken to make certain that confidentiality and security is observed. If the information is held on a computer or in an e-mail this can constitute 'personal data' and confidentiality must be observed and the information securely held so that in the first instance, only appropriate HR personnel can access and track it.

12.20. It is good practice that recruitment records be held for as short a time as possible, a reasonable length of time is 6 months from the date of appointment.

## **13. The Job Offer**

13.1. If an offer is to be conditional, wording of the offer letter, outlined in Section 17, page 49 should make this clear. If one of the defined conditions is not met, for example the passing of an examination within a specified time limit, then the offer can be withdrawn.

13.2. The prospective employee should be advised not to hand in their notice to their current employer until they have received written notification that the offer has confirmed.

13.3. If it is discovered after a new employee has been employed that he or she has lied in respect of a key aspect of their background, then the employee may be dismissed without breach of contract.

## **14. Checks**

14.1. Job offers should be made under the following conditions:

- The receipt of at least two satisfactory references
- Documentation to prove qualifications
- A satisfactory medical
- An Iraqi identification number

- 14.2. Before the successful candidate is offered the job there should be a check whether any qualifications required have actually been obtained by the candidate.
- 14.3. Where a candidate has stated that they have a disability:
- Decide whether there is a need to make any reasonable adjustments to the selection process
  - Decide whether an applicant can carry out a function that is essential to the job
  - Monitor diversity among people making applications for jobs
  - Take positive action to assist disabled people
- 14.4. If there is a need to obtain a medical report from an individual's doctor then their written consent must be obtained and a copy of the consent should be enclosed when writing the doctor. If the requirements of the job are such that access to medical records of the prospective employee may be necessary, it should be made clear the person why this is the case.
- 14.5. It is recommended that:
- Any process of checking that HR plans should be transparent
  - Job applicants should be informed of the types of checks that HR seeks to carry out, what information they wish to verify and how checks will be carried out.
  - HR should obtain the signed consent of job applicants prior to instigating any reference requests or other checks. There should be no secret enquiries, however tempting these may be.
  - Job applicants should be made clear that their qualifications are to be verified in the course of the recruitment process.
- 14.6. Collection and use of information obtained from medical examinations:
- Identify the specific purpose for which a medical examination is to be carried out. It is compulsory that all prospective employees have a medical examination before taking up any post.
  - Only require a job applicant to undergo a medical examination after the job offer has been made.
  - Make sure that the type of medical examination is not excessive in relation to level of fitness required for the job.

- Make sure the applicant's consent covers not only the medical examination itself but also the recording and processing of the results.
  - Make sure that a suitably qualified medical professional completes the interpretation of medical information, including any judgment about the applicant's fitness to work.
  - Restrict the information available to management about an individual's health to no more than necessary for them to determine whether the individual is fit to perform the job.
- 14.7. All checks must be justifiable in relation to the type of job the individual is being offered. It is reasonable to establish that a prospective employee is fit and capable of performing the job into which they are being recruited.
- 14.8. If a job applicant refuses to undertake a medical examination that is proportionate to the requirements of the job, the offer can be withdrawn providing that the offer letter made it clear that the offer was conditional upon satisfactory completion of a pre-employment medical examination.

## **15. References**

- 15.1 An employer obligated to provide a reference that is factual and accurate.
- 15.2. If a reference states that a person has a poor attendance record in previous employment due to sickness, the employer should take care to avoid making assumptions about the person's likely attendance in any new employment. A decision to reject a candidate based on the candidate's previous sickness record can be viewed as potentially discriminatory. HR personnel need to thoroughly check the record and reasons for sickness record.
- 15.3. Seeking a reference about an employee from a current employer or previous employer without the individual's knowledge is against transparency and openness.
- 15.4. Where a reference contains information that contradicts information provided by the candidate, HR should not automatically assume that the information in the reference is correct, or that the candidate has misrepresented the facts. Further checks need to be made.
- 15.5. Where a discrepancy arises between what the applicant has stated in writing or at the interview, and information the referee has provided, the applicant should have the opportunity to provide an explanation and/or seek further information to establish the truth.

