STANDARDIZED HIRING PROCESS GUIDE

FOR CHILD WELFARE SPECIALISTS I & II

Version 3.0
June 8, 2023

Contents

Questions or feedback about this guide or the hiring process should be sent to CW.HR.Requests@okdhs.org

Section I. Overview and Background

This guide provides information about the development and implementation of a new standardized hiring process for Child Welfare Specialist (CWS) I and II positions (except for hotline positions) in the Oklahoma Department of Human Services (OKDHS) Child Welfare Services Division. It addresses how the new process was initiated and developed and how each step of the process should be conducted.

I.1. Project Partnership

The new process was developed through a partnership between OKDHS and the Quality Improvement Center for Workforce Development (QIC-WD) and led by a steering committee comprised of representatives from Child Welfare Services and its partners, including Human Resource Management, Oklahoma University's School of Social Work and Center for Public Management, and the QIC-WD.

I.2 Focus on Hiring

Through a comprehensive needs assessment process, it was determined that the lack of a consistent selection process for frontline child welfare workers at OKDHS was a top area in need of attention. Selection processes and interview questions varied widely across the state. Further, the efficacy of these hiring decisions for predicting employee performance or turnover had not been systematically assessed.

I.3 Development of the Hiring Process

The first step of the development process was to identify the critical competencies that CWS Is and IIs need at the time of hire. Competencies are the knowledge, skills, abilities, behaviors, and other characteristics that an individual needs to perform work roles or occupational functions successfully.

Employees can acquire competencies before being hired, during training, or on the job. The goal for competency-based selection is to assess individual differences in job competencies that can't or won't be trained or learned on the job.

Extensive interviews and surveys were conducted with Child Welfare Supervisors and experienced Specialists to arrive at a final set of the most important competencies to target through the hiring process. Several measures, interview questions, and rating tools were selected or developed to assess the core competencies.

I.4 Features of the Hiring Process

Consistent Communication with Candidates: The process includes clear and consistent communication with candidates before they arrive, ensuring that they understand what to expect during the selection process. This helps manage expectations and provides transparency, which is crucial for ensuring the hiring process stays fair and inclusive.

Standard Processes and Questions: The process is highly structured, following a well-defined approach with predefined procedures and a set of standardized questions, while also allowing for flexibility in certain areas. This combination of structure and flexibility enables a fair comparison of candidates and ensures that all relevant aspects are thoroughly evaluated.

Detailed Rating Scales with Behavior Descriptions: The process incorporates detailed rating scales that outline specific behaviors and performance criteria. These scales serve as valuable tools for interviewers to evaluate candidates in an objective and consistent manner. By aligning their assessments with the behavior descriptions provided in the scales, interviewers can effectively mitigate personal biases and maintain a focus on impartial and objective evaluations.

Training for Everyone Involved: All Administrative Assistants and interviewers participating in the selection process receive training on how to conduct the process effectively and utilize standardized tools and techniques. This training process promotes shared understanding and ensures that all interviewers follow the same guidelines and principles, leading to greater consistency and fairness.

Reduction of Biases: By implementing a structured process with clear guidelines and standardized tools, the influence of biases is reduced. The process helps mitigate the impact of subjective judgments and personal preferences, leading to a more equitable evaluation of candidates.

Time for Deliberation and Informed Decisions: The process allows for adequate time for deliberation and informed decision-making, enabling interviewers to thoroughly review all relevant information, such as candidates' responses and performance ratings, before making their final decisions. This approach acts as a check and balance in thinking, fostering more thoughtful, well-informed, and deliberate selections.

I.5 Evaluation of the Hiring Process

A rigorous randomized control trial at OKDHS found the following benefits:

- Turnover was lower among people who were hired through the new process. Specifically, it lowered the *risk of leaving* by 24%.
- Higher scores are associated with better job performance, as measured by supervisor judgments.
- People hired with the new process were more likely to report that they received valuable information prior to the interview, that the process was fair and gave them opportunities to show their qualifications and capabilities for the job, that the agency was concerned about hiring the most qualified candidates, and that they were satisfied overall with how the hiring process was conducted.

To ensure continued effectiveness, it is important to conduct this process in accordance with the guidance in this document.

Section II. Recruitment and Screening

II.1 Requesting to Fill a Vacant Position

The process for requesting and getting approval for a filling a vacancy remains the same. An Employment Action Form (HCM-92) and a Job Announcement Requisition (JAR, 11PE031E) are completed and submitted to Human Resource Management (HRM) via the e92 system. HRM will enter the position opening in JazzHR, which will post the information on the DHS website and a variety of external job boards.

II.2 Application for Child Welfare Specialists I and II

The application process is the same. When applicants apply, they must indicate their education and upload a resume. Applicants receive an email confirmation of receipt of their application. JazzHR automatically screens applications for minimum qualifications around educational background. Applicants who do not meet the minimum qualifications receive an email notification within three days of their application submission.

II.3 Receiving and Reviewing Applications

The process for reviewing and deciding on applications remains the same. Applications can be viewed in JazzHR, and there are no requirements or prescribed criteria for choosing who should be invited to the next step of the hiring process. The applicant-coding process in JazzHR remains the same; please be sure to enter your screening decision in JazzHR (e.g., *Reject—NOT MOVING FORWARD*, *Advance—Applicants to Interview*).

II.4 Choosing a Method

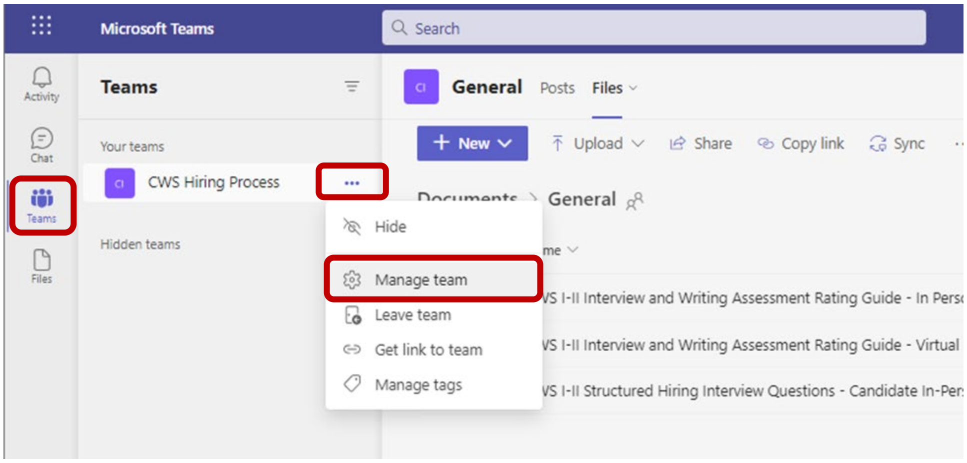
There are three main parts of the standardized hiring process: 1) writing assessment, 2) candidate interview preparation, and 3) interview.

