

Sample Hiring Process

The following are the basic steps in hiring:

1. Write a job description (don't be 100% locked into this. Use it as a starting point).
2. Identify prospects
 - a. Always look internal to the church first
 - b. Network with other churches and organizations – keep looking. Many people will not respond to your initial requests. Instead of putting out an email that says “Do you know of anyone?” Put out an email that says “Please give me the names of three potential children’s ministers”. Direct phone calls to friends and peers are more effective than email.
 - c. Attend conferences and seminars that focus on the specific ministry area that you are looking for staff in. Many people who are looking for jobs attend these conferences. Check the bulletin boards at these conferences. Don't be afraid to ask people you meet if they have considered a new position.
 - d. Use online services. The best we've seen is www.churchstaffing.com. They have an awesome database and will email you notifications of new resumes.
 - e. Post your job description on your web site
 - f. Don't be afraid to ask. Be assertive.
3. Make initial contact. Do this by phone. Many people will say no. Some will say they are happy where they are and not really feeling God's call to leave, but they are willing to talk. Talk to them.
4. Review a person's resume. Make a list of questions. Look specifically at character, competency, compatibility, and calling (4 Cs)
5. Ask the person to complete your questionnaire (see separate files). Ask for a deadline and see how they respond. Some will beat it, others will meet it, and others will miss it. Review the results. Start with their attention to detail. They will not be any more disciplined on your staff than they are in responding to your written questions. Do they have good grammar? Can they communicate clearly? Look closely at their experience, strengths and weaknesses, ability to critically evaluate themselves, and team/leadership experience and potential.
6. Follow-up contact/phone interview to discuss questions from the resume and questionnaire.
7. Contact references. Verify strengths and weaknesses and get clarification of any open issues. Many references don't want to say negative things about the candidate. Specifically ask for their weaknesses. Tell the reference you don't hire anyone without understanding their weaknesses. If there are no known weaknesses, you don't hire (everyone has weaknesses). Also, ask each reference for one or two additional references

that were not given by the candidate (i.e. 3rd party references). Ask for names of other elders, other staff members, or previous supervisors. Contact the additional references. Take notes from each phone interview. Write things down exactly as they are stated. Don't put your own spin on them. Gain a solid understanding of the potential staff members spouse also. Main purposes are to discern competency and character. Also can find out how compatible they've been with previous assignments (do they get along with people, management style, etc.).

8. Follow-up contact/phone interview to resolve any other open items.

9. Invite the candidate in for an interview. Consider having the candidate visit for 2-5 days rather than one day. Let the candidate get to know people and get into the rhythm of your ministry pace. (Many candidates will conclude your pace is too fast or too slow for them without even officially interviewing). Get others at your church to meet with the candidate. Conduct an "official" interview after the person has attended your church service and has seen operations for at least 2 days. Ask for their assessment of what they've seen. (strengths and weaknesses). What would they change? What approach would they take if hired? Do their assessment, philosophy and approach match? Also, flush out any theological differences that could be a problem. Do a debrief with the candidate before they leave? What did they think? Do they sense a calling? Etc.

10. Trust your gut. Avoid rationalizations. Is the candidate a homerun? How do they rate on character? Competency? Compatibility? How does your assessment match that of other people who met with the candidate?

11. If necessary, conduct a follow-up phone interview to clarify any open issues. Close the loop with the candidate and let them know of your decision. Send a thank you card for their willingness to visit.