- 15.6. Generally a reference will involve the disclosure of personal data and this should be securely protected and kept with the candidate's file and kept by the HR Department.

## **16. Employment Contract**

- 16.1. The employment contract comes into force as soon as approval from the Speaker's Office is confirmed and the contract of employment is signed by the Speaker's Office and by the future employee.
- 16.2. Verbal offers are not recommended and it is better to produce a written offer of employment.

## **17. Checklists and Templates**

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## Recruitment & Selection Checklist

Action	Date	Notes
Notified of a vacancy		
Contacted the recruiting manager		
Draft Job Description and Person Specification		
Sign off Job Description and Person Specification		
Agreement of recruitment timetable, including closing and interview dates		
Book panel members & interview room/s		
Draft job advertisement		
Choose media outlets for the advertisement		
Send out invitation letter for interview		
Short-list to specified criteria		
Interview or first interview		
Second interview, if appropriate		
Assessment/test, if appropriate		
Short-list decision		
Secure all short-list documentation		
Send out invitation to interview		
Panel meets to prepare for interviews		
Check the interview room/s and candidate reception		
Convene panel and conduct interviews		

Action	Date	Notes
Convene panel and conduct interviews		
Secure all interview documentation		
References requested		
Send out conditional job offer letter		
References received, and confirmed as acceptable		
Perform pre-confirmation of checks		
Contract issued		
Signed copy of contract received		
Confirm start date with line manager		
Confirm start date and arrival time to report to HR new starter		
Contract signed		
ID card/security pass issued (record number in notes column)		
Establish personnel file		
Passwords issued for access to relevant IT systems		
Provide Staff Handbook		
Book new starter onto induction event		
Arrange any agreed training		

## Recruiting Manager's Checklist

<b>BEFORE ADVERT CLOSING DATE</b>	
	Review role and complete job analysis.
	Fill in the Vacancy Request Form and contact HR. Get approval to fill the vacancy
	Draft Job Description and Person Specification - with support of HR
	Agree a closing date for applications with HR
	Draft advertisement and decide where to place it - with support of HR
	Commission short-listing and interview panel members Draft advertisement and decide where to place it - with support of HR
	Plan the recruitment schedule, including timetable for interviews and location. Send schedule to HR, DG and all members of the short-listing and interview panel
<b>AFTER ADVERT CLOSING DATE</b>	
	Receive applications from HR one day after the advert closes and circulate copies of applications, along with Short-list template and scoring grid to all members of the panel.
	Arrange a meeting of panel to short listed candidates
	Using the Short listing Form as a framework for the discussion assess all applicants against the criteria and identify a number of successful applicants.
	Check the HR has written to all unsuccessful applicants advising that they have been unsuccessful.
<b>PREPARATION FOR INTERVIEW</b>	
	Check HR has written to successful applicants inviting them to interview and detailing any tests. in addition to the interview and what they should bring to the interview i.e. ID
	Request references unless candidate has asked for referees not to be contacted at this stage.
	Ensure that HR has booked rooms are booked for the interview process, that there is a space for candidates to wait for their interview and that security is informed.
	Ensure the interview panel meets at least half an hour before the interviews start to plan the questioning structure for the interviews.

	Ensure that staff meeting the candidates has a list detailing names and interview times and details of any other rooms being used for assessment in addition to interview.
--	--

<b>FOLLOWING THE INTERVIEW</b>	
	Co-ordinate all panel member's views and complete an Interview Evaluation Form for each candidate as a formal record of the decisions.
	Identify the successful candidate who most closely matches the role and criteria in the job description and person specification.
	Contact the successful candidate and give a verbal conditional offer of employment subject to pre-employment checks and discuss possible start date.
	Complete Interview Form and give to HR. HR will send a written offer to the successful candidate.
	Check HR has contacted any unsuccessful internal candidates to let them know that they have been unsuccessful
	Check HR has written to all unsuccessful external candidates confirming that they have not been appointed to the post.
	Check HR has contacted referees.
	Arrange a start date with HR
	Arrange team induction.