1. The steps can be done either virtually (via Teams) or in person.
2. The steps can be done all in one day or split across two days.
3. If they are split across two days, the writing assessment should be done on the first day, and the interview preparation and interview should be done together on the second day.
4. A hybrid option can be used to do the writing assessment virtually and the interview in person.
5. Note that if the candidate needs to do the writing assessment in person, a computer must be available for the candidate to use.

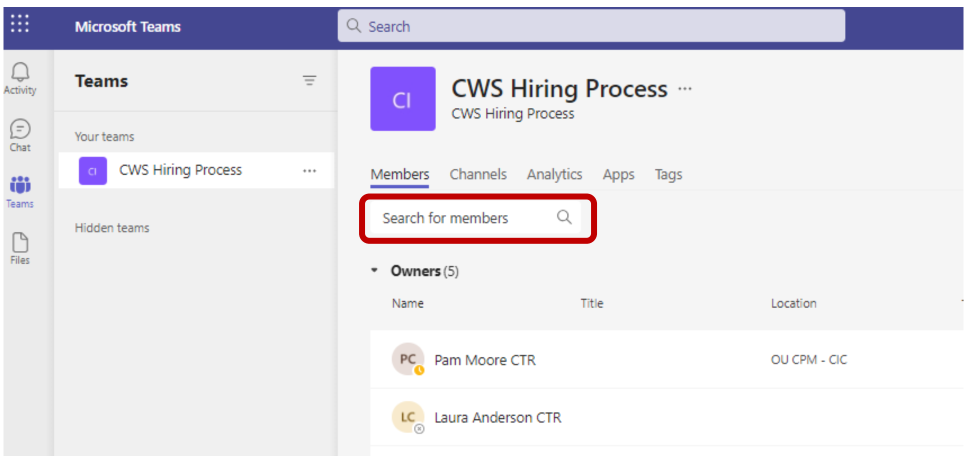
II.5 Selecting a Hiring Panel

In order to participate in the new process, interviewers must have received training. To determine whether a potential interviewer has attended training, you can search for them in Teams.

1. Open the Teams app and click on *Teams* on the left. For the *CWS Hiring Process* team, click on the three horizontal dots to the right of the team name, and click on *Manage team*.



2. In the *Members* tab, which should be selected by default, enter the person's name in the *Search for members* field.



If the person is a member of the team, then they have been trained. If they are not in the list of members of the team, they have not been trained and cannot participate in the new interview. Whenever possible, the same panel members should be used for a single position opening (i.e., across candidates), to improve consistency.

II.6 Scheduling

Selecting a Date and Time

1. All Steps in One Day
   a. It is estimated that it will take 1 hour and 30 minutes for the candidate to complete the entire process (40 minutes for the writing assessment and interview preparation and 50 minutes for the interview).
   b. It is estimated that panel members will need 1 hour and 10 minutes for each candidate (50 minutes for the interview and 20 minutes for scoring and discussion).
2. Steps Split Across Two Days
   a. For the writing assessment portion, 25 minutes should be reserved for the candidate.

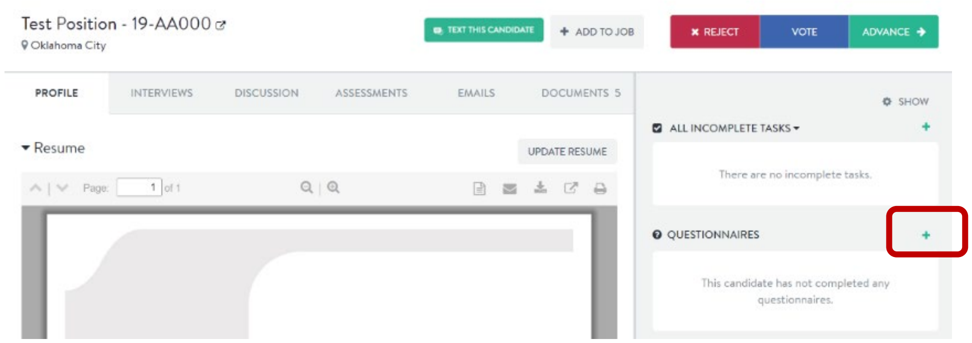
b. For the interview portion, the candidate will need to be scheduled for at least 1 hour and 5 minutes (15 minutes to review the questions and 50 minutes for the interview).

c. Again, it is estimated that panel members will need 1 hour and 10 minutes for each candidate (50 minutes for the interview and 20 minutes for scoring and discussion).

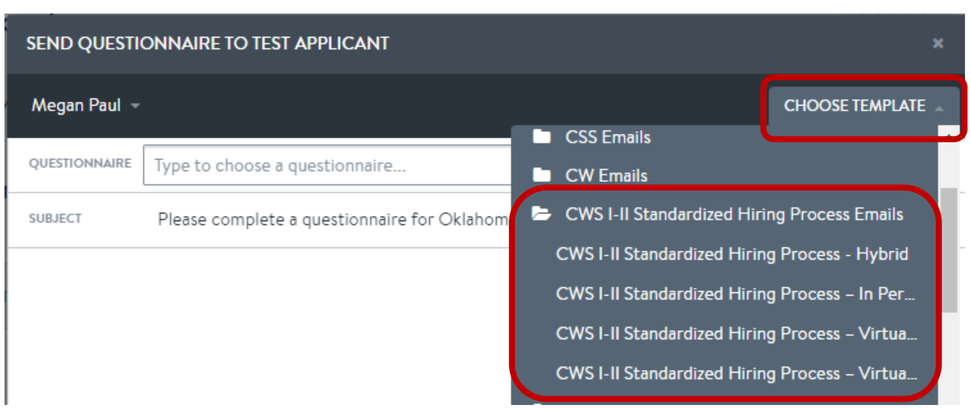
Sending Invites to the Candidate

After the candidate is advanced to an interview in JazzHR, the candidate should be contacted by phone and then sent an initial invite using one of the four standard email templates in JazzHR (options vary depending on what arrangements are selected). All templates include: introductory information for you to customize; a description of the hiring process; instructions regarding references and official transcripts; a link to view more information about the job; and an attachment that provides a brief summary of employee benefits. In addition, the invitation should include a link to a brief questionnaire that asks about reliable transportation and liability insurance, whether the candidate has lived in another state in the last five years, barriers to attending training, a computer literacy (i.e., word processing and using Windows, web browsers, search engines, and email) attestation, and a certification of the truth of the information provided. Further instructions are provided below.

