Hiring for Diversity Workshop: Crafting Interview Questions

Why is a diverse focus important in the interview process?

Effective interviewing increases the likelihood of effective hiring, thus reducing the cost of turnover and employee relations issues. Identify key competencies for success in your position and criteria for evaluation, the premiere elements in structuring effective interviewing questions.

Preparing for an interview:

One of the first steps in preparing for an interview is to develop a list of behaviors or characteristics that would fall within each critical competency profile and/or a rubric built on the criteria a candidate will be evaluated against. A Value for Diversity is a critical competency which you can align your interview questions with and can be added to your rubric or assessment tool. Once you are aware of the characteristics a candidate should possess, you will be able to formulate your interview questions more effectively. A list of characteristics that would encompass "Value for Diversity" is provided below, as well as a list of sample questions to ask in the interview.

What characteristics do individuals who Value and Support Diversity display?

- Manages all kinds and classes of people equitably
- Effectively leverages the contributions of all races, nationalities, cultures, disabilities, ages, and sexes.
- Supports equal and fair treatment and opportunity for all
- Initiates diversity program or activities
- Discourages inappropriate language in the workplace
- Contributes to a welcoming environment for individuals regardless of their background or culture
- Is able to support, teach and empower all students while managing and acknowledging needs of historically underserved groups in Higher Education
- Is able to effectively communicate with people of all races, nationalities, cultures, disabilities, ages, and sexes.
- Proactively manages and promotes diversity through hiring, retention and promotion activities
- Leads and positively impacts diversity in the workplace and community

Potential Interview Questions with a Diversity Focus

- Provide the Ithaca College Statement on Diversity. How has your experience and background prepared you to be effective in this environment with this diversity philosophy?
- In this position, how do you think you might be able to support the College's philosophy toward diversity?
- How have you integrated multiculturalism as part of your teaching pedagogy?
- Tell me about a time when a needed to provide a student/peer of a different gender, race or ethnic background with mentoring or support.
- What do you see as the most challenging aspect of a diverse working environment? What steps have you taken to meet this challenge?
- How do you support traditionally underserved and underrepresented students in your teaching?
- What kinds of experiences have you had working with others with different backgrounds than your own?
- Tell me about a time you had to alter your work style to meet a diversity need or challenge?
- How have you handled a situation when a colleague was not accepting of others' diverse backgrounds?
- What does it mean to have a commitment to diversity and how would you develop and apply your commitment at this institution?
- What was/is the diversity value at your current/former employer? What impact did you make on this value?
- What efforts have you made, or been involved with, to foster diversity competence and understanding?
- What have you done to further your knowledge about diversity? Have you included diversity in your professional development? How have you demonstrated what you have learned?
- What kind of leadership efforts would you make to ensure a commitment to the diversity initiative?
- What strategies have you used to address diversity challenges? What were the positives and negatives?