**Job Vacancy Form**  
**Template – Request to fill a job vacancy**

<b>Request to fill a job vacancy</b>	<b>Please fill in the boxes below</b>
Directorate	
Section	
Job Vacancy Title	
Grade	
Reason for vacancy	
Direct Reports – if appropriate	
Main duties and responsibilities. (List between 5 and 8)	
Any other information	
Date for filling the above vacancy	
<b>Your contact details:</b>	
Name	
Location	
Telephone/E-mail	
<b>Approval</b>	
Signature and date of Recruiting Manager	
Signature and date of Director General	

Please send this form to the Senior Director of Human Resources.

You will be contacted by a member of the Human Resources Department to help you process this vacancy.

## **Job Analysis Questionnaire**

In order to complete a job analysis, the following questions need to be asked:

### **Step 1. Job Analysis**

#### **The nature and purpose of the job**

- Do you need to fill the position exactly as it was described before?
- What is the content of the job; what tasks make up the job on a day-to-day basis?
- What are the main duties and responsibilities?
- What is the purpose of the job?
- What outputs are required from the post-holder?
- How does the job fit into the structure of the COR?
- The person or people needed to fill the position

#### **What skills or qualifications are needed to carry out the job?**

- What (if any) personal attributes are needed to carry out the job?
- What experience is required to carry out the job?
- What knowledge is required to perform the job?
- Do you have any preconceptions of the person who would best fit the position? If so, are the attributes you have in mind really necessary or just personal preferences or based on the previous post-holder?
- The way the job is carried out
- Does the job have to be done in the way that it has always been done?
- Are there any dress, presentation or uniform requirements?
- If recruiting for an existing position, have the circumstances of the job changed since this position was last filled?
- Should the job be changed to make it relevant to current and future needs of the COR?

## Job Description template

Use this information to draft the job description and person specification.

### Step 2. Job Analysis

Fill in the form, if possible with the job holder

#### Job Analysis Form

Job Title

Directorate:

Section

Reports to:

Number of Direct Reports (if appropriate)

**1: Purpose and Scope of the Job:** A short description of the main purpose of the job and the prime reason for its existence.

**2: Work Performed:** Describe in detail the duties performed. State specifically what is done and explain why, how and frequency.

Duties	Frequency
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	
6.	
7.	
8.	
9.	
10.	
Etc.	

**3: Work Contacts:** The extent to which the position requires the ability to gain cooperation, persuade and influence other people. Indicate the level, frequency, difficulty and importance of the work.

Contacts	Frequency	Purpose	Method of Contact
Immediate peers			
Peers in other sections/directorates			
Line manager			
Managers in other directorates			
Executives			
Stakeholders			
Other (specify)			

**4: Decision Making Authority:** Indicate the level of discretion or authority allowed under COR polices, procedures and practices.

**5: Supervisory Responsibility:** The extent to which the position controls, directs and is accountable for the work of others.

Title of employee supervised	Number supervised
Etc.	

**6: Work Conditions (if appropriate):** Degree of exposure to work conditions.

Condition	% of Time
Noise	
Heat	
Fumes	
Dust	
Etc.	

**7: Physical Effort (if appropriate):** Amount of physical exertion expended in handling materials, tools, operating machinery or equipment. Identify tools, equipment, machinery and materials handled.

Type:	% Of Time Used
Equipment	
Tools	
Machinery	
Position	% Of Time In The Position
Walking	
Standing	
Lifting	
Cramped or confined space	
Sitting	
Etc.	

**8: Education and Training Required:** Minimum academic, professional and technical qualifications needed to perform the job.

Education Level	Qualification
School	
College	
Trade/Technical	
IT Office Skills Set	
University	
Post Graduate	
Professional	
Etc.	

**9. Years of Experience:** Minimum previous experience required for performing the duties of the job

Number of Years	Tick
0-1	
1-3	
3-5	
5+	

**10. Other requirements:** List any other requirements needed to perform the duties of the job.

Requirement	Level-basic	Level-intermediate	Level-advanced
Language	Written	Spoken	Written & Spoken
Office equipment	e.g. Photocopier/Printer		
Etc.			