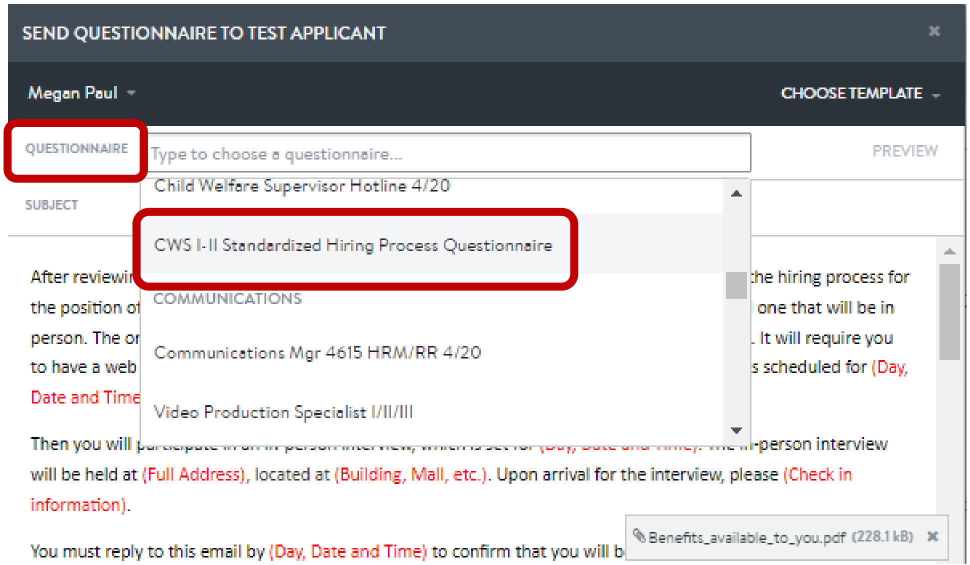
1. In JazzHR, search for and select the candidate, to access their profile.
2. Go to the *QUESTIONNAIRES* section in the sidebar on the right, and click on the green plus sign (+).



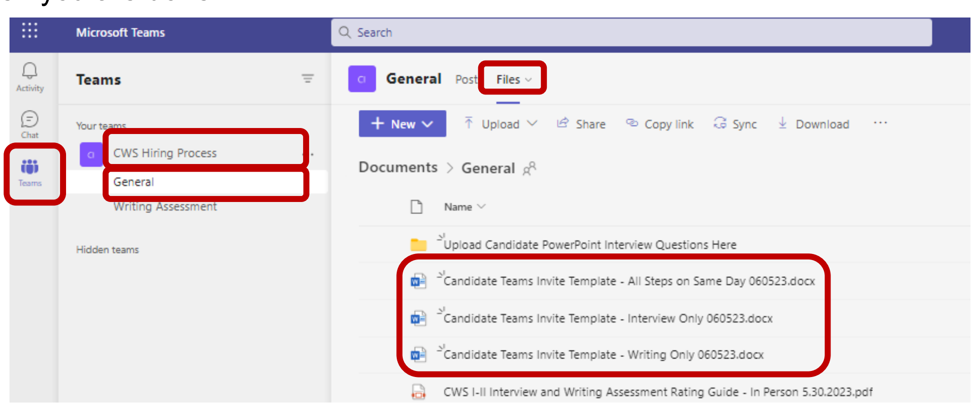
3. When the dialog box opens, click on *CHOOSE TEMPLATE* and select the appropriate interview invite from the *CWS I-II Standardized Hiring Process Emails* folder.



4. Click in the *QUESTIONNAIRE* field on the top left, scroll to the *Child Welfare* section, and select *CWS I-II Standardized Hiring Process Questionnaire*. Customize the email as needed for the candidate and click *SEND.* The candidate will receive the email and a link to complete the questionnaire. Responses to the questionnaire can be accessed in the QUESTIONNAIRES section shown in step 2 above.



5. When the candidate replies, the response will go to the Outlook inbox of the person who sent it from JazzHR, and it will also be available in JazzHR (in the email tab for the candidate). To ensure that the candidate received it, you may want to call them as well; sometimes the emails can get flagged as spam.
6. If either step of the process will be done virtually, Teams meeting invites will be needed as well. When the candidate has confirmed their availability and ability to use Teams, send the Teams meeting invite using Outlook, using the templates provided in Teams.
   a. To retrieve the information for the body of the email from the template, open the Teams app, and click on *Teams* on the left. Select the *CWS Hiring Process* team, click on the *General* channel, click on *Files* at the top, and locate the appropriate *Candidate Teams Invite Template,* depending on which method you will be using. Open the file and copy the contents, in order to paste into your meeting invite. Or you can download the file, open it on your computer, and copy from there. Delete the file when you are done.



b. Open Outlook and create a new Teams meeting. There should be at least two options for doing so:
    - Click on *New Items* and select *Teams Meeting*
    - OR Click on *New Items*, select *Meeting*, and then click on *Teams Meeting* in the ribbon.

c. Paste the invite details into the body of the email and customize as needed. At a minimum, the text in red needs to be customized for the candidate: the day, the date, your name, and your contact information.

d. If the hiring panel will be joining the candidate's meeting (vs. having their own meeting room), you may want to activate the meeting lobby to better control when people join the meeting. This will allow hiring panel members to join early and get situated without disrupting the candidate.
    - To do so, click on *Meeting options* in the meeting information section at the bottom of the email.
    - Then change who can bypass the lobby by clicking on the dropdown menu and selecting *Only me and co-organizers.*
    - Click *Save*.

e. Complete the necessary fields in the meeting invite (title, candidate's email, date, and time). To make things more clear on your calendar, it is recommended that you include the candidate's name in the meeting title (e.g., *Interview with Tori Wilson for CWS I/II Position*). Refer to section *II.6 Scheduling, Selecting a Date and Time*, for a reminder of how much time should be reserved. Because of the different time requirements for candidates and hiring panel members, it is best to <u>not</u> include the hiring panel members in this invite. When everything is final, click *Send*.

f. If you are using an all-virtual method and will be splitting the process into two days, repeat the process above for the second invite (for the interview). Again, refer to section *II.6 Scheduling, Selecting a Date and Time*, for a reminder of how much time should be reserved.

