

Career Service Positions

RECRUITMENT

And

**SELECTION
GUIDELINES**

Dakota State University

July 1, 2000

RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION GUIDELINES

Table of Contents

Section 1	Announcement/Certification Request	Page 3
	Advertising Methods	
	<u>Form:</u> Announcement/Certification Request	
Section 2	Application Review	Page 9
	<u>Form:</u> State of South Dakota Employment Application	
Section 3	Screening Methods	Page 13
	Types of Screening Methods	
	<u>Samples:</u> Willingness Questionnaire	
	Supplemental Application	
	Supplemental Task Questionnaire	
	Self-Assessment Questionnaire	
Section 4	Final Interview	Page 22
	Guidelines for Conducting the Final Interviews	
	<u>Forms:</u> Authorization of Release of Information for Reference Checks	
	Authorization for Release of Information for Pre-employment Screening	
Section 5	Candidate Selection	Page 26
Section 6	Reference Checks	Page 27
	<u>Sample:</u> Employer Reference Check Form	
Section 7	Offer of Employment	Page 30
	Approval Process	
Section 8	Documentation	Page 31
	Complete Selection Documentation Form (SDF)	
	Complete Certification of Eligibles	
	Return documentation of selection process to the Human Resources Director	
	Notify applicants	
	<u>Form:</u> Selection Documentation Form	
Section 9	New Employee Orientation	Page 34
	Appendix	Page 35

SELECTION PROCESS CHECKLIST

Step 1: Complete Announcement/Certification Request form

After you have received the appropriate agency approval, complete the Announcement/Certification Request and send to the Human Resources Director.

Step 2: Review applications

Step 3: Conduct additional screenings, if appropriate

Step 4: Conduct final interviews

Applicants marked with an asterisk (*) on the Certification of Eligibles must be given a final interview.

Step 5: Select top candidate

Step 6: Conduct reference checks

Step 7: Offer employment

- Obtain verbal Executive Council-level approval to offer employment to the top candidate.
- Contact Human Resource Director to discuss your selection and proposed salary prior to making an offer of employment.
- Contact the top candidate to make an offer of employment once you receive necessary approval.
- Complete background check and/or drug/alcohol test (if required for this position) before candidate begins employment.

Step 8: Complete documentation

Return all required documentation to Human Resources within **two working days** of the acceptance of the offer of employment.

Step 9: Schedule new employee orientation

Contact your payroll personnel specialist to schedule orientation for your new employee.

Section 1

ANNOUNCEMENT/CERTIFICATION REQUEST

Job announcements have three objectives:

1. To give necessary information about the position;
2. To attract the interest of suitable applicants; and
3. To motivate the suitable applicants to respond.

Information completed on the **Announcement/Certification Request** form, found on pages 7 and 8, is critical to the selection process.

The following items must be completed on the Announcement/Certification Request form:

Position Number:

Indicates the position number(s) of the vacancy(ies) you are announcing.

Class Title:

Indicates the official payroll title for the position. You may also include a working title if it would be more informative for posting.

Class Code:

Indicates the class code (classification number) for the position you are announcing. The class code can be found on the class specification, or you may contact the Human Resource Director.

Pay Grade:

Indicates the pay grade of the classification.

Salary if other than minimum:

Indicates the starting salary of the position, if higher than the minimum of the range. Listing the salary of the position is not a requirement. Contact the Human Resources Director regarding announcing positions higher than minimum or without a salary.

Department/ Office - Location:

Indicates the department/ office and the location of the position.

Hourly/Salaried and Full-time/Part-time:

Indicates if the position is full-time or part-time and hourly or salaried. Human Resources determines hourly and salaried status.

Type of Announcement:

Indicates who is eligible to apply for the position.

- **Open and Competitive** announcements are open to the general public.
- **Statewide Promotional** announcements are available to permanent, exempt, or probationary employees of the State of South Dakota.
- **Department Promotional** announcements are available to permanent, exempt, or probationary employees within a department.
- **Unit-Specific Promotional** announcements are available to permanent, exempt, or probationary employees within a specific classification and/or unit.

Type of Recruitment:

Determines the posting period for the announcement.

- **Recruitment with Firm Closing Date** - This type of announcement has a fixed closing date. All positions must be announced for a minimum of one week.
- **Open Until Filled Recruitment** - Positions that are difficult to fill may be announced for as long as it takes to fill the position.
- **Continuous Recruitment** - Classifications that are difficult to fill may be announced continuously. Individual positions may be filled from this continuous announcement.

Please note that Open Until Filled is for individual positions, while Continuous Recruitment is for specific classifications.

***Keyboarding** – If you are announcing a clerical position, indicate if a keyboarding skill test is required. Applicants must arrange for testing with their local One-Stop Career Center.

***Commercial Driver's License** - Indicate if the position requires a Commercial Driver's License.

***Background Investigation** - Indicate if the position requires a background investigation.

Position Purpose:

The announcement will use the position purpose statement that is listed on the class specification unless you indicate any additions, deletions, or revisions.

Entry Level Knowledge, Skills and Abilities (KSAs):

The knowledge, skills and abilities found on the class specification are what will be included in the announcement unless you indicate any additions, deletions, or revisions.

The KSAs that will be listed on the announcement are key to what you will be using to determine which applicant will best meet your needs. In developing your KSAs, only be concerned with entry-level knowledge, skills and abilities.

- **Knowledge** relates to organized information, facts, or principles that an individual must possess for successful job performance. Knowledge may be acquired through formal education, training, and personal experience. Examples of knowledge statements are:
 - Knowledge of Business English.
 - Knowledge of accounting principles and practices.
 - Knowledge of the principle of natural science related to environmental control.

- **Skills and Abilities** relate to demonstrated mental or physical abilities, characteristics, behaviors, and traits that are required for successful job performance and personal effectiveness. Skills and abilities may be natural or acquired from past work and life experiences. Examples of skills and abilities statements are:
- Skill to proofread materials to correct errors in spelling, grammar, and punctuation.
 - Skill to operate heavy equipment.
 - Ability to work independently with minimal supervision.
 - Ability to meet schedules and timelines.
 - Ability to establish and maintain effective and cooperative working relationships with others.

Selective Certification:

Indicates if the announcement is selective. Selective announcements are for positions that require a particular education, certification, license, or experience. The reason for the selective certification must be stated. Selective certifications are typically mandated by federal or state law, rules, or contractual agreements. Announcing a position as selective will result in the elimination of all applicants who do not meet the requirement as stated.

Comments:

Provides any additional information that may be beneficial to the applicant, including amount of travel, hours of work if other than 8:00 - 5:00, physical requirements, etc.

Assistance in the Screening Process:

If you check this box, the Human Resources Director will contact you to discuss the type of assistance you desire in the screening process. This could include prescreening of applications or developing additional screening methods. If you have any questions or need assistance at any time during the recruitment and selection process, you are encouraged to contact the Human Resources Director.

Initial Screening Methods:

(Including, but not limited to, skills supplement, supplemental questionnaire, and work samples.) Indicates any additional information applicants must submit with their applications or documents to be sent to applicants upon receipt of applications. If applicants will be required to perform a test or participate in an assessment center as part of the selection process, indicate this in the Comments section of the Announcement Request.

ADVERTISING METHODS

All Career Service jobs are announced through the South Dakota One-Stop Career Centers, Board of Regents institutions, and DSU web page (www.departments.dsu.edu/personnel/employment/default.htm).

In addition to the above, your vacancy can be advertised in several ways, depending upon the level of the position and the difficulty in attracting qualified applicants.

- ◆ **Newspaper or Journal Advertisements**

You may request to advertise positions in newspapers or journals. Costs are generally borne by the department. Follow the normal process for requesting a purchase or quick order. You are required to contact the Human Resources Director for assistance in drafting these ads. Journals often take more lead-time due to print deadlines so factor that additional time into your recruitment plan.

- ◆ **Internet Job Sites**

You may request to place job announcements on an Internet job site. There are a number of different sites that will post openings. Sites are often tailored to a particular occupation or applicant group. The Human Resources Director has information regarding several sites and the audience for each. Contact Human Resources for assistance in posting job announcements on the Internet.

- ◆ **Direct Mailing**

Using direct mailings, you can target specific post-secondary institutions, professional groups, etc., which may have placement or job posting services.

DAKOTA STATE UNIVERSITY ANNOUNCEMENT/CERTIFICATION REQUEST

Position Number(s) _____ Class Title _____ Class Code _____ Pay Grade _____ Salary if other than minimum \$ _____	HR USE ONLY Job# _____ Closing Date _____ Salary _____
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Department _____ Location _____ Number of positions _____ SELECT ONE <input type="checkbox"/> Hourly <input type="checkbox"/> Salaried	Type of Announcement: SELECT ONE <input type="checkbox"/> Open and Competitive (open to the public) <input type="checkbox"/> Statewide Promotional (state employees only) <input type="checkbox"/> Department Promotional <input type="checkbox"/> Unit-specific Promotional _____ Type of Recruitment: SELECT ONE <input type="checkbox"/> Recruitment with Firm Closing Date. Indicate DURATION of announcement (in weeks) _____ (Must be open a minimum of one week) <input type="checkbox"/> Open Until Filled <input type="checkbox"/> Continuous Recruitment
SELECT ONE <input type="checkbox"/> Full Time <input type="checkbox"/> Part Time	

<input type="checkbox"/> yes Is a Keyboarding Test required (for clerical positions only)?
<input type="checkbox"/> yes Does this position require a background investigation?

