Myths or Facts:

Conducting Faculty/Professional & Scientific Staff Searches

Read the question and circle whether you think the statement is a myth or a fact about conducting faculty/P&S staff searches.

1) Is it a best practice to submit the Requisition/Recruitment Plan through the Workflow Transaction System for a position that is underrepresented for women and or minorities without identifying targeted resources. Myth or Fact

2) When developing your position announcement, it is a best practice to define the required and desirable qualifications rather broadly in the advertisements, and, later on, refine the qualifications more specifically once the search committee actually sees the applicants’ materials. Myth or Fact

3) Employers should ensure that employment tests and other selection procedures are properly validated for the positions and purposes for which they are used. The test or selection procedure must be job-related and its results appropriate for the employer’s purpose. Myth or Fact

4) Googling and surfing applicants’ private social media are sure fire ways to gain vital information that can be used to screen applicants’ qualifications. Myth or Fact

5) Applicants who exercise Veterans Preference under the Iowa Code may request to receive written notification explaining the specific reason(s) why they were not selected from an applicant pool. Myth or Fact

6) If the search committee is pressed for time and is worried about losing a top candidate, it is permissible to schedule interviews before submitting the Pre-Interview Report to EOD for review/approval. Myth or Fact

7) After the search committee has submitted the Search and Selection Summary Form through the Workflow Transaction System, and the applicant has accepted the position, it is permissible to purge the individual committee members’ notes used during search committee deliberations. Myth or Fact

8) “Tell us about yourself,” is an excellent example of an open-ended interview question that allows an applicant to share information that he/she feels comfortable in sharing. Myth or Fact

9) It is permissible for the Search admin.to change the rating code on the Search and Selection Summary without including an update in the narrative of the Hiring Summary Justification. Myth or Fact

10) It is not necessary to provide specific examples to support how the candidate(s) of choice met or did not meet the required and desired qualifications in contrast to the other finalists interviewed at the Search and Selection stage since this information was verified at the Pre-Interview stage. Myth or Fact

Answer Key
1) **Myth.** EOD cannot approve the Requisition/Recruitment Plan until targeting resources are identified. As a federal contractor we are required to make a “good faith effort” to source advertising resources that will attract women and minorities when positions are identified as underrepresented.

EOD requests that departments provide 24 hour notice when requesting assistance with advertising resources while the Requisition/Recruitment Plan is in draft form. It is also helpful to share with the EEO Coordinators information about previous ad resources utilized and the budget allotted. A best practice is to have departments/units on an ongoing basis identify and continue to research and evaluate effective advertising resources prior to conducting searches.

2) **Myth.** It is a best practice for position qualifications and evaluative tools to be developed prior to the search committee gaining access to the applicant pool, to minimize bias and ensure that fair and consistent screening of the entire applicant pool occurs.

Examples:

- What are the applicable fields of study (BS, MS, and PhD)?
- How will the committee calculate BA/MA equivalencies?

3) **Fact.** Recently, the OFCCP and the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission has been interpreting employment tests to include all aspects of the Search and selection process, including interviews and job samples.

A best practice for search committees is to spend time identifying effective screening tools to evaluate position qualifications based on current employee talent in their own workforce.

4) **Myth.** This practice can be a double-edged sword; therefore, EOD does not recommend this practice without first seeking permission from applicants to gain access to their professional websites. Transparency of this request is essential in order to provide ample time for applicants to update their professional website materials. A best practice is to have an Admin who is not on the search committee review applicant websites for information.

This will prevent the search committee from having access to personal, non-position related information such as the candidate's race, and ethnicity, association with political groups, affinity groups; etc. (refer to article on social media). If challenged, the burden will be on the hiring department to demonstrate that the non-position related information reviewed was not used to screen out applicants.

Keep in mind you want to treat all applicants as similarly as possible. In addition, not all information posted on social media sites may have been posted by the individual, nor can you always be certain the person's site belongs to your candidate (i.e. candidates with common names).

5) **Fact.** Applicants who have exercised Veterans Preference under the Iowa Code may request a review by EOD or exercise external appeal options through the courts as per Iowa code 35c.

It is required that search committees provide detail information to support the reasons why the veteran applicant does not meet the required and/or desired qualifications and attach this information to the Pre-Interview Report.

6) **Myth.** This practice compromises the integrity of the search and selection process particularly if EOD has questions about the search committee’s recommended list of
finalists and may result in delays to allow for EOD to review the search and selection process of the department/unit.

A best practice is for the search chair to request a rush request for EOD to review the search. It is important to note that rush requests do not bypass the full review process; complete and accurate information is necessary to accommodate a rush request.

7) **Fact.** The Pre-Interview Report and Search & Selection Summary are considered the “official record”. Therefore individual committee notes may be purged. (Refer to handout on confidentiality of applicants) following the conclusion of the search.

The contents of the search file must be kept for the current year plus three years. EOD recommends a secure locked place within the hiring department.

8) **Myth.** EOD does not recommend that search committees utilize this question in an interview. It is too nonspecific and can solicit all types of personal and non-position-related information to include protected group status and medical information. It is not clear to an applicant the type of information that the search committee is seeking. The search committee could receive too much information about the applicant's personal philosophy and political views, etc.

A best practice is to develop behavioral-based questions to evaluate applicant qualifications to perform the position's key areas of responsibilities. A better question to ask is “Describe for the committee how your education and experience makes you a competitive candidate for this position”.

9) **Myth.** It is a best practice to explain the rating change information of each finalist in the Hiring Justification Summary. This will expedite the review process and result in fewer delays.

10) **Myth.** Information gathered during the interview and reference check demonstrates the search committee’s efforts to evaluate candidate qualifications. All finalists interviewed should have qualification information included in the Hiring Justification Summary. You do not need to repeat information though that was included with the PIR. The Search and Selection Form justification should include information gleaned during the interview and the reference checks (if applicable to the hiring decision).