Sending Meeting Invites to the Hiring Panel

1. Send a separate Outlook meeting invite to the hiring panel members, based on the time they need reserved for their part.
2. For a virtual interview, you can choose one of two options: a) have the hiring panel join the meeting between you and the candidate or b) give the hiring panel their own Teams meeting and have the candidate join that meeting room.
    a. *Hiring panel joins Administrative Assistant and candidate:* The hiring panel will not need to join the meeting until approximately 40 minutes after the candidate is expected to join (or 20-25 minutes if you've chosen to administer the writing assessment on a different day), possibly sooner if the candidate is done early and the panel is ready. Then the panel members will need an estimated 1 hour and 10 minutes for each candidate (50 minutes for the interview and 20 minutes for rating and discussion). Do not include a meeting link in this email; just reserve the time. Later, before the candidate is ready for the hiring panel members to join, you will

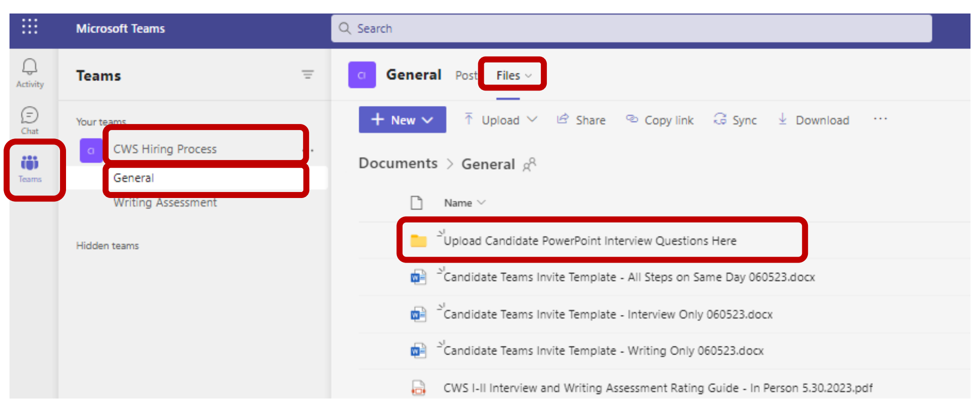
send the panel the meeting link, which they will be waiting to receive. To remind panel members of this plan, you may want to include the following language in this invite: “This invite does not include the Teams meeting link. You will receive the meeting link by email approximately 15 minutes before the interview is scheduled to start.”

b. *Hiring panel has their own Teams meeting room*: Create a new Teams meeting invite in Outlook that reserves the desired block of time for one or more candidates. You will provide this link to the candidate when it is time for them to join the panel for the interview.

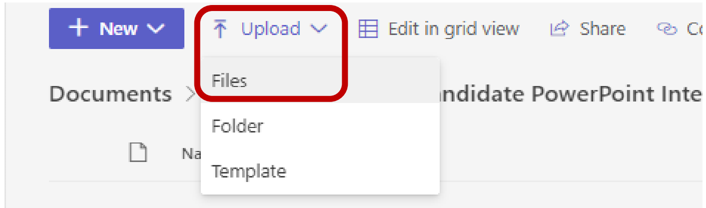
II.7 Preparing Materials for the Hiring Process

All materials will be available in Teams, in the team called *CWS Hiring Process,* in the *General* channel, in the *Files* tab. Below are the files that will be used during the process.

1. Interview Questions for Candidate—Virtual Interview
    a. The candidate will view the questions via screen share during the Teams meeting. This file will need to be created with a custom watermark for each candidate.
    b. Go to http://okdhs.unl.edu in your web browser.
    c. Enter the password questionTool!! and then click on the green *Login* button.
    d. In the field labeled *Create New Interview Questions PPT*, enter the candidate’s name, and then click on the green *Create* button.
    e. A new file will be generated, and a prompt will come up with a link for you to download the PowerPoint. Click on *download*.
    f. Save the file somewhere on your computer, for use during the interview preparation period of the meeting. Name the file using the candidate’s name, the label *Interview Questions*, and date (e.g., *Tori Wilson Interview Questions 020523*).
    g. You will also upload it to Teams. Open Teams and locate the *CWS Hiring Process* team. Click on the *General* channel and then on the *Files* tab at the top.
    h. Open the folder called *Upload Candidate PowerPoint Interview Questions Here*. If you would like to make a designated folder for yourself or the panel within this folder, you may do so by clicking on *New* and *Folder*. Enter the folder name and click on *Create*.



i. Then click on *Upload* and *Files*.



j. Navigate to the candidate's watermarked PowerPoint on your computer, select the file, and click *Open*. The file should upload and be displayed in the list of files.

2. Interview Questions for Candidate—In Person
    a. A paper copy of the interview questions is needed for each candidate. It is strongly suggested that this document be printed on brightly colored paper, so that it can be readily identified.
    b. Always access the most recent version of the file, called *CWS I-II Structured Hiring Interview Questions – Candidate In Person*.
3. Hiring panel members will want to view a copy of the candidate's application, resume, and questionnaire responses (e.g., regarding transportation, training, computer literacy) in preparation for and during the interview. These can be accessed in JazzHR. If you are responsible for getting this information to the hiring panel, it is recommended that you print them as PDFs and send them by email (vs printing them on paper). You may use a PDF creator or writer, which can be found in your printer options.
4. Hiring panel members will also need *the CWS I-II Interview and Writing Assessment Rating Guide*. There are two versions: a) one for a virtual interview, into which notes can be typed and b) one for an in-person interview, which can be printed.
5. After the interview is over, the hiring panel will need to rate the candidate, and you will need to customize the rating form in advance.
    a. In the *General* channel, in the *Files* tab, go to the Excel file called *Standardized Hiring Rating and Scoring Template*.
    b. Download the file and rename it with the candidate's name in the filename (e.g., *Tori Wilson Rating and Scoring Form*).
    c. Open the file and enter the candidate's name and the date in the first worksheet called *Candidate Information*.
    d. In one or more of the next three worksheets (e.g., *Rater #1, Rater #2*), enter each interviewer's name in the top right. After all interviewers enter their ratings, the final score information will be available in the last worksheet called *Candidate Master Score.*

    e. Upload the completed form in the folder called *Upload Rating and Scoring Forms Here.* If you would like to make a designated folder for yourself or the panel within this folder, click on *New* and *Folder*. Enter the folder name and click on *Create*.

6. You will need to provide the candidate a link to the writing assessment, so be sure to have it handy: Writing Assessment for Child Welfare Specialist I &II Positions. Further details can be found in the next section.
7. If the hiring panel has their own Teams meeting room for the candidate to join, you will need to have that meeting link ready to share with the candidate. It can be retrieved from the invite sent to the panel.