I would like assistance with the screening process from Human Resources.

Position Purpose: Indicate any additions, deletions, or revisions to the Position Purpose from the class specification. Also list duties of the position if you want to include them on the announcement.

Entry-level Knowledge, Skills and Abilities: Indicate any additions, deletions, or revisions to the Knowledge, Skills and Abilities listed in the class specification.

Selective Certification: If this position has specific education or license requirements because of state or federal regulations, please indicate.

Comments: Please describe any additional information that may be beneficial to the applicant, including, but not limited to amount of travel, hours of work, physical requirements, etc.

Initial Screening Methods: If you wish to use a questionnaire or other screening device *at the time of announcement*, please indicate your preference and attach appropriate documents.

- Questionnaire mailed to each applicant. Attach questionnaire.
- Questions to be included in the announcement when posted. Attach list of questions.
- Other. Please indicate the process and attach appropriate information or document.

Supervisor of the Position

Name _____

Phone _____ FAX _____

Mailing Address _____

Include a Payroll Authorization Request (PAR), and forward to the appropriate offices for approval.

Section 2

REVIEWING THE APPLICATIONS

Once the position has closed, you will receive the following:

- **Certification of Eligibles** – listing of all eligible applicants
- **Applications and/or Resumes**
- **Selection Documentation Form (SDF)**

There are one set of Selection Process Guidelines in each department. You may call Human Resources for an additional copy or print it from the web at www.departments.dsu.edu/personnel/employment/default.htm.

The first step in the selection process is to review the applications. The purpose of the review is to select the most qualified individuals to move to the next step of the selection process. You should be using the knowledge, skills and abilities (KSAs) identified in the job announcement as your criteria when reviewing the applications.

The following guidelines are used to evaluate an applicant's KSAs:

- Analysis of relevant work experience should include all work performed on a paid or unpaid basis, including work performed in conjunction with educational programs, internships, cooperative education, field placements, trainees, and volunteer experience.
- Evaluation of education is based on the knowledge, skills and abilities the education or training provides. For example, a degree in English is an indicator of writing ability; completion of a vocational school program in auto mechanics is an indicator of knowledge of brake repair.

Because it is difficult to make distinctions between applicants on the basis of an application or resume alone, it may be best at this stage of the selection process to group applicants into two categories: meets entry-level KSAs and exceeds entry-level KSAs.

NOTE: Human Resources staff is available to assist with the initial review of applications.

Applicants with the following preferences will be indicated with an asterisk on the Certification of Eligibles. These applicants must be included in each step of the screening process and must receive a final interview.

- Reemployment Preference
- Veteran's Preference
- Disability Preference

State of South Dakota
Dakota State University
EMPLOYMENT APPLICATION

Rev. 5/2000

Instructions: Complete section one and attach resume and/or complete remainder of application. Application must be postmarked within 24 hours after the closing date. You must submit a separate application for each job opening. To receive disability preference, you must be certified by a state Rehabilitation Counselor and file the form with the Bureau of Personnel. Refer to job announcements for complete instructions and job number.

Questions? Call the Human Resources office: (605) 256-5127 or the Job Line: (605) 773-3326. **Mail application to: Dakota State University, 820 N Washington Avenue, Madison SD 57042 Or fax application to: (605) 256-5316.**

SECTION 1 – REQUIRED INFORMATION

Job Title _____ Job Number _____

Name _____ Social Security Number _____-____-_____

Mailing Address _____

Telephone _____ Are you under age 18? Yes No
Home Office

Have you ever been convicted of or pled guilty or nolo contendere to any felony? Yes No

If yes, please explain: _____

A conviction will not automatically disqualify an applicant. The employer will consider the type and seriousness of the crime, the frequency of violations, the applicant's age at the time of conviction, and the date of conviction or time elapsed since the conviction or completion of any jail sentence in addition to other job-related criteria.

Veterans: Check this box if you wish to claim veteran's preference Attach DD-214 and current VA disability certification (if applicable). List place of residence if different from mailing address: _____

SECTION 2 – EDUCATION

If all requested information is included on an attached resume, you do not need to complete this section.

Do you possess a high school diploma or GED? Yes No

Name and Address of Post-Secondary School _____

Dates Attended _____ to _____ Major _____ Minor _____

Did you graduate? Yes No Type of degree _____

Name and Address of Post-Secondary School _____

Dates Attended _____ to _____ Major _____ Minor _____

Did you graduate? Yes No Type of degree _____

List all relevant licenses, certificates or registrations you possess (include expiration date, license number, and issuing state). Also, identify any other educational experiences that may be relevant to the position for which you are applying.

May we contact your current employer regarding your qualifications prior to making an offer of employment to you? Yes No

PROFESSIONAL REFERENCES – PLEASE INCLUDE NAME, ADDRESS AND TELEPHONE NUMBER:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

By submitting this application, you are certifying that the information is true, correct, and complete to the best of your knowledge and belief. A false or misleading statement or intentional omission of relevant information is cause for disciplinary action, including termination of employment.

SECTION 3 – WORK HISTORY

- If all requested information is included on an attached resume, you do not need to complete this section.
- Begin with your current or most recent position and work backwards; attach additional pages if necessary.
- Include all paid experience; you may include non-paid experience if you feel it may be pertinent to this position.

Job Title _____	Dates: From _____	To _____
Employer _____	City/State _____	
Supervisor's Name/Title _____	Phone _____	
Reason for leaving _____	Final Salary _____	
Duties performed and knowledge or skills gained from this experience _____		

Job Title _____	Dates: From _____	To _____
Employer _____	City/State _____	
Supervisor's Name/Title _____	Phone _____	
Reason for leaving _____	Final Salary _____	
Duties performed and knowledge or skills gained from this experience _____		

Job Title _____	Dates: From _____	To _____
Employer _____	City/State _____	
Supervisor's Name/Title _____	Phone _____	
Reason for leaving _____	Final Salary _____	
Duties performed and knowledge or skills gained from this experience _____		

SECTION 4 – OTHER KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND ABILITIES

Summarize any other knowledge, skills, or qualifications that may be relevant to the position.

EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY AND AFFIRMATIVE ACTION STATISTICS

The State of South Dakota is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

The information below is required by state and federal regulations for statistical and affirmative action purposes and in no way influences employment prospects. **This page is separated from your application immediately.** The information is maintained confidentially and is not available to any employing agency. Your responses are voluntary.

Racial / Ethnic Group:

<input type="checkbox"/> (1) White (not of Hispanic origin): All persons having origins in any of the original peoples of Europe, North Africa, or the Middle East.	<input type="checkbox"/> (2) Black (not of Hispanic origin): All persons having origins in any of the Black racial groups of Africa.	<input type="checkbox"/> (3) Hispanic: All persons of Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Central or South American, or other Spanish culture or origin, regardless of race.
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<input type="checkbox"/> (4) Asian or Pacific Islander: All persons having origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, the Indian Subcontinent, or the Pacific Islands. This area includes, for example: China, India, Japan, Korea, the Philippine Islands, and Samoa.	<input type="checkbox"/> (5) American Indian or Alaskan Native : All persons having origins in any of the peoples of North America, and who maintain cultural identification through tribal affiliation or community recognition.
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Sex: Male Female

Age Group: 1) Under 18 2) 18 – 22 3) 23 – 29 4) 30 – 39 5) 40 – 49 6) 50 – 59 7) 60 or older

Disability: Do you have a physical or mental impairment that limits one or more of your major life activities (e.g. walking, hearing, speaking, seeing, breathing, learning)? Yes No

Please help us provide the best service possible to our job applicants by answering the following questions. The information will not be shared with other agencies, but will be used to evaluate and improve our service. Thank you for your assistance.

How did you learn about this position?

- 1 State Bureau of Personnel office
- 2 South Dakota One-Stop Career Center
Location _____
- 3 Other state department
- 4 Current state employee
- 5 School or University
Location _____
- 6 Tribal or BIA employment assistance office
- 7 Friend
- 8 Internet
 - State of South Dakota website
 - Commercial website
- 9 Television or radio
- 10 Newspaper
- 11 Other _____

Were you treated courteously when requesting job information about state government? Yes No

Was the state job information readily available upon request? Yes No

Was the state job information easily understood? Yes No

If you answered “no” to any of the above, please explain.

Thank you.

Section 3

SCREENING METHODS

In addition to the initial review of applications, you may choose to go through as many additional screenings, or "cuts," as necessary in the process of selecting the most qualified applicant. A screening method is a technique to help you evaluate the applicant's knowledge, skills and abilities. All valid screening methods must adhere to the following:

1. Criteria used in the screening process must be job-related and free of discriminatory bias.
2. Complete documentation must be kept on the entire screening process.
3. Screening methods must be developed to assess the applicants against KSAs that are entry-level and essential.
4. Screening methods must be administered in a standardized and consistent manner.
5. Questions or statements must be accurate, complete, free from bias, and easy to understand.

Types of Screening Methods:

There are a number of screening methods and techniques you can use. The following is a list of the more common types available. Contact the Human Resources Director if you have questions.

Short Screening Interview

This is a short interview designed to screen applicants for a final interview. The purpose of short screening interviews is to clarify information on the resume and better assess an applicant's qualifications to "short list" a large stack of resumes.

