

# Behavioral Interviewing and The Faculty Hiring Process



Selecting the best faculty candidate for a specific open position.

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Welcome to a slideshow and notes on Behavioral Interviewing. While this course was developed with faculty hiring in mind, its basic principles will carry across to other positions within the University as well.

## Today's Agenda

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- Define Successful Job Applicants
    - KSA's and CSF's
    - Diversity
  - Interviewing
    - Establishing Critical Success Factors
    - Establishing an Interview Results Guide
    - Utilizing a Decision Criteria Matrix
  - Reference Checks
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Today we're going to talk about several topics.

By the end of the session, you will be able to define what the Knowledge/Skills and Abilities-Education-Experience for the position which is open, and the Critical Success Factors for an individual hired into that position.

We're going to discuss how diversity fits into that picture.

For the interview itself, we'll talk about how to establish Critical Success Factors, how to "personalize" an Interview Results Guide for the position at hand, and why a Decision Criteria Matrix is important.

We'll also talk about Reference Checks. These are important tools, but they can also be a source of litigation. So they must be done right!

## Hire the Best, Because...

- Selecting the right candidate will:
  - Increase excellence
  - Decrease unwanted attrition & turnover;
  - Decrease performance issues;
  - Decrease lawsuits and employee relations litigation;
  - Increase morale among faculty, staff and students;
  - Other reasons?

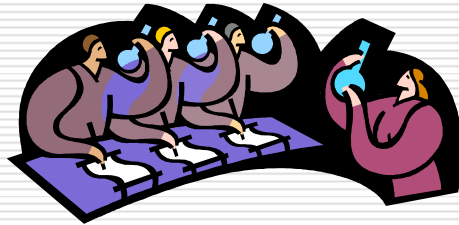
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Why work so hard to get just the right person? I listed a few reasons here, and want to talk about some of them.

- Increasing excellence – I'd like us to be a top ranked school in every subject we choose to explore. Top ranked faculty will help us get there.
- Turnover is costly. What percentage of an exiting employee's salary is the cost of a replacement?
  - Surveys range from 35% to 150% Why might this be?
    - Advertising
    - Processing CV's, screening, interviewing, reference checks – a lot of TIME and dollars
    - Relocation
    - Orientation
    - Other costs – maybe even alumni donations!
- Do bad selections cost more than good selections?

## Selecting Successful Faculty

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Critical Success Factors based on Knowledge, Skills and Abilities and other key factors

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Before we can hire successful faculty, we need to be clear on the characteristics of the job. You're all faculty, we have a couple different areas represented here. But there are some things we'll find are the same across departments, others that are very department specific.

## Defining success

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- What characteristics makes a faculty member successful? Consider...
  - KSA's = Knowledge, Skills and Ability/Experience/Education
  - Motivational factors
  - Personality factors
- Diversity – the best candidate often does not “look like” the rest of the department.
  - What constitutes diversity?
  - Why is diversity important?

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What are the characteristics that make one person shine and another be asked to or decide to leave after a year or two?

- Knowledge and experience surely are part of it
- What about motivation? Does the environment here lend itself to a certain type of motivation on the part of a faculty member? Do individuals who are differently motivated have less success?
- Personality...

Diversity – how does it fit in? The best candidate may be the one who “looks like” NO one else in the department in terms of his/her race, religion, socio-economic background, and so on. Why might it be important to seek out someone who adds that diverse element?

- Diverse student body
- Diverse viewpoints
- Cultural enrichment
- Adds to the transformative experience perhaps?
- Other reasons?

## Behavioral Interviewing

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This has all been leading to the key issue we're talking about today – how to interview a candidate using behavioral interviewing techniques as one of your tools.

My hope is that after this session you'll be able to

- Plan a logical structured interview including preplanned questions to control the interview and get the best information
- Recognize the importance of developing an interview plan based on a thorough knowledge of the job
- Use behavioral interview techniques and open ended questions to control the interview and get the best information
- AND realize the importance of documentation!

## Behavioral vs. Traditional

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Traditional:

- “What would you do if ...”



Behavioral:

- “What did you do when ...”

Is past performance & behavior the  
best indicator of future performance  
& behavior? What do you think?

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Behavioral interviewing may be a new term to some of you. The word “behavioral” may not be used in the same context as it might be for Social Work or Psychology, this is a human resource/business definition.

What do you think, is past performance and behavior ON THE JOB the best indicator of future performance and behavior ON THE JOB?