Section III. Administering the Writing Assessment

III.1 Virtual Method

1. Joining the Teams Meeting
    a. Open Teams in either a desktop app or a web browser. It is best to not use VPN, as it can cause problems.
    b. If you either sent or received the meeting invite, it should be accessible on your calendar in Teams.
2. Candidate Arrival
    a. When the candidate joins the meeting, admit them from the lobby, greet them, and make sure they are set up properly (i.e., camera, speakers, microphone, chat). If they need further details about their devices, they can click *More actions* (the three dots) on the Teams toolbar and click on *Settings* > *Device settings*.
    b. Then explain the overall process. They will complete a writing assessment, which can take up to 15 minutes. If they are doing the interview via Teams on the same day as well, let them know that they will have 15 minutes to review the interview questions and consider their answers. Then they will participate in an interview that will take approximately 50 minutes. Describe who will conduct the interview.
3. Administering the Writing Assessment
    a. Give a brief overview of the writing assessment. You will provide a link in the chat, which will go to a form that includes instructions and a question to answer in writing. They will have 15 minutes to respond.
    b. Copy and paste the link in the chat.
    c. Answer any preliminary questions the candidate has and then give them approximately 17 minutes to read the instructions and compose their response (a couple minutes to read the instructions and then up to 15 minutes to type their answer). Note that they do not have to take the entire time if they don't need it. Let them know when they have 5 minutes left, so they can finish up.
    d. You may perform other tasks while you are waiting but do not step away from the meeting. Be sure to mute yourself so you do not disrupt the candidate. You may also turn off your camera, but let the candidate know you are present and available for questions if they need anything.
4. If you are splitting up the process into two days, you can now end the meeting with the candidate, after thanking them and reminding them of next steps for the interview. If you are doing the entire process in one day, proceed to section IV.

III.2 In-Person Method

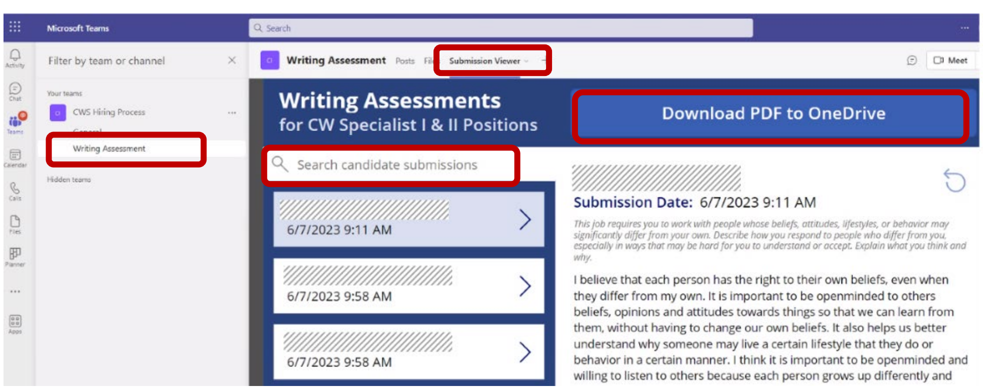
1. Writing Assessment
    a. In Chrome, go to the link.
    b. The writing assessment document includes all the instructions, so just provide an overview. Show the instructions section and scroll down to the second page to show where the candidate will provide their information and writing sample.
    e. Answer any preliminary questions the candidate has and then give them approximately 17 minutes to read the instructions and compose their response (a couple minutes to read the instructions and then up to 15 minutes to type their answer). Note that they do not have to take the entire time if they don't need it. Let them know when they have 5 minutes left, so they can finish up.
    c. Be sure that someone is available to assist them if needed during the assessment.
2. If the candidate will participate in an in-person interview next, refer to section V.2 for further details. Be sure to return to section IV for information on preparing the writing assessment for hiring panel members

Section IV. Preparing the Writing Assessment for Review

IV.1 Writing Assessment

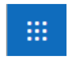
The hiring panel will rate the writing assessment after the interview is complete. Therefore, the PDF of the candidate's writing sample needs to be prepared and available by the time the interview is finished.

1. To retrieve the submitted writing assessment response for raters, go to the *CWS Hiring Process* team and to the *Writing Assessment* channel.
2. Click on the *Submission Viewer* tab.
3. In the search bar, enter the candidate's name.
4. After locating the correct candidate and clicking on their name in the left panel, the full submission will display in the right panel. Click on *Download PDF to OneDrive*.



5. The file will be downloaded to your personal OneDrive in a folder called *CWS Writing Assessments*. The first time you do this, the folder will be automatically created. In the

future, PDFs will be added to the same location. To access the folder:

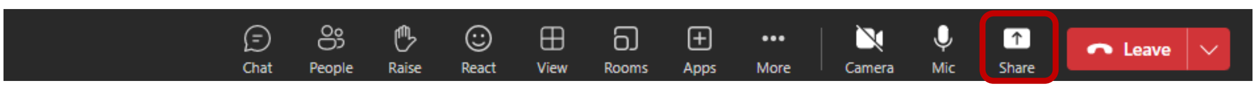
   a. Log into to Microsoft 365 and click on the Microsoft 365 App Launcher—the 'waffle button' in the top left corner 
   b. Select *OneDrive*
   c. Locate your files in either the *My Files* or *Documents* folder in the menu on the left
   d. Open the folder titled *CWS Writing Assessments*
   e. Bookmark this folder for quick access in the future

6. Upload the candidate's writing assessment to Teams. Return to the *Writing Assessment* channel and click on the *Files* tab. To upload the file, you may drag and drop the PDF to the file area of the screen, or you can use the *Upload* function.

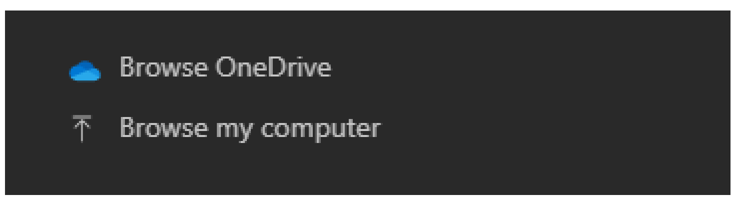
Section V. Preparing the Candidate for the Interview

V.1 Virtual Interview

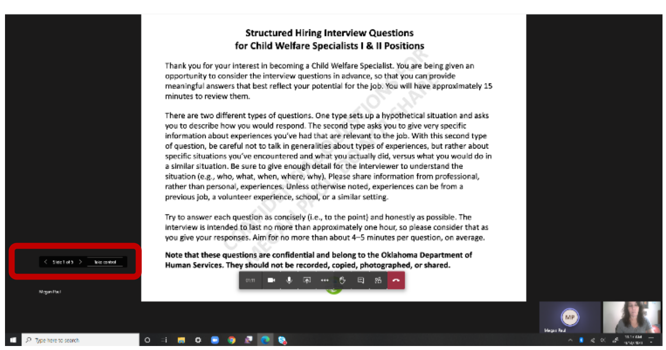
1. Explain to the candidate that they will have approximately 15 minutes to review the interview questions before the interview. Emphasize that the questions are confidential and should not be recorded, copied, photographed, or shared. They may not take any notes.
2. To share the candidate's file, click on the S*hare content* icon on the meeting toolbar.



3. Scroll down to the options to locate the file in either OneDrive or your computer



4. Choose the option that matches where you saved the file. Note that there is not an option to retrieve and share the file through Teams. Do not share the file by opening it from Teams and then just sharing your screen; though the candidate can see the questions this way, they cannot advance the slides on their own.
5. Once the screen has been shared, and the candidate hovers their mouse over the lower left corner, controls will appear that allow them to click through the slides at their own pace.