**Any other comments/notes**

## Template: Job Description

**Reference:**

**Job Title:**

**Directorate:**

**Location:**

**Pay Grade:**

**Reporting to:**

**Responsible for:**

### **Purpose of the Job**

Two or sentences that describe the role and purpose of the job.

### **Direct Reports:**

### **Nature of the Work**

Three to five bullet points that describe the scope of the Directorate, the business hours, the workload e.g. how many committee meetings in a month and the overall key responsibilities of the team the job-holder where will be a member.

### **Duties and Responsibilities**

A list of the main duties and responsibilities that the job holder is expected to deliver e.g.

- Manages a team of three members of staff.
- Provides guidance in advice to staff in line with our Directorate standards, procedures and guidelines.
- Builds effective relationships with stakeholders both internally and externally, by use of appropriate questioning, clarification and language.
- Maintains and updates records accurately and in accordance with data protection requirements.
- Takes responsibility for own personal development, in line with agreed annual performance objectives.

### **Key relationships**

e.g.

- Deals with stakeholders on an external level.
- Liaises with other Directorates

Last updated: (insert date)

Date of next review: (insert date e.g. in 18 months, unless the job becomes vacant)

## Person Specification Template

Requirement	Essential or Desirable?	How Assessed?
<b>Qualifications / Education / Training:</b> Minimum qualifications/training needed to perform in the role	Essential/Desirable	Via application
<b>Experience:</b> Minimum length of time a candidate will have had to have to perform in the role	Essential/Desirable	Via application and interview
<b>Knowledge:</b> Minimum level and type of knowledge needed to perform in the role	Essential/Desirable	Via interview
<b>Skills and Abilities:</b> e.g. -Well developed written and verbal communication skills. -Highly accurate with good attention to detail. -Good time management	Essential/Desirable	Via application and interview
<b>Personal Attributes:</b> e.g. -Excellent team member. -Flexibility.	Essential/Desirable	Via interview
<b>Other:</b> e.g. -Strong commitment to deliver excellence. -Demonstrates drive. -Proactive approach to work.	Essential/Desirable	Via interview

Last updated: (insert date)

Date of next review: (insert date)

## Person Specification Example – Media Assistant

Requirement	Essential or Desirable?	How Assessed?
<b>Qualifications / Education / Training:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Secondary education</li> <li>• Degree level</li> </ul>	Essential Desirable	Via application form
<b>Experience:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Experience of working in a similar role</li> <li>• Experience of writing communications, press releases</li> <li>• Experience of dealing external media</li> </ul>	Essential Desirable	Via application form and interview
<b>Knowledge:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knowledge of media techniques</li> <li>• Knowledge of the public sector</li> </ul>	Essential Desirable	Via interview
<b>Skills and Abilities:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Excellent communication skills, particularly able to write in an engaging manner to suit a variety of audiences</li> <li>• Ability to process and interpret complex information</li> <li>• Strong prioritisation skills and ability to manage own workload</li> <li>• Ability to work flexibly</li> <li>• Team player</li> <li>• Ability to negotiate</li> </ul>	Essential  Essential Essential Essential Essential Desirable	Via written exercise  Via interview Via interview Via interview Via interview Via interview
<b>Personal Attributes:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Self-motivated</li> <li>• Ability to make decisions and use own initiative</li> <li>• Creative, comes up with ideas</li> <li>• Prepared to learn new skills</li> </ul>	Essential Essential  Desirable Desirable	Via interview Via interview  Via interview Via interview
<b>Other:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ability to use Microsoft Word, Excel and Publisher</li> <li>• Willing to participate in presentations</li> </ul>	Desirable Desirable	Via interview Via interview

## Interview Panel Member Checklist

<b>GENERAL RESPONSIBILITIES</b>	
	Have you completed the training course on the recruitment and selection of staff?
	Do you need any other training or support or advice on recruitment and selection?
	Are you aware of your role and responsibilities as a member of the panel?
<b>RESPONSIBILITIES AT INTERVIEW STAGE</b>	
	Do you have a copy of the job description, person specification and all the applications?
	Are you familiar with the selection criteria that were used in the short-listing exercise?
	Are you aware of what other selection techniques will be used e.g. in tray exercises, presentations etc. and do you understand the weighting that they carry within the selection process.