A short screening interview seeks out specifics. Questions about the applicant's experience, accomplishments, responsibilities, education, and knowledge of the field are appropriate. The short screening interview **may be conducted by phone** and typically lasts from ten to twenty minutes.

Work Sample

This selection technique is designed to measure the applicant's skills that are necessary upon entry into the job. Applicants are required to demonstrate a particular skill, for example, composing a business letter. The requested work sample should reproduce the important tasks or work behaviors needed to perform the job

Tests

This selection technique consists of a written and/or proficiency assessment of the applicant's knowledge, skills and abilities.

Evaluate all tests on the following factors:

1. **Is it really job-related?** To be valid, a test must evaluate skills that the applicant will need and use on the job, not general knowledge or skills that are outside the scope of the position.
2. **Does it really work?** Is there any correlation between the employee's job performance and his or her test results? In other words, do the employees who scored higher perform better?
3. **Does it treat everyone fairly?** If women or minorities pass the test less frequently than non-minority applicants do, the test may be flawed, and may leave you open to damaging discrimination claims.
4. **Is it necessary?** Determine whether the test is really helping you make the right hiring decisions. If not, you may want to stop testing altogether, or use another test that is clearly job-related and leads to better results.

You should tread carefully in the area of employment testing. Good testing can yield valuable information. But when done improperly, it can yield serious legal problems. **Please contact the Human Resources Director for assistance before performing pre-employment testing.**

Assessment Center

An assessment center is used to determine a candidate's qualifications for a particular position. Individual and group exercises are administered under standardized conditions which simulate the skills and abilities most essential for successful performance. The candidate's behavior is observed by a team of qualified individuals who are familiar with the requirements of the job and the format of the assessment center.

Assessment center exercises include but are not limited to:

- **In-basket Exercise**: This consists of a variety of memos, letters, and documents of varying importance that the candidates respond to and prioritize.
- **Leaderless Group Discussion**: Candidates are given a specific problem in which they are instructed to try and reach a group consensus within a specified amount of time. This exercise measures qualities such as decision making, cooperation, and interpersonal skills.
- **Oral Presentation Exercise**: Candidates give an oral presentation in which they must defend their positions and recommendations on a specific issue.
- **Role-Play Exercise**: Candidates deal with an employee, irate citizen, or member of the community. This exercise measures such skills as communication, problem solving, and interpersonal skills.
- **Written Report/Analysis Exercise**: Candidates are presented with a job-related topic and are instructed to write a report, position statement, or outline of a new policy.

Essential elements:

- A variety of assessment techniques, including simulation exercises
- Multiple assessors
- Judgments are based on pooling information from assessors
- The characteristics, qualities, knowledge, skills, or abilities evaluated have been determined by a job analysis

These are not assessment centers:

- Panel interviews
- Paper and pencil tests
- Individual assessments

Due to the great expense involved in setting up an assessment center, an agency should consider the use of other techniques first. If you are considering use of an assessment center, please contact the Human Resources Director.

Willingness Questionnaire (Sample on page 16)

The willingness questionnaire is another method for applicants to self assess their suitability for the job. The willingness questionnaire asks questions that measure an applicant's willingness to perform certain essential job tasks. The willingness questionnaire is evaluated on a pass/fail basis. All questions pertain to an applicant's willingness to perform essential job tasks. It is easy to develop, cost effective, and especially useful in screening for positions that require unappealing tasks.

Supplemental Application and Task Questionnaire (Samples on pages 17-19)

A supplemental questionnaire or application is a method of obtaining additional, more detailed information from the applicant about the applicant's work history or education and training as it relates to the duties of the position and the necessary KSAs. This technique is most useful for jobs where the work behaviors involved are easily observed and remain basically the same over a period of time.

On a **Supplemental Application**, task statements and/or corresponding entry-level KSAs are described and applicants are requested to identify the experience and training which indicates that they can perform the task or that they have the required knowledge, skill, or ability.

On a **Supplemental Task Questionnaire**, applicants are asked to answer specific questions about their qualifications for a position. You may wish to design a Supplemental Task Questionnaire so that the applicant must indicate the proficiency level for the task listed based on a performance scale, for example:

1. I cannot perform this task
2. I can perform this task under close supervision
3. I can perform this task in a proficient manner

There are several types of supplemental questionnaires and applications that can be used. Please contact the Human Resources Director for assistance in preparing one.

Self-Assessment Questionnaire (Sample on pages 20-21)

Applicants are asked to assess their own qualifications with regard to their job knowledge and work experience in a variety of areas. There are a variety of self-assessment questionnaires that can be used. Please contact the Human Resources Director for assistance in preparing this type of document.

(Sample)

**WILLINGNESS QUESTIONNAIRE
SOCIAL WORKER**

NAME (Please Print) _____

SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER _____

JOB NUMBER _____

The following working conditions are required for this position. Please indicate your willingness to perform each task by checking yes or no.

Are you willing to share duty on holidays and weekends? Yes ___ No ___

Are you willing to work with clients that may be hostile or violent? Yes ___ No ___

Are you willing to work in clients' homes that may be in poor condition and unsanitary? Yes ___ No ___

Are you willing to work with clients from diverse economic, educational, and cultural backgrounds? Yes ___ No ___

Are you able to fulfill all necessary travel associated with this position? Yes ___ No ___

Are you willing to work with clients who have been exposed to contagious diseases, such as TB, Hepatitis, HIV, etc? Yes ___ No ___

Signature _____ Date _____

(Sample)

**SUPPLEMENTAL APPLICATION
SOCIAL WORKER**

Name (Please Print): _____

Social Security Number: _____

Instructions:

This supplemental application is offered to provide you with the opportunity to fully and clearly explain your background qualifications for the position of Social Worker. The information you provide will be used to evaluate your overall qualifications for this position. Based on the result of this evaluation process, the most qualified candidates will be invited to participate in an oral interview.

This supplemental application is considered a part of your employment application. Please read carefully and complete all sections. Failure to complete this supplemental application will be considered an incomplete application and will result in elimination from the selection process.

Work or Training Experience: Please describe any work or life-related experience which would indicate that you possess the knowledge, skill or ability listed.

1) Knowledge of social worker principles and social work practices.

2) Ability to complete assessments and develop plans for individual cases.

3) Skill in reacting promptly and appropriately to report of suspected child abuse or neglect.

(Sample)

**SUPPLEMENTAL TASK QUESTIONNAIRE
SOCIAL WORKER**

NAME: (Please print) _____

This questionnaire lists tasks that are likely to be encountered in the job of Social Worker in the Department of Social Services. In the space provided, indicate the extent of your previous work experience in performing that task. Use the following codes:

1. I have no experience performing this task.
 2. I have performed this task under close supervision.
 3. I have performed this task independently.
1. Investigate alleged sexual, physical, or emotional child abuse or neglect and determine required action to ensure the safety of the children named in the allegation.

Specific Tasks:

_____ 1. Conduct assigned investigations by interviewing children, family members, alleged perpetrators, and collateral contacts to determine if the alleged abuse or neglect has occurred.

_____ 2. Accept community referrals of child abuse and neglect through regular office intake or emergency 24-hour on-call referrals and respond to emergency law enforcement requests.

_____ 3. Evaluate the risk factors for further abuse or neglect and determine whether the child can safely remain in the current living arrangement or if alternative arrangements must be made, and make recommendations to law enforcement on the removal of children.

_____ 4. Prepare court reports, provide testimony, and attend hearings related to dependency and neglect charges which are filed pursuant to the investigation.

2. Develop and implement treatment plans with parents of children where abuse and/or neglect are substantiated or indicated but where risk factors and family cooperation are such that removal of the child from the home is not necessary.

Specific Tasks:

_____ 1. Identify specific family needs and provide direct services to reduce the risk of future abuse or neglect of the child(ren) including but not limited to training on child development and care, alternatives to physical discipline, nutrition, parenting skills.

_____ 2. Identify other community resources (e.g., mental health, drug and alcohol treatment, education, employment services) to assist with identified family needs and refer families for services.

_____ 3. Develop specific time limited case plans with families to outline specific steps that will be taken by the families and the social worker to meet identified family needs.

_____ 4. Monitor family compliance with the case plan and the ongoing safety of the child(ren) through regular family visits.

(Sample)

**SUPPLEMENTAL QUESTIONNAIRE
SECRETARY**

The supplemental questionnaire provides specific information and details not requested on the standard application. Therefore, do not substitute a resume for completion of any part of this form. You may provide your responses on a separate piece of paper; however, you must also sign and submit this form.

All applicants are required to comply with the instructions on this form to be considered for the Secretary position.

NAME (Please Print) _____

SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER _____

1. Please describe your computer experience including specific information regarding hardware and software used, level of familiarity, and examples of types of documents you created.
2. Describe your experience directing the work of others.
3. This position requires the ability to make mathematical calculations. Please describe your experience in this regard.
4. This position requires the ability to independently compose correspondence. Excellent grammar, spelling, punctuation, and proofreading skills are essential. Describe past experience and training that would enable you to effectively perform this aspect of the job.
5. In this position you need to work on several projects at the same time, respond to problems or projects arising suddenly, and attend to numerous interruptions. Please describe any similar experience you have and what skills you used to handle these situations effectively. Please comment on how you determine priorities.

