

Establishing and Using Screening Criteria

Use of well thought-out criteria promotes:

- Hiring the best candidates
- Fairness
- Non-discrimination, ie. all considerations are as free as possible from irrelevant bias
- Promotion of diversity and enrichment of the workforce
- Efficiency, but **not** at the expense of fairness

Concerns in developing screening criteria:

1. **Protected classes:** criteria should be free from considerations that negatively impact members of a protected class (such as considerations related to disability, gender, ethnicity, race, religion, age, sexual orientation, etc.).
2. **Needs of the position:** criteria should not include considerations unrelated to the position.
3. **Defining what is meant:** criteria should not be undefined or ill-defined.
4. **Bias:** criteria should be unbiased (see handout "Thinking about Bias" for discussion of biased criteria such as prestige factors/sectorism).

Concerns in weighting screening criteria:

5. **Narrow conceptions:** Criteria should be weighted/prioritized, but not in such a way that it supports a narrowly pre-conceived notion of who will do this job. When criteria are prioritized at the beginning of the process, the system should be open to re-prioritization and re-screening of candidates based on evolution in the committee's thinking.

Concerns in applying screening criteria:

6. **Performance based:** assessment of how well a candidate meets a particular criterion should be based on the actual performance of the candidate vs. assumptions about performance from personality traits, pedigree or other considerations. Look at recent past performance.
7. **Numeric ranking:** Steer clear of rigid numerical formulations, which can give the appearance of objectivity to a system that is quite subjective. Numeric scores are helpful to guide your judgment, but are not a substitute for good judgment. Candidates near the borderlines between categories (unqualified, moderately qualified, highly qualified) deserve extra scrutiny to determine which category they best fit, regardless of numeric score.
8. **Unnecessary rigidity:** Do not evaluate candidates' experiences or qualifications in a way that is needlessly conventional or rigid. Be open to transferable skills and non-traditional career paths.