

Hiring For Mission Fit and Best Practices



Human Resources

PEPPERDINE

Part 1: Hiring Best Practices



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OUR HIRING RESPONSIBILITY

- Hire for best fit, both for the position and for the University
 - Skills fit
 - Mission fit
- Create goodwill for the University throughout the process
- Adhere to employment laws
- Position new employee for success



BEFORE YOU BEGIN

Errors to Avoid

- The “like me” bias
- Stereotyping
- The “halo effect”



THE HIRING PROCESS

1

**Position
Description**

2

**Job
Posting**

3

**Recruitment/
Screening**

4

**Offer/
Onboarding**

THE POSITION DESCRIPTION



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THE POSITION DESCRIPTION

Serves as a reference for:

- The employee
- The supervisor
- Human Resources



THE POSITION DESCRIPTION: PURPOSE

PURPOSE

Please describe the basic purpose of this position and how it contributes to the University's mission and strategic plan?:*

The Onboarding and Employment Specialist serves as a Human Resources ambassador to University employees regarding all details involved in the employee onboarding process.

This position will manage the post-job offer onboarding process, guiding employees through new hire tasks, and acting as their primary contact for questions related to their employment, both in their first weeks and throughout their tenure at Pepperdine.

The successful candidate will have excellent attention to detail and possess a welcoming spirit with extraordinary communication skills, as well as the demonstrated ability to manage numerous competing priorities in a fast-paced, high-volume environment, reflecting the University's mission and values in all interactions.

THE POSITION DESCRIPTION:

JOB DUTIES

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JOB DUTIES

% of time	Duties / Responsibilities	Essential
5%	Represent Pepperdine University as an employer by attending job fairs and engaging with student organizations. Provide superior customer service to prospective employees, creating goodwill for the University throughout the application and onboarding process.	Essential
5%	Perform other duties as assigned.	Essential
100%	Uphold University mission through work performed.	Essential
55%	Manage the faculty and staff onboarding process, including sending offer letter and overseeing completion of new hire paperwork, background check, and Form I-9. Meet with employee on employee's first day, providing a welcoming spirit and high touch customer service. Communicate closely with faculty contract originators and dean's office managers about faculty onboarding status. Enter employee data into custom PeopleSoft HCM module.	Essential



THE POSITION DESCRIPTION: JOB DUTIES

- Percentage breakdown
 - Helps employee understand the amount of time they can expect to allocate to each duty
 - For exempt positions, aids HR in assessing whether position passes the exempt duties test
- At Pepperdine, all position descriptions must include the following duties:
 - Perform other duties as assigned
 - Uphold University mission through work performed

THE POSITION DESCRIPTION: QUALIFICATIONS

QUALIFICATIONS

Please consider the essential duties for this position and define the minimum requirements an individual will need in order to meet the expectations of this position.

Required Education/Training/Experience:

Bachelor's degree.

Preferred Education/Training/Experience:

2-3 years' experience in human resources, higher education, or a related field.



THE POSITION DESCRIPTION: QUALIFICATIONS

- **Required qualifications**
 - Non-negotiables
 - Candidates who do not meet these need not apply
 - Setting too many qualifications as “required” may deter capable candidates from applying
 - Consider softening the language (“familiarity with,” “some previous experience in,” “basic knowledge of”)
 - Not setting any required qualifications means everyone is qualified. Consider requiring certain soft skills like communication, attention to detail, critical thinking, ability to work as part of a team
- **Preferred qualifications**
 - Favorable for a candidate to have and likely to give a candidate a competitive edge over other applicants
 - Candidates possessing these will often require less training



THE POSITION DESCRIPTION: **QUALIFICATIONS**

- Stick to gender-neutral pronouns
- Avoid language that could be perceived as discriminatory (e.g. “energetic” or “recent grad”)

THE POSITION DESCRIPTION: PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS

PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS

Please indicate the amount of time this position spends performing each of the following activities

KEY: Never -- Occasionally=1-33% of time -- Frequently + 34-66% of time -- Constantly = 67-100% of time

Sitting:*

Constantly

Standing:*

Frequently

Overhead Reaching:*

Occasionally

Making Repetitive Motions:*

Constantly

Lift/Carry 10 lbs or less:*

Frequently

Lift/Carry 11-15 lbs:*

Occasionally

Lift/Carry 16-20 lbs:*

Occasionally



THE POSITION DESCRIPTION: **PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS**

- Used for pre-employment physicals (when applicable), Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accommodations, and workers' compensation.