SIGNATURE: _____ DATE: _____

(Sample)

**SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONNAIRE
SOCIAL WORKER**

NAME (Please Print) _____

SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER _____

KNOWLEDGE:

Job Knowledge: On the following statements, enter the number (1-4) that corresponds to the job knowledge field and skill level you possess. When selecting your skill level include your job knowledge and work experience.

- 1) Entry level: You understand basic theories and principles regarding this skill. You gained your experience through education and/or on-the-job training in a field listed in the skill description. You would need some help performing the skill.
- 2) Advanced: You have related and repeated experience regarding this skill. You have received some instructions from a specialist with respect to details of assignments, but work has been performed independently or you have graduate education that is specified in the skill description.
- 3) Specialist: You are recognized as "the person to ask" in your immediate organization regarding this skill. You are probably also known outside your organization for your subject matter knowledge. You have extensive experience and could teach or coach the subject.
- 4) Expert: You can answer any question about the skill and most any question related to the field where the skill is used. The "specialist" would come to you for advice.

Work Experience: In the following statements, enter the number (1-5) that corresponds to the work experience field and skill level you possess. When selecting your skill level include **only** your work experience.

- 1) Level 1: Your work experience has been of a routine nature. A supervisor closely monitored your work.
- 2) Level 2: Your work experience has been of a limited independent nature. Decision-making was controlled by established guidelines. Your work was reviewed regularly by a supervisor.
- 3) Level 3: Your work experience has been of an independent nature as you were responsible for establishing your own work methods. Your duties required analysis of technical data and independent decision making. Your work was reviewed occasionally by a supervisor for project conformance.
- 4) Level 4: Your work experience has been of an independent, complex nature. Your duties involved careful analysis and interpretation of data for the purpose of planning, developing and problem solving. Your work progress was communicated to the supervisor through occasional status meetings.
- 5) Level 5: Your work experience has been of a highly diverse and complex nature. Your duties involved exercising the administrative, managerial or technical skill for the purpose of research, planning, development and coordination of large-scale projects. You were free to plan and organize all phases of the work necessary for its completion.

<u>Job Knowledge</u>	<u>Work Experience</u>	_____
_____	_____	Assisting individuals or groups with decisions, problems and concerns utilizing counseling techniques. Education in counseling, guidance counseling, clinical psychology, counseling psychology or social work.
_____	_____	Assisting individuals and families with social and economic problems as a licensed social worker.
_____	_____	Planning, developing, implementing, coordinating or providing social/human services to the public or community. Education in health, education, social and human services.
_____	_____	Providing child care or child welfare services. Education in childhood development, elementary education or human services.
_____	_____	Technical work or counseling in alcohol or drug abuse treatment, prevention, or education programs. Education in social sciences.

ABILITIES:

Leadership - Select the highest level of supervisory/leadership responsibility you have held:

- Lead worker: Responsibilities may include assigning and reviewing the work of people performing similar or related work.
- Supervisor: Responsibilities may include training, evaluating, scheduling and recommending hiring/discipline for a group of employees.
- Administrator: Responsibilities may include planning, organizing and directing the work of a department, program or agency.
- Manager: Responsibilities may include budget development and control; policy formulation; long-range strategic planning and accomplishment of organizational goals through subordinate supervisors.

Decision-Making - Select the highest level that best describes your decision-making experience:

- Provide information or input to the decision-makers.
- Give recommendations to the decision-makers.
- Make the decision but need to obtain supervisor's approval.
- Make the decision, typically without changes from the supervisor.
- Final approval authority for the decision.

Communication - Select the highest level you possess:

- Able to write basic business correspondence in the proper format.
- Able to write and edit business correspondence using prescribed format, rules of punctuation, grammar and style.
- Able to convey information and analysis through composition of reports, articles and manuals.
- Able to compose complex technical reports, articles or manuscripts.
- Able to compose and edit complex technical reports, articles or manuscripts.

Section 4

THE FINAL INTERVIEW

By the time the job applicants have reached the final selection interview, they have already passed a careful evaluation of their knowledge, skills and abilities and are considered to possess at least minimum requirements for the particular job. The purpose of a final interview is to gather additional information on the applicant's job-related knowledge, skills and abilities that will be helpful in selecting the individual most qualified for the position. The interview plays a crucial role in the selection of the right employee.

Please Note: If you have eliminated all but one applicant during the screening process, you are still required to interview the top candidate.

Applicants who qualify for reemployment preference, veteran's preference, or disability preference must receive a final interview. These applicants are indicated with an asterisk on the Certification of Eligibles.

There are several ways to conduct an interview:

- **Individual Interviews:** One-on-one interviews.
- **Panel Interviews:** Conducted by a small group of managers and/or state representatives (generally two or three people). Panel interviews allow for various perspectives on the KSAs required for the position and each candidate's qualifications provide a more objective measurement of the candidate's ability to do the job. Assemble a diverse panel, include supervisors and staff who are knowledgeable about the job and who have some relationship to the job. Make sure the panel members' roles and responsibilities are clear.
- **Sequential Interviews:** A series of panel or individual interviews; the purpose is to give various individuals or groups a chance to interview and assess a candidate.

Developing the Interview Questions

The knowledge, skills and abilities listed in the job announcement are the foundation for developing your interview questions. Questions should be formulated to reveal and provide specific information concerning the knowledge, skills and abilities required for a new employee to be successful on the job. As an interviewer, you must evaluate the same general criteria for each applicant and ask each applicant the same set of core questions. An interview that follows a general standard outline will produce more reliable and valid information for selection, will allow for valid comparisons among applicants, and is less likely to run afoul of laws and regulations governing the selection process.

For your reference, the following sections are located in the appendix to this manual:

- 1) Questions You Can and Cannot Ask (page 36) 2) Sample Interview Questions (page 40)

Please contact the Human Resources Director for assistance in preparing for and conducting the final interviews, if needed.

Guidelines for Conducting Final Interviews

- 1. Prepare for the interview.** Review the application shortly before the interview to refresh your memory. Note areas where you want additional information from the applicant.
- 2. Set the interview climate.** Choose a location free from interruptions and hold all calls. Arrange a casual seating arrangement. Whenever possible, let each candidate see the actual work location. Ensure that appropriate accommodations are made for people who have requested them.
- 3. Establish rapport.** Put the candidate at ease; refer to something you noted on the application to show you have carefully studied it.
- 4. Set the agenda.** Describe the interview structure; this will help you (the panel) and the candidate achieve a concise, focused interview.
- 5. Take notes.** This will help you ask follow-up questions and recall specifics about each candidate. Tell the candidate that you (and the panel) will be taking notes. Note key words/phrases - your notes need not be verbatim. Notes should always be appropriate and reflect **job-related** observations.
- 6. Listen Carefully.** The applicant should carry 80 to 85 percent of the total conversation. Your input should be limited to asking your prepared questions, probing deeper, and asking follow-up questions as needed.
- 7. Maintain Control.** If the candidate gets off track, ask a specific question that will bring the interview back to the subject.
- 8. Allow silence and be patient.** The candidate may need some time to put his or her thoughts together to provide specific answers to your questions.
- 9. Avoid using the word "you" during the interview when describing the job.** This may be viewed by the applicant as an indication he or she has been selected for the position. For example, do not use, "you will be answering the phone..." Instead change the phrasing so the job is not personalized, e.g., "the job duties for this position are..."
- 10. Ask the applicant to complete the appropriate "Authorization of Release" form.** Advise the candidate that you will be checking references on your final candidates and have them sign an "Authorization of Release of Information For Reference Checks" (found on page 24) at the time of the interview. If an applicant indicates they do not wish to have their most recent or current employer contacted, you should discuss the reason for this request with the applicant and ask permission to contact the employer before proceeding with the reference check. If a legitimate reason exists not to contact the current or most recent employer, you should contact other employment references.

If a background investigation will be conducted the applicant must complete the "Authorization for Release of Information for Pre-Employment Screening" form (found on page 25).
- 11. Close the interview.** Ask the candidate if he or she has any questions, needs clarification, or has anything to add. Well-prepared candidates will want to ask relevant questions about the job. You may also want to introduce the candidate to others in the office and/or give a tour of the work setting. Thank the candidate for coming and explain your notification process – when a decision will be made, whether a second interview will be conducted, and how candidates will be notified.
- 12. Complete your notes and/or rating sheet immediately;** don't rely on your memory. Decide whether the candidate meets, exceeds, or does not meet the requirements. Allow adequate breaks between the interviews to make notes and prepare for the next interview.

**STATE OF SOUTH DAKOTA
AUTHORIZATION OF RELEASE OF INFORMATION**

For Reference Checks

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

I have applied for a position with the State of South Dakota. I authorize investigation of all information as may be necessary in arriving at an employment decision. I authorize the State of South Dakota, or its representatives, to contact any professional reference, current or former employer, education-provider, or other collateral source for job-related information. I release the organizations and individuals supplying such information from any and all liability or damages for providing the information requested.

A photocopy or fax of this authorization shall be as valid as the original. This authorization expires 60 days from the date of my signature.

Signature

Name (Please Print)

Social Security Number

Date

STATE OF SOUTH DAKOTA
AUTHORIZATION FOR RELEASE OF INFORMATION
For Pre-Employment Screening

Name (Please Print): _____

Address: _____

Date of Birth: _____

Social Security Number: _____

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN: I am an applicant for a position or volunteer position with the State of South Dakota. I hereby authorize a review of and full disclosure of all records, or any part, concerning myself by and to the State of South Dakota, whether the records are public, private, or confidential.