### Guidance on questions at Interview

When reviewing candidate applications in preparation for the interviews, the interviewer may wish to consider the following checklist in respect of questions to ask.

#### Checking qualifications and training

- How long did the course last?
- Did it lead to a qualification?
- Did the person nominate himself or herself for the training, or were they 'sent'?
- How did the training relate to the job the candidate was employed to do at the time?
- What did the candidate learn?
- How did they apply what they learned?
- How long has the candidate spent in each job?

## **Length of employment**

- If the candidate has had many short-term jobs, why have they chosen to change jobs so frequently? And how does this reconcile with their current application?
- If the candidate has worked for the same employer for a lengthy period of time, was this in the same job or has there been a progression through different posts?
- Where the candidate has worked for the same employer for a long period of time, what has motivated them now to seek a change of employer? How do they think they might adapt to such a major change?
- Are there any gaps between jobs, and if so what were the reasons?

## **Career History**

- Does the candidate's career history appear to follow a natural progression?
- If it appears that there have any backward steps, what was the reason for the particular job move?
- Has there been any change of career direction, and if so, why?

## **Level of Experience**

- Is it clear what the actual job duties were?
- What level of responsibility was held (look for possible exaggerations)?
- How broad is the candidate's experience? There is a difference between breadth and length - i.e. five years experience may have been five years doing exactly the same thing every week, or may alternatively have been progressive, involving many different duties, responsibilities and new challenges.
- What were the reasons for leaving each job - i.e. what motivated the person to start looking for another job?

Effective selection interviewing involves assessing whether the candidate has the necessary skills, knowledge and experience to do the job and also whether, if selected, he or she would be likely to apply him or herself diligently to the job.

## Interview Good Practice

- At the start of every interview, the interviewer should take time to explain the interview process and to make the candidate feel comfortable and relaxed.
- Interview questions should be mainly open questions, i.e. those beginning with 'what', 'which', 'why', 'where', 'when', 'who' or 'how'?
- Closed questions, i.e. those which invite only a 'yes' or 'no' answer, should be kept to a minimum as they are, generally, not useful.
- Closed questions can, however, be used to establish specific facts.
- Questions relating to the type of work, including technical questions, should be planned in advance and asked of all applicants for the particular job - this provides a framework for consistency and fairness.
- Interviewers should make a note of anything on each individual applicant's CV or application form that is unclear, or which appears to be missing, and plan to question the applicant about the matter.
- It is a myth that interviewers should ask every applicant for the job exactly the same series of questions - this restricted approach would prevent effective assessment of candidates' individual backgrounds. Try and match some of the questions to specific evidence that the candidate has provided during the interview or in writing
- Interviewers should be flexible and prepared to respond to what each candidate says in response to the questions asked, and, where appropriate, probe for more information.
- Interviewers should recognize their own personal views, attitudes and prejudices and learn to put them to one side when interviewing, otherwise they may lose out on a highly competent candidate.
- Interviewers should guard against making judgments based on their first impressions of a candidate, i.e. judgments based on a candidate's appearance, dress, mannerisms or accent.
- One of the most useful interview techniques is to ask applicants to give factual examples of their real experiences, for example, to describe an occasion when they experienced conflict with someone at work and how they handled the situation.
- Interviewers should distinguish between the information disclosed and the manner in which it is presented. Unless 'presentation skills' are a requirement of the job, the applicant's level of skill in presenting information will be irrelevant to his or her suitability.