THE JOB POSTING



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THE JOB POSTING: POSTING POLICY AND DETAILS

- The posting must go through an approval process.
- Pay Range: Effective January 1, 2023, CA's pay transparency bill requires companies with 15+ employees to include a pay range in their job postings.

Expected Pay Range: \$64,480.00 - \$66,000.00 per year

The above pay range reflects what Pepperdine University reasonably expects to pay for this position at time of posting. Actual compensation may vary based on relevant factors such as work experience, market conditions, education/training, and skill level. In addition to base pay, Pepperdine offers a robust and highly competitive **benefits package**.



THE JOB POSTING: POSTING POLICY AND DETAILS

- Posting duration - All full-time, regular staff positions must be posted on jobs.pepperdine.edu for a minimum of five (5) business days, and all applicants must be given fair consideration.
 - No offer may be extended until the full five (5) days have elapsed

RECRUITMENT



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RECRUITMENT: **ADVERTISING THE POSITION**

Advertising broadens and diversifies the applicant pool

- Paid ads on highly trafficked sites
- Career fairs



RECRUITMENT: SCREENING APPLICANTS

- Review all applications, resumes, and cover letters
 - Red flags:
 - Spelling, grammar, and punctuation errors
 - Short-term work assignments or gaps in employment
 - Lack of attention to detail
 - Evidence that a career has plateaued or regressed
 - Failure to follow directions
- Note: California law prohibits the automatic disqualification of candidates using AI-based systems (e.g., resume filters, scoring tools, or automated assessments).



RECRUITMENT: SCREENING APPLICANTS

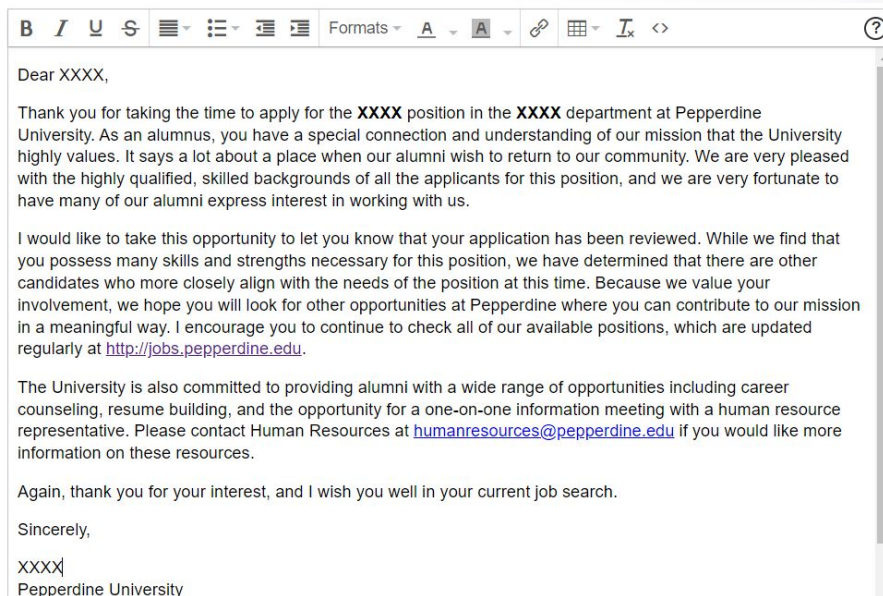
- Send additional screening questions
 - Present a real-life scenario related to the day-to-day duties of the position



RECRUITMENT: COMMUNICATING WITH APPLICANTS

- Timely communication throughout the hiring process shows respect for the applicant and saves you time.
- Human Resources provides sample language for each stage of the hiring process.

RECRUITMENT: COMMUNICATING WITH APPLICANTS





RECRUITMENT: PREPARING FOR THE INTERVIEW

- Ask all candidates the same set of questions.
- Ask open-ended questions rather than “yes/no” questions.
- Stay away from questions that have more to do with a candidate’s personal lifestyle than with their job-related experience.