I consent to your release of all public and private information that you have concerning me, my work record, background, military service records, educational records, financial status, civil litigation or penalties, criminal history record, investigator files, performance ratings, complaints or grievances filed against me, and internal affairs investigations or discipline, including any files which are deemed to be confidential or sealed.

I release you, your organization, and all others from liability or damages that may result from furnishing the information requested, including any liability or damage according to any state or federal laws. I release you, as the custodian of the records, from all liability for damages of whatever kind which may result to me, my heirs, family, or associates because of compliance with this authorization and request to release information or any attempt to comply with it.

In consideration of the State of South Dakota's acceptance and processing of my application for employment, I agree to hold the State, its agents and employees harmless from all claims and liability associated with my application for employment or in any way connected with the decision whether or not to employ me with the State. I further agree to indemnify and hold harmless the person to whom this request is presented and his agents and employees, from all claims, damages, losses and expenses, including reasonable attorney's fees, arising out of or by reason of complying with this request.

A photocopy or fax copy of this release form is as valid as the original, even though the photocopy or fax copy does not contain an original signature. This waiver is valid for a period of 60 days from the date of my signature or, if I am hired, throughout my employment with the State of South Dakota.

If you have questions regarding the validity of this release, you may contact me at the address listed on this form.

Signature

Date

Section 5

CANDIDATE SELECTION

Now that you have interviewed, it is time to select the candidate who best meets the requirements of your position. Taking into account what you learned in the interview, the candidate's behavior during questioning, and test results (if applicable), select the candidate who has the qualifications to perform the duties of the position most effectively.

Be careful to avoid making the following mistakes when evaluating the candidates:

- **Gut Feeling** – making an intuitive judgment about an applicant without substantiating facts.
- **Halo Effect** – allowing one or two favorable traits of an applicant, such as nice appearance, to bias your judgment favorably on entirely unrelated knowledge, skills and abilities.
- **Stereotyping** – developing an oversimplified, standardized mental image of the members of a particular group. Example: thinking that all individuals with a firm handshake are decisive.
- **Similar-to-Me-Effect** – evaluating certain applicants higher, regardless of their qualifications, because they resemble you in some way; or evaluating applicants lower because they are dissimilar to you in some way.
- **Contrast Effect** – comparing an applicant against another applicant rather than to the specific requirements of the job. Example: allowing the first applicant to be the standard against which all subsequent applicants will be evaluated.
- **First Impressions** – forming a favorable or unfavorable judgment about an applicant during the first few minutes of the interview.

Section 6

REFERENCE CHECKS

You are required to check **employment references** of the top candidate before any offer of employment is made regardless of impressions of the person's qualifications. References are checked for three primary reasons: 1) to verify employment; 2) to verify what you have learned during the interview; and 3) to obtain employment recommendations.

Failure to check references can have serious legal consequences for Dakota State University. If an employee engages in violent, harmful behavior similar to that which occurred during previous employment, and which could have been revealed in a reference check, Dakota State University can be held legally responsible for "negligent hiring."

Develop a set of **job-related** questions to be used on all reference checks. Target your questions to the knowledge, skills and abilities needed in the job. For example: This job involves writing and editing job listings and promotional material for the unit with minimal supervision. Did the candidate perform similar duties? If so, what is your assessment of the candidate's writing and editing skills?

Use a written questionnaire form so that you can document the reference check. A sample Employer Reference Check Form can be found on page 28, and is available in electronic format on the Human Resources web page (www.departments.dsu.edu/personnel/forms/default.htm).

(Sample)

EMPLOYER REFERENCE CHECK FORM

Applicant's Name: _____ Date: _____

Applicant's Social Security Number: _____

Position Applied For: _____

Organization Contacted: _____

Phone Number: _____

Person Contacted: _____

1. Introduction: (_____) gave your name as a former employer.
Applicant's Name

2. What were the dates of employment? From _____ to _____

3. Were you the applicant's immediate supervisor? ___ Yes ___ No If no, please give your working relationship: _____

4. What position(s) did this person hold? _____

Please describe the responsibilities the applicant had with your organization. _____

5. How well did he/she get along with subordinates and peers? How well does he/she get along with supervisors? _____

6. Why did this person leave? _____

7. If you were hiring this person for the position I have described to you, what would you be concerned about? _____

8. Does this person have any written reprimands or has disciplinary action been taken against the person? _____

9. Using the Knowledge, Skills and Abilities statement from the announcement, develop questions about specific job skills. For example, "How knowledgeable is the applicant of accounting principles; Can this applicant write business correspondence without assistance; Please describe the applicant's supervisory style."

10. Would you rehire? ___ Yes ___ No. If no, why? _____

11. Is there any other pertinent performance information about this applicant that we should consider?

12. Is there anything else you would suggest we probe further or anyone else you would suggest we talk with?

13. What other individuals could I contact who would know about the applicant's job performance and work history? _____

Name and Title of Person conducting the reference check:

Date _____

Section 7

OFFER OF EMPLOYMENT

Once you have selected your top candidate based on the knowledge, skills and abilities stated in the job announcement and conducted reference checks with positive results, it is time to make an offer of employment.

Approval Process

You must receive appropriate approval from your Executive Council representative and the Human Resources Director prior to making an offer of employment for any position. The Human Resource Director will discuss the selection with you and obtain the necessary approval for any salary issues.

Offer of Employment

You may contact the top candidate to make an offer of employment once you receive necessary approval from your Executive Council representative and the Human Resources Director. If a background check and/or drug/alcohol test must be completed, the offer must be contingent upon acceptable results.

Section 8

DOCUMENTATION

Documentation of the selection process does not need to be complex or lengthy. However records must be sufficiently complete to show that the selection procedures and decisions were job-related and that equal consideration and uniform hiring standards were applied to all applicants.

1. Complete Selection Documentation Form (SDF)

A Selection Documentation Form (SDF), found on page 33, must be completed on the candidate that was offered and accepted employment. The SDF documents your interview and selection process. Your reasons for selection must relate to the applicant's job-related knowledge, skills and abilities. The information contained on this form will be used if a hiring decision is challenged or an inquiry is filed.

2. Complete Certification of Eligibles

The Certification of Eligibles must be completed by indicating the status of all the candidates who applied for the position. The applicant status codes are:

A	Appointed
DA	Declined Appointment
ANA	Appeared for Final Interview, but Was Not Appointed
DI	Declined Interview or Failed to Appear
NSI	Not Selected for Final Interview

3. Return documentation of selection process to Human Resources

The appointing authority will forward the following documents to Human Resources for each hire:

- Certification of Eligibles;
- Selection Documentation Form;
- Copies of selection methods used and any other information related to selection methods (e.g., completed supplemental questionnaires, tests, etc.);
- Interview questions and notes taken by the interview team/individual for every applicant who was interviewed (this includes short pre-screening interviews);
- Names and titles of all persons administering the selection process or participating in making selection decisions;
- Job applications/resumes of all applicants;
- Reference check forms; and
- Personnel Action Request (PAR).

This documentation must be returned to the Human Resources Director within two working days of acceptance of appointment.

Documentation of the recruitment and selection process will be maintained by Human Resources for three years to support the hiring decision and to provide fact-based information for monitoring and evaluating recruitment and selection practices and procedures.

Notification to Applicants

Upon receipt of the documentation, Human Resources will send a letter to the applicants notifying them that they did not receive an interview or that they did receive an interview but were not selected for the position. These letters will be generated from the information received on the Certification of Eligibles. The Human Resources Director will generate appointment letters unless other arrangements have been made.

**STATE OF SOUTH DAKOTA
Selection Documentation Form (SDF)**

DEPARTMENT: _____

POSITION TITLE: _____

POSITION NUMBER: _____

JOB NUMBER: _____

DATE: _____

Selection Technique(s) Used (*check all that apply*):

Application Analysis ___ Reference check ___ Oral Interview ___ Self Assessment Questionnaire ___

Supplemental Application ___ Willingness Questionnaire ___ Work Sample ___ Assessment Center ___

Task Questionnaire ___ Background Check ___ Test ___ Other (Specify): _____

Name of Applicant Appointed: _____

Rationale for Appointment Selection (check all that apply):

___ Ability to work required shift/work hours

___ Possesses sufficient, related work experience

Explain: _____

___ Possesses related knowledge, skills and abilities

Explain: _____

___ Sufficient education background (highest degree completed):

___ Holds necessary certification/licensure

List: _____

___ Other _____

This applicant was selected because:

Please attach certification, interview documents, and reference checks to this form and forward to the Human Resources Director within two working days of acceptance of appointment.

Section 9

NEW EMPLOYEE ORIENTATION

Contact the payroll/personnel specialist to schedule the new employee benefit orientation session. An I-9 and W-4 should be completed on the first day, and orientation should take place within the first week of employment.

APPENDIX

Table of Contents

Interview Questions You Can and Cannot Ask Page **36**

Types of Interview Questions Page **38**

Sample Interview Questions Page **40**

Forms

1. Dakota State University Announcement/Certification Request
2. State of South Dakota/DSU Employment Application
3. Authorization of Release of Information for Reference Checks
4. Authorization for Release of Information for Pre-employment Screening
5. Selection Documentation Form

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS YOU CAN AND CANNOT ASK

The Uniform Guidelines arising out of Title VII and EEOC legislation insist that the interview be designed on the basis of specific job requirements. Both the content and method of the interview must be developed to reveal accurately and fairly which candidates are most qualified to fulfill the job requirements. Questions related to gender, sexual orientation, age, marital status, color, race, religion, national origin, medical condition, pregnancy, or disability are inappropriate and against the law. In addition, employers must afford each candidate equal treatment in the screening process.