- Interviewers should not be afraid to ask challenging and difficult questions (as long as they are relevant to the job), for example, questions about weaknesses or work-based problems that the candidate has encountered.
- Leading questions should always be avoided as they imply the answer that the interviewer is expecting and so most candidates will tailor their answers accordingly.
- Interviewers should avoid making assumptions about candidates' abilities, but should instead ask relevant questions designed to establish facts.
- It is unacceptable to ask questions in a rude, intimidating or aggressive manner (although challenging questions are to be recommended).
- Personal questions and questions about family circumstances should not be asked as they can be indirectly discriminatory, in particular against female candidates.
- Interviewers should avoid questions about a candidate's hobbies, social activities, unless these are relevant to the job.
- Interviewers should listen carefully and with an open mind to what candidates have to say.
- Candidates should be given plenty of opportunity to sell themselves, and to ask questions at the end of the interview.

## Examples of questions to ask and avoid during recruitment interviews

Ask	Avoid
To what extent would you be available to work overtime at short notice?	Who would look after your children if your manager asked you to work overtime at short notice?
How frequently have you worked weekends during the past year?	How would weekend working affect your family life?
What would you like to be doing in five years' time?	Do you have any plans to start a family in the next five years?
How do you cope with pressure of work?	How does pressure of work affect your relationship with your family and children?
How would you deal with someone at work whose views are strongly opposed to your own views?	How would you deal with a difficult male colleague if his views were strongly opposed to your own views?
What do you think makes a good supervisor/manager?	What difficulties do you think you might have supervising men/women/?
What do you think is the best approach to handling minor disciplinary matters?	How would you handle a disciplinary matter if the employee concerned was much older than you?
What do you think are the key qualities needed to supervise a diverse team of people?	How would you feel about supervising staff who are mostly much older than you?

## Template - Guide to Scoring- Short-listing

Rating	Definition
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>5</b> <b>EXCEPTIONAL</b></p>	<p>Provides evidence that directly relates to all of the competencies being measured. The evidence clearly explains their role and what they did in relation to the criteria being measured. The examples have direct relevance to the job criteria.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>4</b> <b>VERY GOOD</b></p>	<p>Provides evidence that relates directly to most of the competency being measured. Evidence explains their role and what they did in relation to most of the criteria. The examples have relevant links to the job criteria.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>3</b> <b>GOOD</b></p>	<p>Provided some evidence that relates to some of the competency being measured. Evidence clearly explains their role and what they did in relation to some of criteria. The examples have some links to the job criteria.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>2</b> <b>LOW</b></p>	<p>Provided minimum of evidence and does not clearly relate to the criteria measured. Evidence does not explain their role and what they did. Examples have no direct relevance to the job criteria. Applicant states that they fulfil criteria but provided no supportive evidence or example's to substantiate this statement.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>1</b> <b>Nil</b></p>	<p>No evidence or experience provided to indicate competency or criteria. Criteria not referred to.</p>

**SHORTLISTING FORM**

Private and Confidential

SCORE 1- 5 for each candidate – use scoring guide

Insert criteria as appropriate for each job

<b>Candidate Name</b>	<b>Qualifications and Training</b>	<b>Knowledge</b>	<b>Skill</b>	<b>Skill</b>	<b>Skill</b>	<b>Experience</b>	<b>Attribute</b>	<b>Attribute</b>
<b>Etc.</b>								

Completed by:

Date:

## Template - Guide to Scoring- Interviews

Rating	Definition
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>5</b> <b>Exceptional</b></p>	<p>Provides evidence that is entirely relevant and all of which <b>directly</b> relates to the skill/knowledge/experience being measured. The evidence <b>clearly explains</b> their role and what they did in relation to the criteria being measured and indicates that they fully satisfy if not exceed the requirements. Many examples provided all of which have <b>direct relevance</b> to the job criteria.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>4</b> <b>Very good</b></p>	<p>Provides evidence that <b>directly</b> relates to the competency being measured. The evidence <b>clearly explains</b> their role and what they did in relation to the criteria being measured. The examples have <b>direct relevance</b> to the job criteria.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>3</b> <b>GOOD</b></p>	<p>Provides evidence that relates directly to some of the competency being measured. <b>In the main</b> the evidence explains their role and what they did in relation to the criteria. The examples have <b>relevant links</b> to the job criteria.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>2</b> <b>Part</b></p>	<p>Provided <b>some</b> evidence that relates to <b>some of</b> the criteria being measured. Evidence explains their role and what they did in relation to <b>some</b> of criteria. The examples have <b>some links</b> to the job criteria.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>1</b> <b>Low</b></p>	<p>Provided minimum of evidence and does not clearly relate to the competency /criteria measured. Evidence <b>does not</b> explain their role and what they did. Examples have <b>no direct</b> relevance to the job criteria. Applicant states that they fulfil criteria but provided no supportive evidence or example's to substantiate this statement.</p>

