

Working together towards Equity, Diversity & Inclusion



EDI Wise Practices for Hiring Panels

Consider these wise practices for developing and implementing an inclusive interview and selection process for candidates:

Hiring Panel Roles and Responsibilities

- The purpose of the Hiring Panel is to interview and select candidates more equitably, as it allows for a range of perspectives.
- A Hiring Panel should consist of a minimum of two (2) to three (3) Panel Members, including the Hiring Manager. For highly specialized roles, more than three (3) Panel Members may be necessary based on what is being assessed.
- The Hiring Manager is accountable for coordinating the interview and selection process.
- The Hiring Manager is accountable for assigning Panel Members to candidate interviews.
- The Hiring Manager should provide the job description for the position to Panel Members in advance of the interviews, in a timely manner that allows for Members to review all relevant documents.
- Where appropriate to the job description, the Hiring Manager should request area-specific interview questions from Panel Members (e.g., including an Indigenous-focused question for candidates who may be expected to work with Indigenous clients, etc.)

Hiring Panel Composition and Preparation

The Hiring Manager should make a best effort to build a diverse panel with the following considerations, in this order of importance:

- Panel Members should have a basic understanding of the role and its responsibilities.
- Panel Members should, where possible, reflect the diversity of the population bases VCH serves, as well as existing staff demographics. This includes age and years of service at VCH, educational experiences, ability and disability, languages spoken, regional and geographic representation, ethnic and racial identities, gender identities and expression, and other core dimensions of individuals' identities.
- If the vacancy is an executive role, Panel Members should ideally equally represent management and staff positions.

Prior to the Interview

The Hiring Panel should become familiar with the impacts of unconscious bias in the recruitment process. Resources include:

- [How Unconscious Bias Affects the Recruitment Process](#) (Video – 2 minutes)
- [Unconscious Bias in Recruiting](#) (Video – 5 minutes)
- [Unconscious Bias for Hiring Managers](#) (VCH Workshop – 90 minutes)

The Hiring Panel must declare any conflicts of interest, including current/prior working relationships or personal relationships they have had with the candidates (particularly where there is/was an imbalance of power), to other members of the Hiring Panel and the Talent Acquisition Advisor. If a Panel Member has a conflict of interest, they should be prepared to recuse themselves and suggest someone equivalent in their place.

To mitigate unexpected feelings of intimidation in the interview, the Hiring Manager should inform candidates prior to the interview if they will be interviewed by a panel consisting of more than two to three people.

Conducting the Interview

- a. Prepare for any accommodations for the candidate, if necessary.
- b. Frame interview questions in a way that ensures candidates are clear on what is being asked of them; for example, if the panel is seeking specific examples of skills or situations, this should be explicitly included in the question.
 - E.g., “Providing a specific example, tell us about a time when you...”
- c. During the interview, take detailed notes using the Interview Guide Template. Avoid going “off script” from interview questions, while recognizing that clarifying questions might be needed to accommodate differences in communication styles.
- d. Recognizing differences in how candidates comprehend questions (i.e., verbally, written), where possible, provide the candidate with the questions in writing (e.g., on a printed sheet to be returned at the end of the interview, or inserted in the Zoom meeting chat).
- e. If the candidate is “missing the mark” on a response, consider providing them with one chance to course-correct by asking a single follow-up question (ensure this is done equitably with all candidates).
- f. Ensure all candidate interviews follow the same format, including the length of time allocated per interview. Where possible, provide candidates similar amounts of time to ask questions of the panel.

Post-Interview Candidate Debrief and Evaluation

Assume bias – ask yourself and other Hiring Panel members:

- How have our biases impacted our preference for **or** against the candidate?
 - E.g., relying on ‘gut feelings’, which are often based on biases, such as affinity bias.
- Could assumptions or stereotypes be affecting our preference for **or** against the candidate?
 - E.g., assuming that a lack of eye contact means a person is disinterested or untrustworthy (this could be rooted in cultural differences, person could be neurodiverse, etc.)

- Are we jumping to conclusions about a candidate?
 - E.g., assuming they're not qualified because they presented as nervous during the interview; not taking into consideration differences in communication style (for certain cultures, it's not common to "talk yourself up" and this might be challenging for a candidate).
 - E.g., making assumptions about a candidate's capabilities based on irrelevant factors, such as the organization/industry they worked in previously, or what school they attended.

Panel Members should complete notes in the Interview Guide, score based on the Evaluation Matrix, and send all documents to the Hiring Manager/Director. Hiring Managers/Directors must save all copies for a minimum time period of four (4) years.

Candidate Selection

- a. Select the candidate who is most qualified for the role. The most qualified does not necessarily mean the candidate with the highest score. Consider strategic hiring when two candidates are approximately equal, meaning there are two equally qualified candidates and one is from an Employment Equity Designated Group (Gender Identity, Racial, Disability, Indigenous, and/or Sexual Orientation Diversity).
- b. Where possible, consider how a candidate's lived experience can positively contribute to team perspectives and dynamics.
- c. Submit the top candidate recommendation to your Talent Acquisition Advisor.
- d. Decide how to proceed if the top candidate turns the position down.

For any recruitment inquiries, please connect with your Talent Acquisition Advisor.

If you have any questions about this resource, please contact the EDI team at EDI@vch.ca