Examples of questions you can and cannot ask:

➤ Name

Permissible:

- Name
- "Have you ever used another name?" or "Is there any additional information relative to change of name, use of an assumed name, or nickname necessary to enable a check on your work and education record? If yes, please explain."

Avoid:

- Inquiries about the name that would indicate applicant's sex, marital status, lineage, ancestry, national origin, or descent.

➤ Residence

Permissible:

- Place of residence.

Avoid:

- "Do you own or rent your home?"
- Names or relationship of persons with whom applicant resides

➤ Age

Permissible:

- Statement that hire is subject to verification that applicant meets legal age requirements.

Avoid:

- Age
- Birth Date
- Dates of attendance of elementary or high school
- Questions that tend to identify applicants over age forty

➤ Birthplace/Citizenship

Permissible:

- "Could you, after employment, submit verification of your legal right to work in the United States?"
- Statement that such proof may be required after a decision is made to hire the candidate.

Avoid:

- Birthplace of applicant, applicant's parents, spouse, or other relatives.
- "Are you a U.S. citizen" or citizenship of applicant, applicant's parents, spouse, or other relatives.
- Requirements that applicant produces naturalization, first papers, or alien card prior to a decision to hire.

➤ National Origin

Permissible:

- Language applicant reads, speaks, or writes, if use of language other than English is relevant to the job for which applicant is applying.

Avoid:

- Questions as to nationality, lineage, ancestry, national origin, descent, or parentage of applicant, applicant's parents, or spouse.
- "What is your native tongue?"
- Language commonly used by applicant.
- How applicant acquired ability to read, write, or speak a foreign language.
- Questions asking specifically the nationality, racial affiliations, or religious affiliation of a school attended.

➤ Sex, Marital Status, Family

Permissible:

- Name and address of parent or guardian if applicant is a minor.
- Statement of company policy regarding work assignment of employees who are related.

Avoid:

- Questions that indicate applicant's sex.
- Questions that indicate applicant's marital status.
- Number and/or ages of children or dependents.
- Provisions for childcare.
- Questions regarding pregnancy, child bearing, or birth control.
- Name and addresses of relatives, spouse, or children of adult applicants.
- Inquiries made to males and females alike, as to duration of stay on job or anticipated absences.

➤ Physical or Mental Disability

Permissible:

- Statement by employer that offer may be made contingent upon an applicant passing a job-related physical examination (if applicable).

Avoid

- Questions regarding applicant's general medical condition, state of health, or illnesses.
- Questions regarding receipt of Workers' Compensation.
- Questions regarding past sick leave usage
- "Do you have any physical or mental disabilities or handicaps?"

➤ Religion

Permissible:

- Statement by employer of regular days, hours or shifts to be worked.

Avoid:

- Questions regarding applicant's religion.
- Religious days observed.
- "Does your religion prevent you from working weekends or holidays?"

➤ Criminal Records

Permissible:

- **Job-related questions** about convictions, except those convictions that have been sealed, expunged, or statutorily eradicated. If you need to ask about a criminal record, please contact the Human Resources Director prior to the interview.

Avoid:

- Arrest record.
- "Have you ever been arrested?"

TYPES OF INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

When developing interview questions, consider what types of question would best give you the information you are seeking. Listed below are different types of interview questions and when each is best used or should be avoided:

- **Theoretical (Situational) questions** place the interviewee in a hypothetical situation. These questions are more likely to test the interviewee's skill at answering questions rather than exploring the interviewee's ability to do a good job. These questions usually take the form of "Here's the situation... What would you do?" Example: "If you were hiring someone for this position, what qualities would you look for?"
- **Alternate choice questions** consist of two or more equally desirable or undesirable options. These types of questions should normally be avoided. Example: "Do you prefer establishing your own work priorities or having them pre-determined for you?" Always follow-up with why the person chose one answer over the other.
- **Yes or No questions** should be avoided because they obtain very limited information from the applicant. Example: "Can you operate an IBM computer?"
- **Loaded or leading questions** should be avoided because they suggest a correct answer. Such questions often reveal the interviewer's attitudes and may help applicants to create answers to fit those attitudes. Example: "Our department wants hard working employees. What kind of employee are you?"
- **Direct questions** are used to get very specific information, such as "What accounting courses have you had?" They are valuable for questioning applicants in depth or on topics brought up by candidates' responses to open-ended or theoretical questions.
- **Definitional questions** are usually posed in a "What is a ..." or "What does _____ refer to or mean?" format. They require applicants to demonstrate their knowledge of terms, concepts, and tools.
- **Open-ended questions** require more than a yes or no response. They often begin with "Tell me...", "Describe...", "When...". Open-ended questions are basic to any effective interview because they call for candidates to relate information and ideas that they feel are important.
- **Behavioral questions** seek demonstrated examples of behavior from past experience and concentrate on job related functions. Behavioral Interviewing is a more systematic and standardized process of evaluating job candidates than the typical "traditional interview". Behavioral Interviewing is based on the principle that the best predictor of future performance is past performance in a similar circumstance. Therefore, the questions asked focus on behavior and ask how applicants respond to a variety of specific situations and what results occurred from their actions.

For example, if you want to predict how applicants will behave with difficult clients, ask them to describe previous experience with different clients. The applicant will relate actual experiences rather than imagining what he or she might do in some hypothetical situation.

Behavioral interviewing focuses on experiences, behaviors, knowledge, skills and abilities that are job related. Applicants may use work experience, activities, hobbies, volunteer work, school projects, family life – anything really – as examples of their past behavior. Behavioral interviews give candidates a chance to "tell a story" as opposed to a one-sentence answer.

Example:

Describe a situation where you set challenging goals for yourself and accomplished them.

What was the situation that led you to set this goal?

What did you hope to accomplish and why was this important to you?

In what way did these goals represent a stretch or challenge for you?

How did you go about achieving this goal? What specific things did you do?

What level of effort did you have to put in to achieve your goal?

How did others feel about your actions?

What was the result?

Interviewers should also have several follow-up questions and probe for details that explore all aspects of a given situation or experience.

Examples of follow-up questions:

1. Please clarify what you mean by ...
2. How did you feel when that happened?
3. Why do you think you reacted as you did?
4. Did you consider other options at the time?
5. Please give me more details about ...
6. How do you think others felt about your actions at the time?
7. Looking back on the experience, how do you see things now?
8. What was going through your mind when you took that action?
9. Did the outcome of your action satisfy you?
10. Can you give me an example?
11. What did you do?
12. What did you say?
13. What was your role?
14. What was the result?

SAMPLE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

General Questions:

Previous Job Experience/Performance:

- What are/were your responsibilities and accountabilities?
- Describe three instances where you feel you've done your best work.
- How were you most effective in your previous organization? Be specific.
- What has been the hardest or most difficult part of your present job?
- What are the essential functions of your current job?
- Why did you leave?
- What do you spend the most time doing in your present/past positions?
- Describe the working environment in your present job.
- Describe the most creative work-related project that you have carried out.
- What has been the hardest or most difficult part of your present job?
- Describe some examples of specific job conditions/tasks, or assignments that have been dissatisfying to you.
- Give me an example of when you worked the hardest and felt the greatest sense of achievement.
- Describe what you consider to be your proudest achievement.
- Provide examples of your three most important accomplishments.
- In your most recent position, what did you learn? How did you apply this learning?
- Tell me about a challenge you faced in a previous work situation. How did you respond?
- What have been the biggest goals you have set and achieved in recent years? How did you do this?
- Tell me about a time you made a mistake at your previous job that cost the company time and money.
- What have been some of the biggest business decisions you made in the last few years?
- Tell me about a time when you made a significant impact towards the outcome of a project.
- Tell me about a time when you experienced a setback while working on a project.
- What is the most important thing you learned about yourself in your present position and how will it make you more effective on this job?

Expectations for This Job:

- What type of work setting motivates you?
- Why did you apply for this position?
- Why should you be hired for this position?
- Based on what you know about the position, which aspects of it would be most attractive to you? Least attractive?
- How would you describe your past performance in a similar position?
- What do you think are the most important qualities we should look for in someone to fill this particular position?
- What is important to you in a job and why?
- Walk me through the major highlights of your career so far and tell me where you want to go next.
- Tell me about a time when you set your sights too high (or too low).

Management Attitudes:

- What in your opinion is the most important function of a manager?
- What kind of direction do you prefer from a supervisor?
- What do you consider to be important attributes of a supervisor?
- Describe what you liked and disliked about how you were managed in previous positions.
- Give an example of a specific occasion when you conformed to a policy with which you did not agree.
- Tell me about a situation where you didn't get along with your supervisor.
- In your current position in which you report to the (Director), describe an incident in which you disagreed with the (Director) and tell me how this issue was resolved.

