

Top 10 Tips: The Interview: Screening for Fit

by Sandy Kuperberg, HR Manager, Toronto International Film Festival Group

1. The Job Posting

Send your job opening to places that are a fit with what your organization does – some ideas: arts organizations in your network, professional associations, Work in Culture, Charity Village.

2. Initial Screen

Conduct an initial screen of candidates based on the qualifications of the job: Make an A B C (or Yes, Maybe, No) pile.

Conduct Phone Interviews – find out what the candidate knows about the organization, and get a sense of salary expectations.

3. Use Behavioural Interview questions

i.e. changing the yes/no question. **Example:** Can you describe a situation where you had to deal with an irate or incredibly demanding donor? What was your reaction, and the outcome? (To determine conflict resolution skills/customer service approach).

4. Use Scenario Interview questions

Provide the candidate with a realistic preview of the organization, as well as to determine how they might behave in a situation.

Example: The Director of Development has just called you with a list of 5 names and their telephone numbers after a Campaign volunteer meeting. He has asked you to book all 5 meetings in the next week with these individuals under the advice of our campaign volunteer. You must coordinate the schedules of the volunteer, the DOD and the individual prospects. What would you do next? (To determine ability to multi-task and prioritize).

5. Hiring Committees

Get other staff's perspective. Consider inviting staff from other department's (esp. those who maybe working closely with this position) to join the interview process.

6. Be prepared for the interview!

Review the candidate's resumes ahead of time-and if you have a committee, encourage the same. This will allow you to focus your energies towards evaluating the candidates' previous experience and "fit" potential, based on your needs for the job.

7. Set the stage for the interview

Open the interview by providing an overview of the organization and the job, let the candidate know you'll be taking notes, and they will have an opportunity at the end to ask questions of you and/or your committee.

8. End of Interview Questions

Encourage and evaluate questions raised by the candidate at the end of the interview.

9. 2nd Interviews

Invite your short-list in for 2nd interviews – these can take a different format from the first, they can be more informal, and can be either one on one, or different staff than the hiring committee. This is also a perfect opportunity to give the candidate a tour of the workplace.

10. Make sure "fit" doesn't become "just like me"