**Interview Evaluation Form**

SCORE 1- 5 for each candidate – use scoring guide

Insert criteria as appropriate for each job

<b>JOB TITLE:</b> Directorate	<b>NAME OF CANDIDATE:</b>
----------------------------------	---------------------------

CRITERIA	ESSENTIAL	DESIRABLE	SCORE 1-5

Completed by:

Date:

**Interview Panel Decision Sheet  
(SUMMARY OF REASONS FOR SELECTION/REJECTION OF  
CANDIDATES)**

Post: \_\_\_\_\_ HR Ref: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Date of Interview: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Your Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Chair/Lead Interviewer to be contacted for feedback: \_\_\_\_\_

<b>CANDIDATE APPOINTED:</b>
<b>Starting date:</b>
<b>Location</b>
<b>Line Manager:</b>
<b>Reserve Candidate(s):</b>

**Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Chair/Lead Interview) Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Have unsuccessful candidates been contacted to inform them of the outcome?</b>
<b>Yes/No</b>
<b>Do you require the HR department to write to unsuccessful candidates?</b>
<b>Yes/No</b>

SELECTION CRITERIA (List below, or attach job description/person specification)

**You must record selection criteria and comments for all candidates**

- 
- |    |        |
|----|--------|
| 1. | 5.     |
| 2. | 6.     |
| 3. | 7.     |
| 4. | 8. Etc |

**CANDIDATE:**

Criteria met:

Criteria not met:

Comments:

---

**CANDIDATE:**

Criteria met:

Criteria not met:

Comments:

Etc.

---

## Template - Reference Request Letter

(Insert date)  
(Insert name of referee)  
(Job Title)  
(Insert address)

Dear (insert name)

(Insert name of prospective employee) has applied for the position of (insert job title) in The Council of Representatives (COR) and has given me permission to contact you for a reference. A job description and person specification for this position are enclosed.

I would be grateful if you would provide the following details in relation to (insert name of prospective employee) and return to me by (insert date). You can email your response using a secure electronic address at (insert e-mail address).

- Please outline the dates that they were employed by you.
- Please confirm the position that they held and summarise their main responsibilities.
- Please comment on his/her skills, attributes and achievements in the following areas:
- (Note: design specific questions focused on the person specification criteria)
- What were the reasons for him/her leaving your employment?
- Would you employ him/her again? If not, why not?
- Please state below whether you have any other information, which is relevant to this reference.

Thank you in advance for your assistance in this matter.

Yours sincerely  
(Insert name)  
(Job Title)

Enclosed:  
Job description  
Person specification

## Template - The Offer Letter

**Set out below is a template for an offer letter to a successful candidate.**

(Insert reference)

(Insert date)

(Insert address of the COR)

Dear (insert name of employee)

I am writing following your interview for the position of (insert job title) on (insert date) and am delighted to confirm that we would like to offer you the position with The Council of Representatives (COR).

I am enclosing a draft contract of employment, which, if you decide to accept the offer, will contain the terms of your employment with us.

All offers of employment with the COR are conditional upon and subject to:

- a report from a medical practitioner; and
- two personal references

which, in The COR's opinion, are satisfactory and confirm that you are fit for your proposed duties.

If you decide you would like to accept the offer, please sign and return the enclosed copy of the contract to me by (insert date). I look forward to working with you.

Yours sincerely

for and on behalf of the COR