Decision-Making/Problem-Solving/Analytical Skills:

- Describe a specific time on the job when your problem-solving skills were tested. What did you do?
- Give an example of a time when you had to make a quick decision.
- Tell me about a major obstacle you encountered in your last job and how you handled it.
- Give an example of time when you had to use your fact-finding skills to get information to solve a problem – then describe how you analyzed the information to come to a decision.
- Give an example of a problem you faced on a job and describe how you solved it.
- What are some examples of important types of decisions or recommendations you were/are called upon to make in your past/present position?
- Most of us can think of an important decision we'd make differently if we could do it over. Give an example from your experience.
- Give an example of a difficult decision you had to make at your last job. How did you solve it? Why did you choose that method instead of another solution?
- What has been a stubborn or recurring problem area you would have liked to solve in your current job, but haven't yet.
- What process do you follow in solving problems?
- What methods do you use to make decisions? Give an example of your approach.
- What kinds of decisions do/did you have authority over? Which one do/did you have to check with your manager before making?
- What information or technical support has helped you succeed on the job? (For example, policy and procedures, standardized forms, goals, etc.)
- Have you ever had to make a decision before you had all the data you wanted? Give an example. What did you do?
- Recall a time when you made what you consider a mistake or a bad decision on the job. How did you handle the situation?
- Tell me about a time when you had to solve a difficult problem.
- Describe a major problem you have faced and how you dealt with it.
- Give me an example of a time when you had to be quick in coming to a decision. What was the outcome?
- Describe the project or situation that best demonstrated your analytical skills.
- Give me an instance when you had to think on your feet to extricate yourself from a problem.
- Give me a specific example of a time when you used good judgment and logic in solving a problem.
- Give me an example of a time in which you had to be relatively quick in coming to a decision.
- Give an example of a problem you solved and the process you used.
- Tell me about a difficult decision you made.
- What have been some of the most difficult decisions you had to make? What alternatives did you consider? What did you do? What was the outcome?
- Give me an example when you had to make a decision without consulting your boss. What did you do?
- Tell me about a time when you had to make a decision when you had too little information to easily arrive at a decision. What happened?
- Tell me about a time when you had a problem you couldn't solve.
- What were the most difficult decisions you made in the last six months? How did you formulate these decisions?
- What decisions have you made that were incorrect and cost the company money? Explain.
- What was the most difficult decision you have had to make over the past year?
- What problems have you recently been asked to solve? How did you address these problems?

Interpersonal/Communication Skills/Conflict

- Describe how you would endeavor to convince your boss to grant you additional funds for a purpose you have in mind.
- Describe some projects you worked on that required strong writing skills. What was the level of your responsibility? What was the primary audience?

- How would you characterize your communication skills?
- Name one recent success you had in dealing with an unhappy customer, co-worker, vendor, etc. How did you accomplish it?
- How do you persuade others to get what you want?
- In a past job, when did you find it necessary to disagree with your supervisor? How did you approach him/her and what was the result?
- What role do you usually take in a group meeting or discussion?
- When you started new jobs, how did you establish good relationships with your coworkers? With management?
- Have you ever had a situation when you found it necessary to confront someone at work? How did you handle it?
- What approaches worked best for you in the past in communicating with your boss? With your coworkers?
- In your past work life, what kind of coworkers or clients rubbed you the wrong way? How did you respond?
- Tell me about a time when you felt you went beyond the call of duty in helping a client.
- What experiences have you had working with people of different ethnicity's, age, or physical ability levels?
- Describe a situation where your ability to listen and establish rapport with someone difficult helped you overcome a tough situation.
- Tell me about a time you helped someone else achieve a goal.
- By providing examples, convince me that you can adapt to a wide variety of people, situations, and environments.
- Tell me about a situation when you had to persuade another person to your point of view.
- Describe a situation where you had to work with someone who was difficult. How was the person difficult and how did you handle it?
- Tell me about a time in which you had to use your written communication skills to get an important point across.
- Tell me about a time when you disagreed with others in your work group and how you handled it. How was the disagreement resolved?
- Describe the most creative presentation you have ever given. What did you do?
- Tell me about a time when you were able to adapt to, and deal with, an arrogant and dogmatic person. What happened?
- Tell me about a time when you handled a difficult situation with a coworker.
- Tell me about a time when you were tolerant of an opinion that was different from yours.
- Tell me about a time when you had to adapt to a difficult situation.
- Give me an example of a miscommunication with a coworker or employer. How did you solve it?
- What types of things make you angry? How have you dealt with them?
- Describe the most significant or creative presentation that you have had to complete.
- Give me an example of a time when you were able to successfully communicate with another person even when that individual may not have personally like you (or vice versa).
- What are some of the most important reports you have written? Who were they written for? What feedback did you receive?
- Tell me about the most frustrating time you had relating a concept.
- Tell me about a time when someone misunderstood your instructions and a problem arose.
- Describe a time when your communication approach differed depending on the individual or group with whom you were communicating. Describe the reasons.
- What changes have you made in your approach to others to become more accepted in your work environment?
- Describe a situation in which you were able to use persuasion to successfully convince someone to see things your way.

Motivation/Goal Orientation

- Give an example of an important job goal you set in the past and tell about your success in reaching it.
- Give an example of a time when you had to go above and beyond the call of duty to get a job done.
- Describe how your work history reflects your job objectives and abilities.
- Why did you choose this profession? What rewards does it give you?
- Please describe how you set and measure work goals.
- How do you monitor the progress of assignments and projects?
- Tell me about a time when you took charge as a leader in a work situation without being formally assigned to that role by your boss.
- Tell me about a time when you made a decision when no policy existed to cover the situation. Explain.
- Tell me about a time in which you were very persistent to reach your goals.
- Describe what you consider your most successful experience at convincing others of the need for a specific action and your process to gain recognition at the top for support of your idea.
- Give me an example of an important goal that you had set in the past and tell me about your success in reaching it.

Overall Job Performance

- How do you typically handle yourself in a fast-paced environment?
- How would you describe the place at which you work – fast, moderate, slow, or if it varies, under what circumstances?
- How do you handle a heavy workload with many deadlines?
- You are given several rush projects to be completed in a short period of time. How would you establish priorities? Why?
- How would you describe your organizational abilities? Attendance and punctuality habits? Work habits?
- Tell me about a time you had to juggle a number of work priorities. What did you do?
- Tell me about work-related situations that cause stress for you. How do you typically handle such stress?
- Describe a time on any job that you held in which you were faced with problems or stresses that tested your coping skills.
- Give me an example of a situation where you were over your head on a project. What steps did you take to overcome the situation.
- Describe what you have done to make (your job, a departmental process, etc.) easier, more effective, more efficient.
- Describe the most creative thing you have done in your career.
- Think of a time in your past when you took a risk. Give me a quick overview of the situation and then walk me through that situation, telling me about your part in it.
- Have you ever been assigned to take the lead on a project? How did you define and establish the group's sense of purpose?
- Give me examples of what information is important to pass on to the boss, what information would be nice for him/her to have, and what information is necessary and tell me why.
- What activities have you pursued in the last two years to enhance your skills? Why these particular activities? Why did you focus on these skills?
- What do you believe are the critical elements of effective performance? Describe the role each play.

Influence

- Think about a time in your past when you established credibility with another work unit. What were the factors involved and why did they accept your advice?
- Describe your approach to making decisions and solving problems. What are the inherent strengths and weaknesses of your approach?
- Tell me how you increased teamwork among a previous group with whom you worked.
- How do you make others outside your direct control produce essential elements of a project?

- Give me an example of a specific occasion in which you conformed to a policy with which you did not agree.
- What is the farthest you have had to bend your standards in order to succeed?

Teamwork

- What activities have you engaged in to assure other units in the organization view your work group/department as a positive resource?
- Think of a time when you anticipated the needs changing in a group you serve. Describe the situation and what you did about it.
- How have you personally built consensus within a group?
- Tell us about a goal that you or your organization needed to achieve through teamwork. Tell us how you designed that team.
- What behavior do you use to encourage team members to speak openly?
- Why do people trust you?
- What are some of the factors that you believe constitute a strong team?
- What did you do to support your coworkers in your last job? Please give a specific example of a time when you helped or supported a coworker.
- Give an example of a time when you had to take the lead with your work group to get a task done. How did you get cooperation?
- How do you get cooperation from coworkers, other departments, etc.?
- How do you usually approach a manager with a problem? Give an example.
- Would you rather work on a team or on your own?
- Tell me about a time when you were on a team, and one of the members wasn't carrying his or her weight. What actions did you take?
- What was the most obstructive group you had to get cooperation from? How did you handle it?
- Describe a situation when you had a positive influence on the attitudes and behaviors of others.
- When have you worked on a busy team and you were somehow expected to perform tasks that might have been considered below you?
- Tell me about a time when you had persuaded team members to do things your way.
- Tell me about a time you initiated a team approach to solve a problem. Describe the role you played on the team and comment on your effectiveness.
- Tell me about a project of which you are particularly proud of and your contribution.

Communication

- How do you ensure your presentations will be effective?
- Can you think of a time when you had to present a new (idea, concept, process, procedure, etc.) to (someone, your boss, a group, etc.) and you felt successful? Give a quick overview and then walk me through that situation, telling me about your part in it.
- What factors do you use to select the issues to be communicated?
- Think of a time when your listening skills were particularly useful in solving a problem. Give me an overview and then walk me through the situation.

Understanding Self and Others

- What are your major strengths and weaknesses? Describe a situation in which one or more played a significant role.
- Think of a time in your past when you were in a very uncertain situation, outcomes were uncertain, there was a lot of change taking place. What did you do? What did you feel? How did you handle it?
- Tell me about the most stressful situation you have been in and how you handled it.
- Think of a time when you were personally confronted and challenged by someone. Give an overview and then walk me through that situation, telling me about your part in it. What did you think/feel? What did you say/do? What was the outcome?

