

STEP
1

STEP
2

STEP
3

STEP
4

DoD HIRING REFORM



FOUR KEY STEPS OF THE HIRING PROCESS



The right people in the right jobs at the right time.



DoD HIRING REFORM

GUIDELINES FOR HIRING MANAGERS

Recruiting the best employees for your agency is one of the most important and pressing activities you perform as a manager. While you are responsible for specific hiring decisions within your project area, you are not alone in this process. Department of Defense (DoD) Human Resources (HR) professionals are available to help. By working together to attract the best available candidates, we expedite the hiring process and ensure that the Department will continue to attract quality workers.

This brochure provides a guide to the four key steps of the hiring process, with helpful tips to facilitate that process. Also included is a useful outline for writing effective job announcements and integrating new employees into DoD's culture and mission.

FOUR KEY STEPS OF THE HIRING PROCESS:

**STEP
1**

PLANNING

**STEP
2**

ATTRACTING THE CANDIDATE

**STEP
3**

MAKING HIRING DECISIONS

**STEP
4**

SHAPING EARLY EXPERIENCES

PLANNING

Planning for hiring requires sound strategy and careful implementation.

WHAT YOU SHOULD DO AS A HIRING MANAGER

- **Review your strategic workforce plans**
Knowing your mission and related goals helps you identify your challenges.
- **Identify your talent requirements**
Compare your current workforce to your expected workforce needs.
- **Consider the labor market**
Be familiar with the current DoD and federal labor pool, as well as external sources. Know who's out there and how best to recruit them.

WHAT HR CAN DO

Your HR professional can share best practices, help you map out your needs, provide demographic information on your current workforce, discuss the labor market to identify potential sources of strong candidates and offer suggestions on how to attract them, including incentives and compensation strategies.



ATTRACTING THE CANDIDATE

Attracting quality candidates is helped by accurate and understandable descriptions of job duties, responsibilities and required qualifications.

WHAT YOU SHOULD DO AS A HIRING MANAGER

- **Confirm required skills and responsibilities, and align with needs**
Identify the primary responsibilities of the position and the skills needed to be successful in the position. Use available and up-to-date position descriptions. Consider the appropriate level of security clearance required for the position — this could have a major impact on the timeline.
- **Choose the best recruitment strategy**
With your HR professional, discuss the best strategies to recruit diverse candidates, including veterans and persons with disabilities. Consider all available sources for job candidates, such as colleges and professional associations. Decide which hiring flexibilities might be used and whether to use recruitment incentives.
- **Use simplified job announcements**
Ensure the job announcement clearly and simply identifies the requirements of the job. Plan the interview schedule as early in the process as possible once you have discussed timelines and interview formats with your HR professional.

WHAT HR CAN DO

Your HR professional plays an integral role in understanding your job and recommending strategies for attracting, assessing and choosing the best candidates and, ultimately, for compensating the selected applicant. Together you'll discuss timelines, communication preferences and responsibilities. Use the agreed-upon timeline to review resumes and schedule interviews. You and your HR professional will update each other on progress and make any needed adjustments to the timelines.

SPECIAL FOCUS AREA**WRITING EFFECTIVE JOB OPPORTUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Finding the best qualified candidates for your agency begins with clearly communicating the responsibilities and skills of the open position. You can do that by making sure an effective Job Opportunity Announcement, or JOA, is being used for the position you are filling. In some cases, you may be the primary author of the JOA, in other cases, you may work with your HR office to update one that already exists. Either way, the following tips will help you create JOAs that are understandable to job seekers.

- **Avoid Information Overload in Job Announcements**

Keep job announcements to fewer than 5 pages, focusing only on the required skills and essential responsibilities of the position. Brief descriptions for each section work best. Remember: the goal of a good job announcement is to provide enough information for the candidate to determine if the job is the right fit, and if so, how to apply.

- **Use Plain Language**

Use present tense and be enthusiastic when writing about the job (e.g., “You will manage...”). Keep the application instruction as simple as possible, and keep acronyms and federal terminology to a minimum. If unfamiliar terms must be used, include a brief descriptive phrase or spell out the acronym (e.g., “JOAs, or Job Opportunity Announcements...”).



You can use the following format as a guide for writing a JOA.

THE SEVEN INGREDIENTS OF THE JOA

1. Job Summary

- Write a summary of the job in 3 or 4 sentences.
- Identify the starting salary range.
- Indicate if this job has promotion potential.

2. Key Requirements

- Identify key requirements for the position with your HR professional, such as citizenship, education or experience requirements.

3. Responsibilities and Duties

- List a few of the major job responsibilities and duties as bulleted items.
- Use simple language and avoid excessive wordiness.
- Highlight the typical daily assignments that the applicant can expect.

4. Qualifications

- Provide clear qualification requirements. A simplified format will help applicants make the connection between what the job requires and their qualifications.
- Specify if education can be substituted for experience.

5. How Applicants Will be Evaluated

- Identify any knowledge, skills and abilities that are required for the job position.
- Focus on the key knowledge or skills needed for success in this position.
- Explain how candidates will be evaluated and how they will be ranked.

6. How to Apply

- Explain the ways a candidate can apply. Identify what needs to be included in the application package.