RECRUITMENT: PREPARING FOR THE INTERVIEW

- **DO NOT** ask candidates about their criminal history.
- **DO NOT** ask candidates about their gender, marital status, or personal relationships.
- **DO NOT** ask candidates about their national origin, surname, native language, race, ethnicity, skin color, or complexion.
- **DO NOT** ask candidates about their salary history (though asking about salary expectations for *this* position is OK).
- **DO NOT** ask candidates if they are married, pregnant, or whether they have kids.
- **DO NOT** ask candidates when they graduated from high school or college. You can, however, ask them if they have a high school diploma (or equivalent) or college degree.
- **DO NOT** ask candidates if they have any disabilities. You can, however, ask them if they can perform the duties of the job for which they are applying.



RECRUITMENT: INTERVIEWING CANDIDATES: OVERVIEW

1. Conduct a telephone or Zoom pre-screen interview.
 - Prepare a set of questions to ask all candidates, but keep it conversational. Include a question about the mission.
2. Invite candidates to an in-person interview.
 - Include your supervisor and one or more trusted colleagues or key members of your team.
 - Prepare a set of questions to ask all candidates, but keep it conversational. Include a question about the mission.



RECRUITMENT: INTERVIEWING CANDIDATES: OVERVIEW

3. Facilitate a meeting to introduce your finalist to members of your team or department.
4. Arrange for your finalist meet with members of your area's senior leadership.



RECRUITMENT: VETTING FINALISTS

- Current/past Pepperdine staff or faculty - Schedule an appointment with HR to review the employee's personnel file.
- Administer skills testing through HR (optional).
 - Custom skills tests tailored to specific roles or assessing key competencies are also available upon request.
- Conduct a basic internet search for public information.
 - Look for any content not in keeping with the University's values and mission statement.



RECRUITMENT: REFERENCE CHECKS

- Inform your candidate that you will be contacting their references.
- Ask candidate to provide you with a list of past supervisors. Ensure supervisors from their most recent positions are included. Also ask permission to contact their current supervisor.
 - For candidates with little to no work history, professors, mentors, supervisors of extracurricular activities, or religious leaders may be substituted.



RECRUITMENT: REFERENCE CHECKS

- Sample Reference Check Questions:
 - Describe how you know this candidate.
 - What have you found to be this candidate's top strengths?
 - What opportunities does this candidate have for growth?
 - How would you describe this candidate's interpersonal skills?
 - How would you describe this candidate's written skills?
 - How would you describe this candidate's attention to detail?
 - How would you describe this candidate's time management and organizational skills?
 - Did you ever have any issues with this candidate's performance, punctuality, or behavior?
 - If given the opportunity, would you rehire this candidate?
 - (Describe position.) Would you recommend this candidate for this type of role?



RECRUITMENT: MAKING THE OFFER

- Verbal offer: includes the salary and potential start date
 - Note: If the candidate is a current Pepperdine staff/faculty or student employee, please work with HR to determine an appropriate transfer date.
- All verbal offers should be made contingent upon successful completion of a criminal, educational, and employment screening (and pre-employment physical if required).
- *Offers above or below the maximum budgeted amount or range approved for the position must be reviewed by HR before the offer is extended.*



RECRUITMENT: COMMUNICATE WITH REMAINING APPLICANTS

- To fully close out a job, all applicants should receive communication regarding their application status, and all applicants' statuses should be changed in PageUp once they have received the proper communication.
- HR has instructions for how to do this and in bulk, and is also glad to guide you through a brief phone or Zoom call.

ONBOARDING



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ONBOARDING: PRE-ARRIVAL

Before the First Day:

- Call or email your new employee to provide them with information about their first day, including the following:
 - What time and where to report
 - Parking instructions
 - Lunch instructions
 - Dress code (including parameters for casual Friday if applicable)
 - Reminder to bring the following:
 - Form I-9 documents



ONBOARDING: FIRST DAY

- Welcome Your New Employee
 - Have their workspace and materials ready
 - Show them around the office/worksite
 - Introduce them to their colleagues
 - Arrange to take them to lunch, either one-on-one or with your team
 - Facilitate team-building activities among them and their fellow team members.
- Ensure your new employee visits Human Resources to present original documents establishing their identity and eligibility to work in the United States.