Again, I realize that people can and do change. But in their overall work life, they probably exhibit skills throughout their career that have a great deal of continuity: if they are ambitious, or research focused, or hate meeting one on one with students, you can rest reasonably assured that this will be a continuing factor in their career.

## Definition of Behavioral Interviewing

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*“A thorough, planned, systematic way to gather and evaluate information about what candidates have done in the past to show how they would handle future situations.”*

(Herbert G. Henneman III, Professor of Business, University of Wisconsin)

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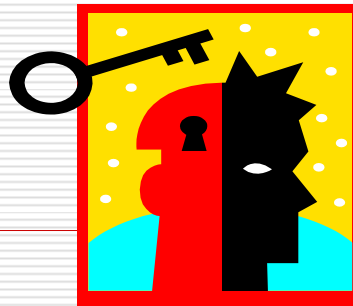
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That's what Dr. Henneman is talking about in this quote. The fact that there are certain characteristics that carry across.

## The “Key” Assumption

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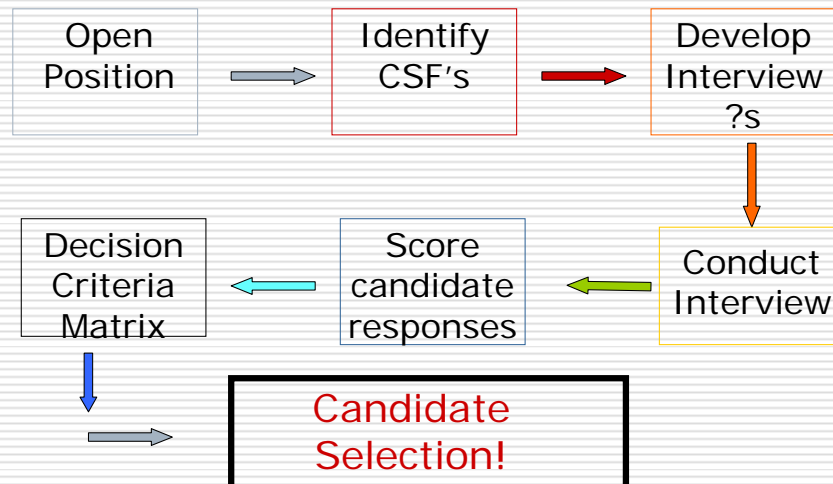
- Job candidates who previously demonstrated a particular behavior to address a situation will repeat that behavior in the future when confronted with a similar set of problems.



A person gains experience and abilities over time, at least we hope they do, but some core elements will carry across.

A person may not have dealt with a difficult student acting out in class, but they've probably handled some difficult situation in the past that may give you a clue as to how they will react.

## Behavioral Interviewing Model



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This is the overall flow – after the position is approved, we should advertise based on the critical success factors, then develop our interview questions,

After which we interview

Score the responses – formally decide how each candidate ranks

Plug the numbers into the decision matrix

Discuss the outcomes and determine if you have selected who is the best candidate for the position

Then...select the new faculty member.

## Behavioral Interviewing Involves:

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- Identifying the KSA's (Knowledge, Skills & Abilities), behaviors, and competencies critical for successful job performance;
  - Developing interview questions based on the Critical Success Factors (CSF's);
  - Asking each candidate the same set of questions (follow-ups could vary based on candidate response);
  - Scoring candidate responses & assigning rank (Decision Criteria Matrix).
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Expanding that flow, we can see that Behavioral Interviewing involves several steps.

## Using Behavioral Interviewing Techniques

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- Behavioral interviewing involves asking for examples of how a candidate has handled given situations in the past.
  - Example -
    - Please tell me about a time when you had to give constructive feedback to a student. What was the situation, and how did you handle it? In retrospect, would you do anything differently now?
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This was the most obvious example I could think of. I'm sure it would apply to all faculty positions.

We'll talk about questions some more in a few minutes, but first we need to talk about the critical success factors of the job.

Remember, we need to keep those in mind when we're creating the questions.

## Critical Success Factors

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While some questions, like the one on the last slide, are obviously linked to being a successful faculty member in general,

before you can develop all your behavioral interview questions, you have to be clear on the critical success factors of the job.

## Establishing Critical Success Factors

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- ❑ Critical Success Factors (CSF) are those skills, abilities, behaviors & competencies critical to successful job performance.
  - ❑ CSF's are established based on:
    - 🕒 Position description
    - 🕒 Analysis of job duties and the incumbents in the position currently.
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CSF's are the essential competencies critical to being a success in a position.

We establish the CSF's based on the job description. You've got a cc of a general FACULTY job description in your packet.