7. What to Expect Next

- Explain the post-application process to the applicant. Briefly explain how candidates will be notified of their application status.

MAKING HIRING DECISIONS

Involving your HR professionals can eliminate problems and ease the process.

WHAT YOU SHOULD DO AS A HIRING MANAGER

- **Determine schedule availability and set aside time for interviews early in the process**
Make sure those assisting you in the interviewing process are also available. Resolve any schedule and priority conflicts that will interfere with this phase.
- **Complete interviews in a timely manner**
Use time efficiently, while adhering to correct interview protocols. This practice respects your time and the applicant's time.
- **Notify appropriate officials, such as your HR servicing office, of your decision**
This should take place as soon as possible once you have made your decision. *If you're unclear about who to notify, your HR professional can help.*

WHAT HR CAN DO

Your HR professional will keep you informed and involved about the next steps in the process, promptly provide you the list of qualified candidates, ensure applicant notification occurs, and work with you from the time the tentative offer is extended to when the candidate is formally hired.



SHAPING EARLY EXPERIENCES

A smooth transition into the new job increases employee productivity and retention. Research shows most employees decide if they're going to stay or go within the first six months, so be sure to make a positive first impression.

WHAT YOU SHOULD DO AS A HIRING MANAGER

- **Stay informed and involved**
Touch base with your HR professional and the candidate on a regular basis after the tentative offer has been made.
- **Plan for a successful Day One**
Arrange for the appropriate workspace requirements (desk, computer, access, etc.) to be in place. Welcome your new employee and introduce that person to your staff and key personnel in your organization. Review the organization chart with the new employee and ensure a suitable staff sponsor or mentor has been assigned.
- **Cultivate a positive experience for the new employee**
Schedule regular meetings with your new employee. Make sure there is substantive work for your new employee to do, and set clear and realistic performance expectations. Provide information on training and development opportunities.

WHAT HR CAN DO

Your HR professional will initiate the conditions of employment (i.e., security and suitability), will work with you to establish the start date for the employee so you can plan your Day One activities and requirements, and coordinate the completion of appropriate paperwork and orientation.



SPECIAL FOCUS AREA**TIPS FOR SHAPING EARLY EXPERIENCES****1. Prepare for Arrival**

- Before the new employee's start date, coordinate with the appropriate office to mail or e-mail a Welcome Packet, which should include a welcome letter and organizational information. Always take a moment to add a personal note of welcome to the packet. A phone call from you is also an appropriate way to keep your new employees informed and to welcome them.
- Collaborate with the staff and assign a sponsor/mentor who will dedicate the time to provide this important support to the new employee.
- Ensure that office essentials and reasonable accommodations are ready (desk, computer, file cabinet, and supplies).

2. Make it a Good First Day

- Place a welcome note on the new employee's desk.
- Give a tour of the building, the office and essential facilities.
- Introduce key stakeholders, senior leaders, co-workers, and other managers to the new employee.
- Provide a contact list of the office for the new employee.
- Connect your new employee with your HR representative for the formal "swearing in", completion of paperwork and security requirements, and explanation of benefits and agency policies.
- Provide information about the organization, including the organization chart, and go over everyday aspects about the job.
- Plan a lunch with the new hire and co-workers.
- Allow some time for the new employee to settle into the office; check in with him or her frequently.
- At the end of the day, be sure to discuss the first-day experience with the new employee and answer questions.

3. Cultivation is Key for 90 Days

- Block out time especially during the first eight weeks to meet with your new employee, answer his or her questions, and respond to his or her concerns.
- Explain job responsibilities for the new employee, set realistic expectations, and provide feedback early and often using clear methods for understanding performance objectives.
- Establish a formal performance plan and communicate that you will hold the employee accountable for achieving the goals articulated in the plan.
- Provide meaningful work for the new employee and ensure the assignment is understood.
- Provide timely and constructive feedback on completed work assignments.
- Continue to introduce your new employee to key stakeholders, including staff from other departments and external partners.
- Solicit feedback on the onboarding process and make adjustments as needed.

Making an onboarding investment in your employee will pay off. A good onboarding process accelerates employee productivity, improves performance, and improves employee retention, reducing turnover costs.



FOUR KEY STEPS OF THE HIRING PROCESS

STEP 1

PLANNING

- Review your strategic workforce plans
- Identify your talent requirements
- Consider the labor market

STEP 2

ATTRACTING THE CANDIDATE

- Confirm required skills and responsibilities, and align with needs
- Choose the best recruitment strategy
- Use simplified job announcements

STEP 3

MAKING HIRING DECISIONS

- Determine schedule availability and set aside time for interviews early in the process
- Complete interviews in a timely manner
- Notify appropriate officials of your decision

STEP 4

SHAPING EARLY EXPERIENCES

- Stay informed and involved
- Plan for a successful Day One
- Cultivate a positive experience for the new employee

Finding and hiring top talent for DoD is critical to achieving our mission. Your active participation in workforce planning, recruiting, hiring and developing talent strengthens DoD and makes us an employer of choice. We look forward to working with you to meet your talent needs. For more information contact your HR servicing activity.

For more information on DoD's hiring reform initiative, go to:
http://www.cpms.osd.mil/hiring_reform/hiring_index.aspx

A collaborative effort between the Department of Defense
and the Partnership for Public Service