6. You may perform other tasks while you are waiting but do not step away from the meeting. Be sure to mute yourself so you do not disrupt the candidate. You may also turn off your camera, but let the candidate know you are present and available for questions if they need anything. Let them know when they have 5 minutes left, so they can finish up.

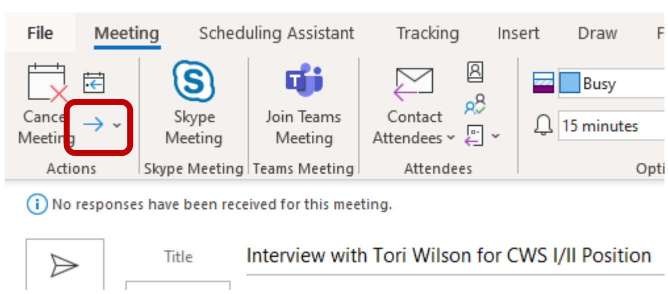
V.2 In-Person Interview

1. After welcoming the candidate, provide them with the interview questions, using the *CWS I-II Structured Hiring Interview Questions–Candidate In Person* document.
2. Explain to the candidate that they will have approximately 15 minutes to review the questions before the interview. Emphasize that the questions are confidential and should not be copied, photographed, shared, or removed from the premises. They may write notes on the document to jog their memory, but they should otherwise be asked to put away their cell phone and any other paper.
3. Be sure that someone is available to oversee them and answer any questions as they review the questions. They may bring the questions with them into the interview.

Section VI. Preparing for the Hiring Panel (Virtual Interview Only)

VI.1 Hiring Panel Invitation

This step is only needed if the plan is for the hiring panel to join the Administrative Assistant and candidate in their meeting room. If the hiring panel has their own meeting room, this step can be skipped. Send the Teams meeting invite to the hiring panel as soon as the candidate starts reviewing the questions. To do so, go to the meeting in your Outlook calendar (the one that was sent to the candidate) and forward it to the hiring panel by going to the *Actions* group at the top left and clicking on the right arrow. Do not use the option to invite the panel from within the meeting. Recall that the panel will be sent to a lobby until you are ready to admit them. Do not admit them until the candidate has had 15 minutes to review the questions, unless say they are done.



VI.2 Transitioning to the Interview

If the hiring panel is joining the Teams meeting, admit them from the lobby when everyone is ready. When the panel has joined the meeting, you may leave the meeting by clicking on the red *Leave* button on the right side of the meeting controls bar.

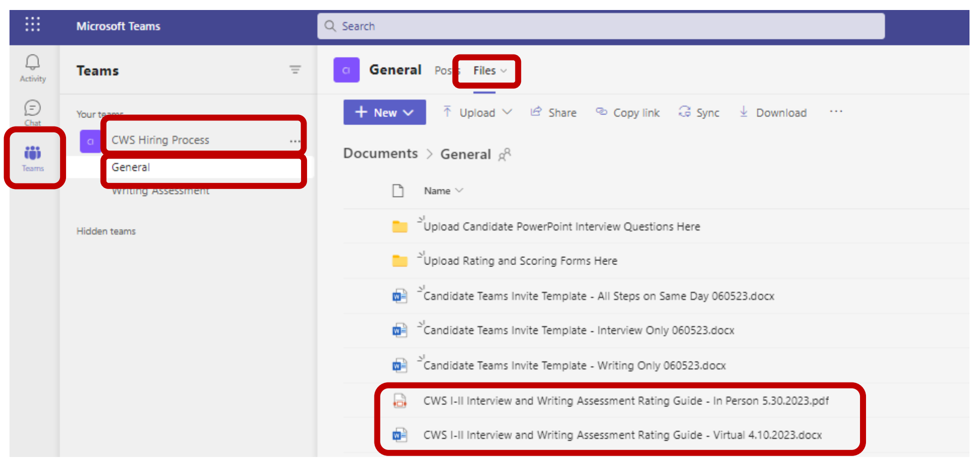
If the hiring panel has their own Teams meeting room that the candidate will join, paste the meeting link into the chat, and give the candidate instructions about joining the panel.

Section VII. Conducting the Structured Interview

This section provides an overview of the steps involved in the structured interview. Specific details are included in the *CWS I-II Interview and Writing Assessment Rating Guide*, which interviewers should use during the interview. Instructions for accessing the file are provided below.

VII.1 Preparing to Conduct the Interview

1. Prior to the interview, hiring panel members should review the candidate's application, resume, and questionnaire responses in JazzHR (or received from an Administrative Assistant).
2. Hiring panel members should also discuss interview logistics and roles and ensure familiarity with the questions and rating scales.
3. To locate the *CWS I-II Interview and Writing Assessment Rating Guide*, go to Teams, and click on *Teams* on the left. Select the *CWS Hiring Process* team, click on the *General* channel, click on *Files* at the top, and click on one of the two *CWS I-II Interview and Writing Assessment Rating Guides.* There are two versions: a) one for a virtual interview, into which notes can be typed and b) one for an in-person interview which can be printed. For a virtual interview, you can view the file in Teams, or you may temporarily download the file to your computer, for preparation and for use during the interview. Do not store the file on your computer long term. In the future, always download the latest version of this document.



4. You will need to take notes regarding the candidate's responses. If you wish to type notes in the file, you may do so (you must download the file first). If not, you may print the file and take notes by hand.
5. If the interview is done virtually via Teams, the candidate's version of the questions will be displayed during the interview, so other than for the opening information (prior to the questions), you will not need to use the rating guide. You will need it to make your ratings after the candidate is done, but it is not essential that you view it during the interview, unless you intend to take notes in it.
6. Because the interview question have many details and sub-questions, it is valuable to

display the questions on screen. In order to do this, someone on the panel will need to download the candidate’s watermarked PowerPoint file to their computer beforehand.

   a. Open Teams and locate the *CWS Hiring Process* team. Click on the *General* channel and then on the *Files* tab at the top.
   b. Open the folder called *Upload Candidate PowerPoint Interview Questions Here* and locate the candidate’s file.
   c. Download the file to your computer.

7. In addition to reviewing the questions and rating scales, it is recommended that hiring panel members review Appendix A of this guide, which provides a summary of key rating tips, and Appendix B, which provides information about avoiding rating biases.

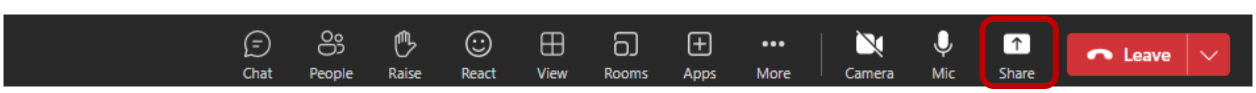
VII.2 Joining the Teams Meeting (Virtual Interview Only)

There are two possible arrangements for meeting with the candidate via Teams. This will have already been decided in advance.