When your search committee meets, you'll want to discuss CSF's in light of the job description and in light of an in depth discussion of what success looks like for your department and the University as a whole.

Look at job duties – what does it take to do those well? Look at current incumbents – are there other skills that would complement the existing team?

## Critical Success Factors: Faculty Position

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### □ Possible CSF's:

- Knowledge & Ability/Education/Experience
- Scholarship
- Communication / Interpersonal Skills
- Problem Solving / Decision Making
- Others?

For each CSF,  
establish a clear &  
succinct definition.

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Lets discuss this a bit.

Taking a term like "scholarship." It is important for a faculty member to exhibit scholarship. But, what do you mean by that term? Be sure your team is very clear on what each CSF means.

Decision making – define what you mean. Is a successful person one who makes every decision with input from peers and Dean? Or is the successful person one who makes all decisions on his/her own? Or is it somewhere in the middle?

And so on...

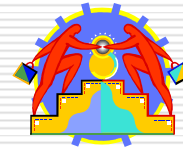
## CSF vs. Competencies:

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- Critical Success Factors can be Competencies, but they are not necessarily the same thing - e.g.:
  - Is "Scholarship" a competency or a CSF?
  - Is "Communication Ability" a competency or a CSF?

*Or are they both?*

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How does scholarship fit in, anyway? CSF? Competency?

Same with Communication Ability. You need to think through these issues and be sure the team is all on the same page.

## Connecting CSF's to the Interview

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- Develop questions that focus on the key competencies (CSF's) for the job.
- Determine which behavioral or situational questions elicit the desired behaviors for each particular job.
  - "Think of an occasion when ..."
  - "Can you give me an example of ..."

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I suggest that you design a flowing series of questions for the interview process.

This doesn't mean that you ask the questions in 1-2-3-4-5 order for every candidate, the flow of the conversation may dictate otherwise in some cases.

The important thing is to ask the SAME questions over the course of the interview of all candidates.

How a candidate answers will determine where you go. With some questions and some candidates, you may not probe as deeply, as there may be no need. With others, 3 or 4 follow up questions might be needed based on their initial response.

## Validity and Reliability in Interviewing

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- ❑ Federal guidelines – an interview is a test
  - Reliability – are we getting consistent info for decision making even with different interviewers?
    - ❑ Structured process
    - ❑ Preplanned questions tied to job
  - Validity – does the interview measure skills/predict performance?
    - ❑ Base on job analysis
    - ❑ Questions relate to job skills for specific job

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Federal guidelines concerning the evaluation of selection instruments consider interviewing as a test. Thus, if we are challenged on any candidate search, one thing that WILL be reviewed is the interview process.

Thus we need to consider validation criteria. The issue? It is almost impossible in a situation such as ours to develop true validity and reliability indicators. So we need to do what we can.

As far as reliability, interviews must generate consistent information for decision making even though different interviewers may be part of the process. That is why a structured interview is so helpful – it gives us preplanned questions based on the job requirements, not on “gut feeling,” which could lead to legal problems.

Validity – the interview needs to measure a person’s skills for the specific job or predict job performance. Difficult to measure, but if we can show that the interview process is

- Based on Job Analysis
- Contains questions that provide evidence about important job skills
- Systematically relates interview information to the specific job

We have a solid chance of proving our case.

## Hiring Criteria

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- Must be:
    - Measurable or Observable;
    - Clearly understood by each interviewer;
    - Related significantly to the open job;
    - Identified as a "Must" or a "Want"
      - Must** - applicant must possess to be considered;
      - Want** - remaining criteria used to determine best candidate;
    - Written in behavioral terms
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Thus, hiring criteria need to be....

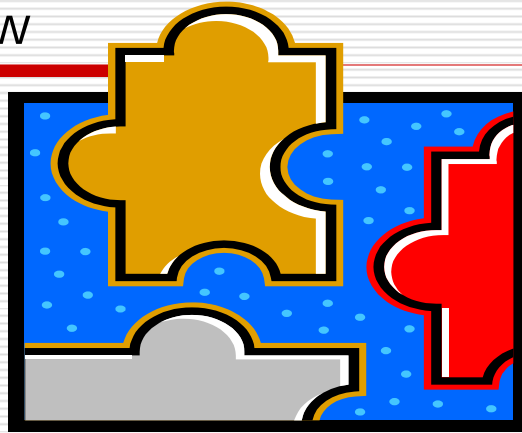
The more of this you have documented before the interview process begins, the better. It helps you decide between candidates, all of who might look similar on paper.