Initiative and Innovation

- What ideas did you contribute to your department/company? What were the results?
- Give an example of something you recommended that was adopted.
- Give an example of a project you were responsible for starting. What did you do? How did it work out?
- When have you had to produce results, without sufficient guidelines or information? What did you do?
- Tell me about a work emergency or crisis of some kind in which you were involved. What was your role? What did you do?
- Tell me about a time when you had to change your plan or approach to get an important job done.
- Describe a specific problem you solved for your employer. How did you approach the problem? What role did others play? What was the outcome?
- Give me an example of a time when you were inventive and offered fresh insights about a situation. What was the situation?
- Tell me about a time when you were creative in solving a problem.
- Tell me about some projects you generated on your own. What prompted you to begin them.
- Provide an example of a past initiative in which you have initiated and effected an improvement to the organization.
- Please describe how you encourage creativity within your group.
- Tell me about a time when you anticipated potential problems and developed preventive measures.
- Tell me about a project you initiated.
- Describe any significant project idea, etc. you have initiated or thought of in the past year. How did you know it was needed and would work? Was it used? Does it work?
- Have you ever recognized a problem before your boss or others in the organization? Explain.
- What are some of the best ideas you have ever sold to a superior? What was your approach?

Ability to Learn

- Give an example of a situation at your previous employment when you have had to keep up with the changes in technology, terminology, or information in your field.
- What is the fastest you have learned something new for a job? What did you have to learn?
- If time did not permit a training period on a new job, how would you go about learning the things expected or required of you?
- What was the most challenging work or technical problem you ever encountered? What did you do?
- In your most recent position, describe how you used technology to increase your work efficiency.

Dependability/Flexibility

- In a past job, did you have to alter your standards to meet your company's? When? Why?
- What results were you expected to accomplish in your last job? How were they measured?
- Have you worked in an organization that changed its policy or procedure frequently? How did you deal with that?
- Give an example of a time when you were given tasks to accomplish without advance warning. How did you handle it?
- In a past job, has a policy or directive come down with which you really disagreed? What did you do?
- Tell me about a time when a change of policy or changed decision made your work difficult. What did you do?

Organization/Attention to Detail/Use of Time

- Would you rather formulate a plan or carry it out? Why? Give an example of a plan you have implemented.
- Describe an experience when you were responsible for coordinating several small tasks to accomplish a large job.
- How do you keep track of your paperwork, schedules, etc? Please be specific.
- In your last job, if something wasn't due for several weeks, when and how did you approach getting it done?
- Describe how you handled the details of your last major project.
- Describe a way you improved the organization of a system or a task at your last/present job.
- How do you organize your daily tasks? How do you prioritize them or decide what you should work on next?
- Give me a specific example of a time when you failed to meet a deadline. What things did you fail to do? What were the repercussions? What did you learn?
- Give me a specific example of a time when you managed several projects at once.
- Give an example of a situation when you faced many competing priorities and discuss what criteria you used in deciding what to do first.
- Tell me about a time when you prioritized the elements of a complicated project.
- Tell me about a time when you were unable to complete a project on time.
- Tell me about a time when you got bogged down in the details of a project.
- Tell me about a job/task that was boring. How did you deal with it?
- How do you organize your day, week, etc.?
- What do you do when your schedule is upset by unforeseen circumstances? Please provide an example of a time when this has happened.

Management and Supervisory Questions

Leadership Qualities

- Have you ever been assigned to lead a work team on a major project? Describe.
- Describe a situation in which you were able to positively influence the actions of others in a desired direction.
- Describe your supervisory experience.
- Describe a time when you believed it was necessary to modify or change your actions to respond to the needs of another coworker.
- Describe a situation where your ability to motivate others was more crucial than the ability to supervise.
- Tell me about a time you had to get someone to do something he or she was reluctant to do.
- Take me through a project where you demonstrated leadership skills.
- Give me an example of a time when you found a clever way of motivating an employee.
- Provide some examples of situations in which you feel your leadership style has been particularly effective and describe another situation in which the style has been less effective.
- Tell about a situation in which you were required to motivate individuals who report to you and describe the practices you used to get them to perform more effectively.

Organizational/Planning Skills

- How would you describe your planning skills? Budgeting skills?
- Describe any new plans or programs you've developed.
- Describe the extent of your responsibility in policy formulation.
- In what way have you improved your planning over the last few years?
- Have you ever had to reorganize an existing system? If so, how?

Administration/Staffing

- How do you make sure that your employees are accountable?
- What do you typically do when you hear of a problem in your area.
- How useful have you found written procedures and guidelines in helping you manage your area?
- Do you believe that the chain of command is important? Why? When do you think it might inhibit organizational effectiveness?
- Think of a time in the past when you hired someone to work for you and the person did not work out. What went wrong?

Interpersonal/Communication Skills/Conflict

- Describe the most significant written document, report or presentation that you have had to complete.
- Describe how you would notify the people you supervise about a new procedure that you were responsible for implementing. It would mean that those people would be assuming new and more complex duties.
- Describe how you would notify a large number of people about a new policy or regulation that you were responsible for implementing.
- Describe your background in making group presentations.
- Give an example of an effective meeting that you've coordinated, attended or led.
- What approach worked best for you in the past in communicating with your subordinates?
- Have you ever been challenged to get others to understand and accept your ideas? How did you do this?
- Describe a tough situation in which you had to talk to people to get information you needed to make an important decision or recommendation. What was challenging about the situation? What did you do? What happened?
- Tell me about a time when you had to communicate unpleasant information to an employee. What happened?

Decision-Making/Problem Solving Abilities

- Give an example of a time when you had to carefully analyze a situation to be effective in guiding your action or decision.
- What types of analytical studies have you conducted?
- At which point do you find it necessary to bring others into your decision-making process? Why?
- Describe your approach to making decisions and solving problems. Why do you do it this way?
- When you recommend something to management, what approach do you usually use? Give an example.
- How much leeway do you give your employees to make decisions? How do you still maintain control?
- How do you assemble relevant data to make your decisions? How do you know when you have enough data?
- What have you done to get creative solutions to problems? Be specific.
- Tell me about a time when you were forced to make an unpopular decision.

Management Attitude/Style

- How would you describe your management philosophy and style?
- In what ways might you want to modify your approach to dealing with subordinates?
- How would you deal with an employee who was not doing his or her job properly?
- Have you ever had to initiate corrective action for an employee? If so, what steps did you take?
- How have you dealt with an employee who did not appear to measure up to increasing demands of the job?
- What philosophy and techniques do you use in motivating and energizing your staff?
- How do you think your staff would describe your style of delegation.
- How do you get your employees (or others) to follow you?
- How do you use power or authority to get what you want done?
- Give an example of how you delegated responsibility for a recent assignment; for instance, how you delegated the assignment, and what you did to monitor it.
- What are some examples of your ability to manage and supervise others? Give specifics of people who have grown as a result of your influence.

Financial

- What responsibility do you have for budgeting? What budgeting method do you use?
- How do you go about estimating expenses and budgets?
- What recent decision have you made that had an impact on finances? How did you assess its impact?
- What experience have you had with long- and short-term budget projections? Please explain.

Evaluating Performance

- How would you describe your standards of performance? What would your staff say? What would your supervisor say?
- What do you do to ensure objectivity when you evaluate the work of others?
- What sort of performance standards have you held employees to? Were they written?
- How long does it take you to write a performance evaluation? What steps do you go through?
- How do you get your employees involved in their own evaluations?
- How do you plan for performance improvements?
- When you evaluate someone's performance orally, what approach do you take? What if their performance has been exceptionally good? Marginal?
- How do you conduct an evaluation process?

Employee Relations

- How have you helped your employees become committed to a job or to the organization?
- What types of employees do you find hardest to manage? Why?
- How have you dealt with an “attitude” problem? Please give a specific example.
- How often do you think it’s necessary to meet with your employees?
- How have you handled “complainers”?
- Describe a time when you had to discipline an employee. What was your strategy?
- Describe a time when you had to criticize or discipline the performance of someone who worked for you. How did you handle the situation? What was the result?
- Have you had to manage a personnel situation that had a potential legal impact? Please describe what your role was and what you learned from it.
- How do you develop trust and loyalty in your employees?
- How much time do you spend with your employees?
- Describe a time when you had problems getting people to work together in solving a problem or completing an assignment.
- Describe a time when you had to intervene to solve a conflict. Why did you handle it that way?
- Tell me about a time when you had to fire a subordinate.
- Describe the most difficult performance issue you have dealt with. How was the issue resolved?

Planning/Goal Setting

- How far in advance do you typically plan activities for yourself and your employees? By what methods?
- Give an example of a change you saw coming, or something you thought was necessary to change. How did you go about planning for it?
- How do you assess priorities? How do you then assign them?
- Describe the areas in which you think your organization has been most effective in meeting the challenges of the changing environment and your role in the process.

Organizational Relationships

- What would you describe as an effective staff meeting? An ineffective one?
- How do you typically get cooperation from someone in another department?
- Have you had to make oral presentations to other managers? Describe what you did and how effective it was.
- Give an example of a time when you believed it was necessary to be assertive to get what you needed from your manager.
- Describe a time when you had to “sell” a decision or policy to your employees when you did not agree with it.