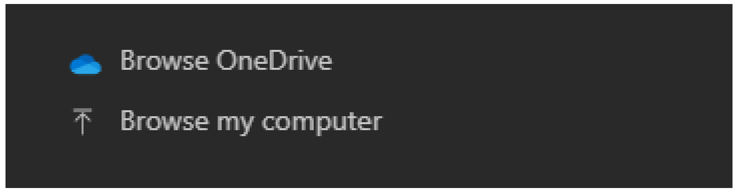
1. *Hiring panel joins Administrative Assistant and candidate:* In this arrangement, the Administrative Assistant will send you an email with the Teams meeting link approximately 15 minutes before the candidate is ready for the interview. You may use either the desktop app or a web browser for Teams. It is best to not use VPN, as it can cause problems. You may be sent to a lobby until everyone is ready to convene.
2. *Hiring panel has their own Teams meeting room*: In this arrangement, the hiring panel will have a dedicated meeting room that the candidate will join. This meeting can be accessed through your Outlook calendar.

VII.3 Opening

1. Hiring panel members should open the interview by welcoming and thanking the candidate, facilitating introductions of the panel members, providing an overview of the interview process for the candidate, and providing preliminary information about the job and the agency. Further details are in the *CWS I-II Interview and Writing Assessment Rating Guide,* which can be found in Teams. See section VII.1 for information about how to access the file.
2. Virtual Interview Only
   a. Because the interview question have many details and sub-questions, it is valuable to display the questions on screen. Someone should have downloaded the candidate’s watermarked PowerPoint file in advance.
   b. To share the candidate’s file, click on the S*hare content* icon on the meeting toolbar.



c. Scroll down to the options to locate the file in either OneDrive or your computer, depending on where it was saved.



VII.4 Rated Interview Questions

Hiring panel members should then explain the types of questions and what kinds of responses are suitable; ask structured questions, using probing or follow-up questions as needed; and take notes on the candidate's responses.

VII.5 Closing

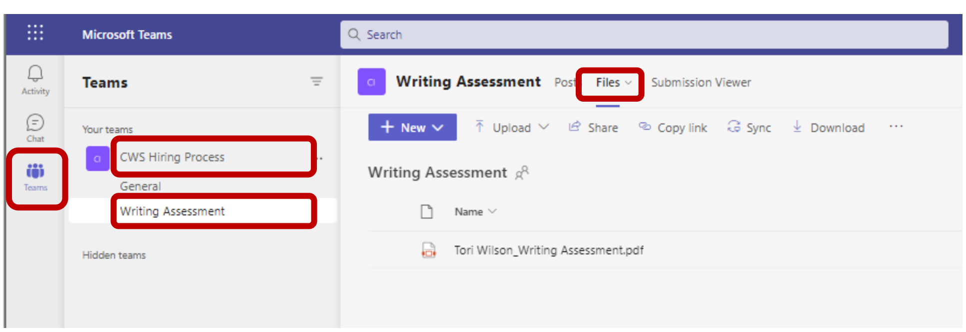
After the standardized questions have been asked, the hiring panel should share any remaining important job information that was not covered at beginning of the interview. If there is any additional information that needs to be collected from the candidate (e.g., for the purpose of contacting references), it can be requested at this time, though additional questionnaires or forms should not be used. The hiring panel should also inquire about the candidate's continued interest in the position, describe the next steps in the process, and answer any remaining questions from the candidate. For an in-person interview, as the candidate is thanked and escorted out of the room, their interview questions should be collected from them.

VII.6 Rating

After the candidate has left, hiring panel members should use their notes and the rubrics for each question to independently rate each interview question and the writing assessment. See section VII.1 for information about how to access the *CWS I-II Interview and Writing Assessment Rating Guide*, which contains the scoring rubrics. Further details are described below.

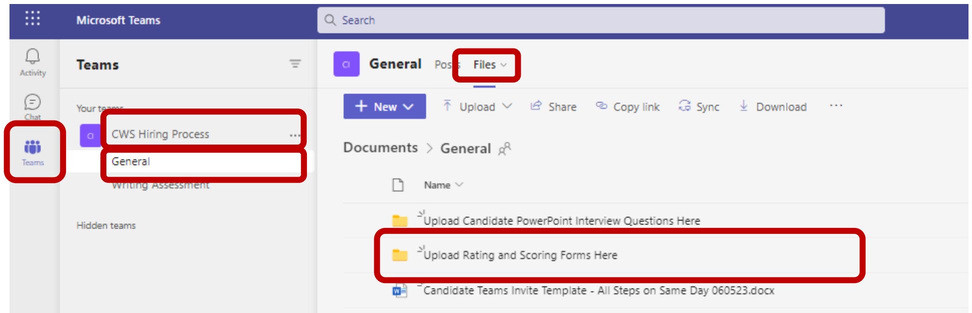
Reviewing the Writing Assessment

You may access the candidate's writing assessment in Teams. In Teams, click on *Teams* on the left. Select the *CWS Hiring Process* team, click on the *Writing Assessment* channel, and click on *Files* at the top. Click on the PDF to open and read the candidate's written response.



Entering Ratings

1. To enter your ratings, go to the *General* channel, and click on the folder called *Upload Rating and Scoring Forms Here*. Search for the candidate's file by name.



2. Open the file in Teams (do not download it) and note the three worksheets for raters. Click on each one to locate the worksheet assigned to you. Check the *Rater Name* field in the top right corner.

3. Using your notes and the scoring rubrics, click on the rating dropdown for each competency and select your rating.

Discussing Ratings

When everyone is done, ratings should be discussed. Consensus is not required, but it is desirable to achieve a shared understanding of perspectives. Raters may change their ratings in light of the discussion, but it is not required.

Section VIII. Hiring Recommendations or Decision

After ratings are finalized, the candidate's score will display in top right corner of the last worksheet of the rating form, called *Candidate Master Score*.