ONBOARDING: THE FIRST WEEK

- Tell Them What to Expect
 - Attire
 - Office standards
 - Your preferred communication style
 - The introductory period and related performance expectations
 - Procedure for time off, calling out sick, running late, etc.
 - Schedule a weekly (or periodic) one-on-one meeting with your new employee, but plan to meet more frequently with them during the first several weeks
 - Provide regular feedback, addressing areas that require improvement



ONBOARDING: THE FIRST FEW WEEKS

- Train Them on Everything
 - Email/calendar
 - Business processes
 - Office equipment
 - Phone and email etiquette
 - Systems
 - Soft skills
 - Customer service
 - Organization
 - Time management

Part 2:

Hiring for Mission Fit



Kyle Stiemsma
Director, Human Resources

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PEPPERDINE'S MISSION

Pepperdine is a Christian university committed to the highest standards of academic excellence and Christian values, where students are strengthened for lives of purpose, service, and leadership.



WHAT IS A “MISSION FIT”

- The allure of Pepperdine and our mission is that there is no one exact definition of “mission fit.”



WHAT IS A “MISSION FIT”

- The allure of Pepperdine and our mission is that there is no one exact definition of “mission fit.”
- For our context, a “mission fit” is a person who operates according to our shared values, finds fulfillment in our shared work, and is motivated by our shared purpose.



THE IMPORTANCE OF MISSION FIT

- Hiring is one of the most important decisions a manager has to make.
- Pepperdine's Christian mission is a major differentiator and competitive advantage.
- Assessing if someone is a “mission fit” can be difficult and elusive.



HERITAGE, UNITY, AND DIVERSITY

- Churches of Christ and the Restoration Movement
- The paradox of the Christian faith
- The expectation and necessity of diversity



SETTING EXPECTATIONS AND SHAPING PERCEPTIONS

- You are responsible for telling Pepperdine's story throughout the interview process—tell it well.
 - Describe our business and community
 - Talk about our history and where we're headed
 - Speak to what brought/keeps you here



SETTING EXPECTATIONS AND SHAPING PERCEPTIONS

- The process you follow is as important as the words you say.
 - Be a gracious host
 - Have a fair and consistent, but unscripted, process
 - Share context about the role, team, and University
 - Speak personally to the mission



SAMPLE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

- [Share your personal experience, how you live out the mission, how you see it played out at Pepperdine.]
Describe your desire to promote the mission and be part of this culture. What part of this description resonates?
- What experiences do you have that align with the mission?
- What values do you prioritize in the workplace?
- What are ways you think faith can be lived out in the workplace?
- What is the higher purpose/calling you've worked toward?
What do you hope to work toward in this role?



SAMPLE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

- What do you think you can contribute to Pepperdine, the culture, the mission, this team, this position, this position's constituents?
- How have you seen work be accomplished through relationships? In what ways do you do this well?
- Based on this position, how do you think you could deliver (values - hospitality, excellence, etc.) to constituents?
- How would your (supervisor, colleagues, guests) describe your work? What would they say was your lasting legacy in your (interactions, organization, etc.)?



ASSESSING MISSION FIT

- Does the candidate share a Christian background?
- Before providing additional context, how well did the candidate appear to understand and resonate with our mission (based on their application, cover letter, and initial response to questions)?
- When the mission is explained, is the candidate ambivalent or enthusiastic?



ASSESSING MISSION FIT

- In answers to questions, does the candidate articulate values associated with character (integrity, honesty, trustworthiness, etc.)?
- Knowing Pepperdine and your team will only be as good as each person part of it, will Pepperdine be better, worse, or the same if you hired this candidate?
- What values or language does the candidate share (such as those we affiliate with our mission, Code of Ethics, and culture)?
- How confident are you explaining why/how this candidate will contribute toward the mission?



THANK YOU

QUESTIONS?

The logo for Pepperdine University is centered on a dark blue background with a wavy, topographical pattern. The word "PEPPERDINE" is written in a white, serif, all-caps font. A thin orange horizontal line is positioned beneath the letters "PEPPER" and "DINE", with the letter "P" in "PEPPER" overlapping the line.

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