United States

of America

Working for America

Focus Groups With Hiring Managers - Focus Group Summary Form

This document contains questions for obtaining input from hiring managers on their perspectives and opinions on the agency's hiring process.

FOCUS GROUPS
WITH HIRING MANAGERS

Information about the Focus Groups		
2.	Location:	
3.	Number of Participants:	
4.	Participant Group:	
5.	Facilitator Names:	
6.	Note-taker Names:	

QUESTIONS

1. What is your understanding of your role in the hiring process vs. the manager's role?

2. Are you aware of OPM's memo entitled "Strategies to Improve Federal Hiring"? If so, was any of it new to you?

3. What aspects of the hiring process within HR take the longest amount of time?

   Prompts:

   Identifying KSAs and competencies (done by either HR or hiring office)

   Preparing crediting plans/assessments

   Preparing job announcements

   Processing incoming applications

4. What are some of the barriers that prevent a timely hiring process?

   Prompts:

   Staff resources

   Staff training

   Communication with hiring officials

   Administrative officers

   Number of applications

   Scheduling/running panels

   Selecting officials' timeliness

5. How much of a barrier are internal, agency-specific policies and procedures in the hiring process?

   Prompt:

   Redundant reviews

6. What do you wish hiring officials would do differently to expedite the hiring process?

7. If panels are used, how can panel resources be used most effectively to evaluate applicants?

   Prompt:

   Assemble panels early to be ready to work once applications have been screened

8. What aspects of the hiring process do you feel can be streamlined?

9. What have been your experiences with new hiring flexibilities such as direct hire, the category rating process, and hiring incentives (e.g., student loan repayment programs and recruitment or relocation bonuses)?

10. What kinds of experiences have you had with the use of automated systems to screen applications?

    Prompts:

    USA Staffing

    Resumix

    Other systems helpful to reduce hiring time?

    Suggestions for improvement?

11. Who do you think should be responsible for the continued development of automated hiring systems?

    Prompts:

    OPM? Individual agencies? Congress?

12. What role would you like OPM to play in the use of candidate assessment tools?

13. What are some things that seem to be working well in the current hiring process?

RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS

1. How many of you have made a selection in recent years for external hires? How many of you have made a selection in recent years through merit promotions?

Notes

2. What is your understanding of your role in the hiring process vs. the role of HR staff?

   Prompts:

   Recruitment methods

   Job announcement

   Candidate assessment

   Interviews (scheduling and conducting)

   Reference checks

   Extending the job offer

Notes

3. What are some of the barriers you have encountered that delayed the hiring process?

      Prompts:

      Budget

      Staff resources

      Layers of approval

      Communication with HR

      Different barriers for filling a vacant position vs. creating a new position

Notes

4. How much of a barrier are agency-specific policies and procedures in the hiring process?

Notes

5. What aspects of the hiring process are the most time-consuming?

      Prompts:

      Approval of position/authority to hire

      Getting announcement out

      Reviewing applications

      Rating panels

      Getting certificate of eligibles

      Scheduling/Conducting interviews

      Reference checks

Notes

6. What do you wish HR staff or Administrative Officers would do differently to expedite the hiring process?

Notes

7. What is the role of administrative officers in the hiring process? What kinds of experiences have you had with them?

Notes

8. How do you feel about the quality of applicants referred to you?

Notes

9. What aspects of the hiring process are the most time-consuming?

     Prompts: Veterans' Recruitment Appointment (VRA)

         Veterans' Opportunity Employment Act

         30% Disabled Veterans

         On-Campus Recruitment or Student Educational Employment Program (SEEP) Appointment (Student Temporary and Career Appt., also referred as co-op appointment)

         Federal Career Intern Program (FCIP)

         Presidential Management Fellows Program (PMF)

         Other excepted appointments, e.g., for persons with disabilities

         Outstanding Scholars Program (only in conjunction with competitive examining)

         Direct Hire authority for mission-critical positions

            -Medical occupations

            -Information technology management

            -Iraq reconstruction

        Direct Hire for shortage positions

        Hiring Incentives

            -Recruitment bonuses

            -Relocation bonuses

            -Student loan repayment

        Category Rating (alternative to Rule of Three rating and ranking procedure)

Notes

10. If you have used any hiring flexibilities, what has been the impact on the quality of candidates?

 Prompts:

 Impact on choice of applicants

 Impact on quality of applicants

 If no or little use of hiring flexibilities, what are the barriers to their use?

Notes

11. What aspects of the hiring process do you feel can be streamlined?

Notes

12. What aspects of the hiring process work well, and why?

Notes