Written in behavioral terms? Not "a good teacher" but define some of the characteristics that make up that "good teacher" status – such as...

(examples?)

## The Interview

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Putting Together the Pieces for  
a Successful Hire

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OK, we've done our homework, we've determined what we're looking for in a candidate and the questions we're going to ask to see how candidate's measure up.

It's time to talk to people.

## Conducting the Interview

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- Typical structure:
    - Opening & building rapport;
    - Obtaining / Scoring information;
      - Job-relevant data to make hiring decision;
    - Giving information;
      - Information about AU, this position, etc.
    - Closing the interview
      - Informing candidate of next steps, timeline, etc.
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I suspect you've all seen this information. This is the basic interview structure. I thought I'd tuck it in here as a quick review, we don't need to spend much time on it unless you'd like to.

## Conducting the Interview

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- Panel vs. Individual:
  - Panel has advantages over individual interviewing formats:
    - Different viewpoints on candidate strengths/weaknesses;
    - Better record keeping / note taking;
    - Varying opinions on the best candidate - come to consensus during Decision Criteria Matrix (DCM) conversation

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We do a lot of panel interviews here – if you haven't been part of one, you may not realize the advantages.

As far as taking notes – do so! And if the candidate decides to take notes as well, that's just fine.

## Interview Results Guide

- Allows you to:
  - Ask each candidate the same set of questions - follow-ups may vary based on candidate responses;
  - Review answers for consistency of responses / things that are comparable between candidates;
  - Score answers and transfer to Decision Criteria Matrix (consensus between interviewers)

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I usually use two forms: one for the interview and one for evaluating. The training program I've pulled much of this class from used one form for both. It is up to your committee as to which way you'll decide to go.

With one form, you'll need to put down the questions that will be asked so that you're sure to hit all the questions with every candidate. You'll need space to make notes about the candidate's response and behaviors exhibited during the interview. You'll also need room for scoring on that same form.

With two forms, you can separate out some of the analysis to a separate form, on our website and in your packet we have a sample "Applicant Assessment Sheet" that has a lot of potential areas of analysis. So in a two form setup you'll have one for questions and notes, one for analysis and scores.

Either method is perfectly acceptable. The important thing is consistent documentation.

## Interview Results Guide

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### KSA's

- Meets minimum qualifications
- Factor 1
  - Meets/exceeds
- Factor 2
  - Meets/exceeds
- Factor 3
  - Meets/exceeds
- Comments

### CSF's

- Factor 1
  - "grade"
- Factor 2
  - "grade"
- Factor 3
  - "grade"
- Comments

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Things you'll want to consider when analyzing the results of the interview.

Again, the form available online doesn't hit the details, it just gives some overall criteria. YOUR form should end up more specific. Having some overall is fine, but be sure to get the specific KSA/CSF's into the process.

ALL members of the university community who will interview the candidate should fill out a sheet and submit it back to the chair of the committee. As far as a housekeeping detail – you'll want a CV to go to every interviewing party, along with an Applicant Assessment Sheet of some format so that you can get information from many sources in order to make your final decision.

## Decision Criteria Matrix

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- ❑ Use as a tool to help you rank all applicants;
- ❑ Come to consensus with interview partners on assigned scores;
- ❑ Assists with candidate selection / de-selection process;
- ❑ Maintain documentation!



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Once you've got your information back from the Committee and from the others who've talked with the candidate, you need to put it all together.

A tool that will help is a decision criteria matrix. OK, it's a spreadsheet. Nothing too fancy, just a way to pull everything together.

## Decision Criteria Matrix Sample

| Decision Criteria Matrix |            |         |         |         |      |       |
|--------------------------|------------|---------|---------|---------|------|-------|
| Faculty Position: _____  |            |         |         |         |      |       |
| Candidate Name           | Date intv. | Factor: | Factor: | Factor: | Refs | Total |
|                          |            |         |         |         |      |       |
|                          |            |         |         |         |      |       |
|                          |            |         |         |         |      |       |
|                          |            |         |         |         |      |       |
|                          |            |         |         |         |      |       |

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Yours will vary depending on how you set up the scoring. You may have two levels of scoring – that from your committee, which is probably the most important piece, and that from the other interview participants.

Talk about red flags that come up when and if they come up – if a person on or not on the committee has strong reservations about a candidate that the rest of the committee favors, discuss that. It may be a stopping point. It may not.

The decision matrix should not be a strictly numerical form, but numbers do add to the reliability of the process. Weighted numbers that lead to the selection of the best candidate would be the best situation. But that isn't always realistic.