Child Welfare Specialist I & II Standardized Hiring Process
Candidate Master Score

Candidate Name:
Jamie Johnson

Candidate Score: 52

Competency	**Rater** **Drew Gray**	**Gabriela Diaz**	**Test Rater #3**	**Average**
2.1. Reliability	3	4	Not Rated	3.50
2.2. Accountability	4	3	Not Rated	3.50
2.3. Self-Development	2	3	Not Rated	2.50
3. Belief in the Ability of People to Change	5	5	Not Rated	5.00
4. Flexibility/Adaptability	2	1	Not Rated	1.50
5. Stress Management	3	3	Not Rated	3.00
6.1. Intrapersonal Aspects of Emotional Intelligence, Self-Reflection, Self-Awareness, and Self-Esteem	4	3	Not Rated	3.50
6.2. Interpersonal Aspects of Emotional Intelligence, Composure, and Compassion	4	4	Not Rated	4.00
7.1. Candor & Assertiveness, Tact	5	3	Not Rated	4.00
7.2. Interpersonal Relationships	3	4	Not Rated	3.50
8. Oral Communication	3	2	Not Rated	2.50
9. Interpersonal Awareness and Impact	4	4	Not Rated	4.00
10. Composure	2	1	Not Rated	1.50
11. Approachability	2	3	Not Rated	2.50
12. Unconditional Positive Regard	4	3	Not Rated	3.50
13. Writing Quality	4	4	Not Rated	4.00

The lowest possible Candidate Score is -80 and the maximum possible total score is 80. Hiring panels and selecting officials are encouraged to use the total Candidate Score as a decision guide, while factoring in scores on individual competencies. Generally speaking, higher total scores are, on average associated with better performance. More specifically, candidates who score higher than 56 are almost 6 times as likely to have higher-than-average job performance than those who score below a 56. However, there may be some concerning responses (e.g., red flag interview answers) or results (e.g., an average rating of 1 for writing quality) that are disguised by the total score (due to high ratings on other competencies). In those cases, the total score may not reflect important nuances that should be considered. So although candidates can and should be broadly compared on total scores, it is important to not overlook finer distinctions that may affect the candidate's performance potential. In addition, the candidate's ability to meet core job requirements (e.g., related to work travel, being on call, attending training, possessing a valid driver's license, or passing a criminal background check or pre-employment drug screening) should be factored in to hiring decisions.

All other hiring procedures and documentation requirements remain the same.

Section IX. Hiring Process Documentation

The following documents should be uploaded to the *Documents* tab of the candidate's profile in JazzHR:

1. *CWS I-II Interview and Writing Assessment Rating Guide*, located in the *General* channel, in *Files*. (This is a record of what the candidate was asked and what the rating criteria were.)
2. The candidate's writing assessment, located in the *Writing Assessment* channel, in *Files*.
3. The candidate's Rating and Scoring Form

After the files have been uploaded to JazzHR, delete them from your computer. All other required actions in JazzHR remain the same. For further details, access the JazzHR training manual.

Questions and Feedback

Questions or feedback about this guide or the hiring process should be sent to CW.HR.Requests@okdhs.org

Appendix A. Rating Reminders

DO…

- ✓ Review the competency definitions and rating scales before interviews.
- ✓ Review *Common Rating Biases in Interviews and How to Avoid Them* (on the next page) before interviews.
- ✓ Remember that the bulleted lists of behaviors are examples, not a checklist.
- ✓ Remember it is your job to obtain the evidence of whether the candidate has the competency in question.
- ✓ Review and familiarize yourself with the examples of and guidelines for probing questions.
- ✓ Rate against the standard provided in the rubric.

DON'T…

- Penalize a candidate if you have to repeat questions/sub-questions or if you have to ask probing questions.
- Give a candidate a rating based on your feelings about whether you "like" them or not.
- Rate the candidate based on your impressions of the quality/relevance to child welfare of the example the candidate provides.
- Penalize a candidate who doesn't have much work experience and thus gives an example from their personal life.
- "Reserve" your highest rating for a possible future candidate who might come along who would be better.

Appendix B. Common Rating Biases

Common Rating Biases in Interviews and How to Avoid Them

Regardless of how well intentioned we are as interviewers, it is possible to slide into common rating errors that can become bad habits. By rating errors, we mean ways of consistently assigning ratings to applicants that in some way don't reflect their "true" qualities. Because we're human, our judgments will always be subject to various influences and biases. It becomes a concern when these biases distort the accuracy of the decisions we make about job applicants. Here are some of the common interviewing biases, and some ways to try to avoid them.

Leniency and Severity Errors

One common error involves rating all applicants either too high or too low over all the dimensions. When you look over your ratings, is everyone rated as "acceptable" on every category? If so, you've probably been too lenient. Conversely, are you a "hard grader" who finds it difficult to give anyone a rating other than "unacceptable"? You may be overly severe in your ratings. To correct this error, review your notes and ratings and try to bring the overused and underused rating categories more into line where justified.

Central Tendency Errors

This refers to an interviewer's unwillingness to assign the extreme high or low rating categories. Everyone is seen as average, and only the middle part of the rating scale is used. This may happen when interviewers are asked to evaluate unfamiliar dimensions on an interview (hence, the need for training!). Rather than risk giving someone an extremely high or low rating, the interviewer plays it safe and gives an average rating. To avoid this error, take time to understand the meaning of each rating dimension, monitor your ratings over the course of the day, and don't be afraid to give an applicant a high or low rating if justified.

Halo Errors

These are evaluations (good or bad) based upon your general feelings about the applicant. The interviewer generally has a favorable or unfavorable attitude toward the applicant that permeates all of their ratings. Typically, the interviewer has strong feelings about at least one important aspect of the applicant's interview, and uniformly generalizes this to all other rating categories. For example, you might really love the fact that a candidate has an MSW from your alma mater, and you may personally feel that we need to hire more people with MSWs in this position, so you give her high ratings on all of the interview dimensions, regardless of her answers to the questions. To avoid this error, try to be aware of your attitudes that may influence your ratings. Focus your ratings on the applicant's actual behaviors and competencies.

First Impression Error

This refers to making an evaluation of the applicant within the first minutes of the interview. Be open to changing your mind about the candidate as the interview progresses and stay focused on what they are saying throughout the interview.

Recency Error

This refers to focusing on what happened most recently and allowing these recent recollections to unduly influence the ratings, rather than taking into account responses over the entire interview. When making final judgments, recall what you saw and heard throughout the interview, rather than just at the end.

Contrast Effects

This happens when an interviewer allows the quality of the applicants who preceded the present applicant to influence the ratings of the present applicant. Applicants with average credentials appear better to the interviewer if they follow someone with poor credentials and they appear worse if they follow someone with superior credentials.

Similar-to-me Error

This is favorably evaluating an applicant just because he or she is similar to the interviewer in some way. The problem is that the interviewer isn't truly evaluating the individual based upon their responses to the questions.

Stereotyping

Because the candidate is perceived to belong to a particular group, the interviewer assumes that the individual possesses all the stereotypic traits associated with that group and allows these assumptions to affect their ratings of the person.

General Advice

Look over your ratings for all of the candidates you interview each day. Do you see a pattern emerging? Awareness and frequent self-monitoring are your best bets to try to avoid these common biases.

Sources

Janz, T., Hellervik, L., & Gilmore, D. C. (1986) *Behavior description interviewing: New, accurate, cost effective*. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall.

Muchinsky, P. (1993). *Psychology applied to work: An introduction to industrial and organizational psychology.* Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole.