

## **PRIOR TO SEARCH**

**The successful outcome of any search has its foundation in the preparation that occurs prior to posting the job vacancy announcement. There are several steps that must be taken prior to the onset of any search.**

***Please review the outline below prior to preparing your Request to Fill.***

### **The Position Description**

The position description is an essential component of the search process. The hiring manager, department chair/division director, faculty and staff should collaborate while preparing the request to fill and determine not only current needs but try to anticipate future needs and how this position can and/or will fill those needs.

Position descriptions, when placed in advertisements, are used to attract candidates to the institution. It should provide potential candidates with a description of the role, responsibilities, and accountabilities. *Ultimately this is what attracts candidates to the position.*

The description should include language that reflects diversity and inclusion in position duties and qualifications. The Chief Diversity and Inclusion Officer is your best resource and can assist by providing appropriate language for the position.

### **How to Prepare a Position Description**

- Review previous description, update, and modify as required, eliminate any outdated information.
- Collaborate with those who interact directly with the position, including members of other departments.
- Think about the attributes of the position, *not* the individual previously in the role.
- Discuss what excellence and distinction means for the proposed position.
  - Review departmental needs, inter-disciplinary needs, student needs.
- Identify in detail the duties and responsibilities for the purpose of the RTF.
- Sort responsibilities into functional areas, list specific tasks under functional area.
- Do not use gender specific language, i.e. “he/she”, use position title.
- How will this position contribute to the goals of the department/division?
- Who does this position report to?
- What is the title that will be used in the ad (working title)? What is the classification title ([SUNY Unclassified Service Titles link](#))?
  - Example: Finance Assistant/Staff Assistant
- Review appropriate position title, determine salary range in collaboration with dean/vice president/hiring authority.

## **Determine Minimum and Preferred Requirements**

- What areas of knowledge and/or experience are required?
  - Avoid required qualifications that are too specific and narrow, instead, add to preferred qualifications. Only require specific discipline if absolutely essential to perform duties of position, instead, include “or related area” for flexibility.
    - Example – Bachelor’s Degree in Accounting – too narrow, instead require Bachelor’s Degree in Accounting, Finance, Business or related area or only Bachelor’s Degree
  - For faculty searches, consider ABD candidates (if applicable) with defined expectation for completion.
    - Example – PhD in Art Education or related field, ABD will be considered with degree completion within 2 years.
  - Use “earned doctorate”, “terminal degree” instead of “PhD” to allow more flexibility.
- What skills, both technical and soft, are required?
- What candidate characteristics are required for this position?
- What competencies are required for this position?
- Include diversity, equity, and inclusion language.

Consider how minimum requirements will be assessed, keeping in mind all required qualifications must be evident in application documents submitted by candidates to be approved for consideration.

## **Description of Department/Division/Program (for Advertising Purposes)**

- Describe your department/division/program in a manner that will attract candidates. Highlight accomplishments, programs, services, etc.
  - Include links to department and/or programs.
- Convey commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion.
- Acknowledge commitment to student success.

## **Develop Recruitment Plan**

- Review appropriate advertising resources pertinent to position.
  - Consider non-traditional advertising publications/journals/organizations to recruit diverse candidates.
- Identify programs in the field that promote diversity.
- What professional meetings, workshops, conferences are upcoming?
  - Can the posting be shared?
  - Can those attending share the job vacancy announcement?
- Establish application requirements.
  - Evidence of teaching effectiveness.
  - Statements – research, diversity, teaching philosophy.
  - Portfolios, licensure
  - Unofficial Transcripts (then official transcripts at the time of appointment)
- References.

- How will references be conducted? Phone? Written? Both?
- When will references be checked?
- References must be from professional relationships, consider requiring at least one reference be from a current or former manager/supervisor.

### **Appoint and Select Search Committee Members**

Search committees play a vital role in shaping our college faculty and professional staff. When determining who should serve on the committee as department chair/director and/or hiring manager you should create a diverse committee ideally with members representing a cross section of the college community. Committee members are expected to dedicate considerable time to the process, please select members who have the ability to do so.

- For faculty searches consider faculty from other departments that may be interdisciplinary.
- For professional searches consider the departments on campus that the position serves and/or works with and include staff representation from those areas.
- Members should be committed to diversity and equity.
- Appoint Search Chair to lead and coordinate search.
- Department chairs and directors should not serve as search chair unless critically necessary.
- Consider including students as search committee members. Students provide a unique and valuable perspective and can be strategic members of the committee. Students are provided with full access to candidate applications in Interview Exchange.