## Reference Checking

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OK, you've interviewed. You've figured out who your top 3 or 4 candidates are based on those interviews.

Now its time to reference check those top candidates.

I know some here have reference checked BEFORE the interview, this isn't optimal. We'll talk about why.

## Reference Checking

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- Why reference check?
    - Verifies CV
    - Verifies interview
    - Protects against negligent hiring charges
  - Why ask for written consent **before** reference check?
    - State/Fed guidelines including FRCA
    - Release of information
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We reference check for a lot of reasons.

- We may have picked up hints of an issue in the interview, the reference check allows us to check it out.
- It allows us to ask people that know the candidate some pointed and specific questions that could help protect us against negligent hiring.
- It allows us to check facts as well

WRITTEN Consent is VITAL. That's another reason to check AFTER the interview. At the interview process (probably while they're in HR) we can get a release/consent form. It heads off problems later if we decide not to hire based on references – for us and for the person who gave the reference.

We comply with state and federal laws, including FRCA – Fair Credit Reporting Act – dictates some of the language on the form.

## What information?

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- Persistence pays off
  - “Who else do you think I should talk to?”
- Listen listen listen.**
  - How it is said
  - What isn't said
- Keep written records
- Don't release information to applicant

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Persistence pays off. Some tips –

- Ask the person on the list “is there anyone else you think I should talk to about this candidate?” Our release form lets us talk to more people than just those the candidate provided.
- LISTEN – WHAT is being said? HOW is it being said. What ISN'T being said? Read between the lines if those lines are slapping you in the face.
- Keep written records. The reference is an interview – ask the same question of all references, take notes. Keep the notes!
- We never EVER release reference materials to an applicant. Did you know that even after hire you don't have an absolute right to see that part of your file?

## What information? (slide 2)

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- Information must relate to position  
KSA's and CSF's
- Information re arrests/convictions
  - In Illinois arrest and expunged records cannot be considered
  - Conviction is not automatic disqualifier
  - HR performs sex offender checks (that **WOULD BE** an automatic disqualifier!)

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You do need to remember that the information does need to relate to the job, of course.

Information regarding to arrests and convictions can be sticky. If you find out someone has an arrest record, please realize that arrest records **CANNOT** be considered against the individual in Illinois or Wisconsin. Neither can sealed or expunged conviction records.

A conviction does not automatically disqualify an individual – it depends on several factors including how long its been since the conviction, subsequent employment history, what the conviction was for, and so on.

A definite disqualifier? Being listed on a Sexual Offenders site as a convicted sex offender. We do check that in HR, by the way.

## Documentation

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- Interview guides, notes, reference check notes, and decision matrices must be sent to Human Resources at conclusion of process
- HR keeps this data for 2 years for legal purposes
- Extra copies of CV's should be shredded

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Any one count how many times I've talked about documentation?

We need the information.

A few years ago, we did have a case where a candidate decided we didn't hire him because of his national origin. Because the hiring supervisor kept such fabulous documentation, we easily won that case before an arbitrator, it never went to court.

Documentation can absolutely make or break the University's case.

## Interview Do's & Don't's

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### □ Do:

- Make the candidate feel comfortable / provide information;
- Allow for moments of silence during the process;
- Take control of the interview in the event the candidate begins to "ramble."
- Provide a timeline;
- Ask if candidate has any questions.

### □ Don't:

- Go unprepared;
- Make a hiring decision based on "gut instinct";
- Lead or guide the candidate's answers;
- Use body language which indicates disinterest in the candidate or his/her answers;
- Make any promises of employment, benefits, etc.

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This is just a refresher. I think you know most or all of this already. Are there any of the above that you'd like to discuss a bit?

## In Closing ...

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- Behavioral interviewing is the best avenue for “using past behaviors to predict future performance.”
- Interviewing is a skill that requires practice ... the interview “tool” you choose can make your decision making process easier.



Success!

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As you all know, practice may not make perfect, but it does make you better and more skilled.

## HR - Early & Often!

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- Utilize HR to assist in:
  - Developing Critical Success Factors;
  - Developing interview questions connected to the CSF's;
  - Utilizing the Decision Criteria Matrix;
  - Making the hiring decision.

**Terri Hoehne x 3866 AUR**

**Susan Brown x 5260 AUR**

**Kristan Smith x 8508 GWC**

We're here to assist you through the process.

Our goal is that the "incoming class" of faculty will truly shine, and that we'll end up with a group that will stay with us, increase the excellence of the University, and add value to our overall faculty.

So please feel free to work with us every step of the way.