**DEI-Focused Interview Scoring Rubric**

**Strategy Recommendation**

DEI Strategy: DEI-Focused Interviews

## ACHRO Workgroups: Screening Criteria; Interviews; BPs/APs/Hiring Procedures

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# Issue Statement

Commonly used interview formats prioritize technical competence, experience, and subject area knowledge without adequately assessing the ability to apply technical skills with diverse student populations, employee groups, and communities to increase equity and inclusion.

# Strategy Proposal

Revise interview policies and procedures to require committees for all positions to evaluate responses to interview questions, writing tasks, and work demonstrations (as applicable) for the application of technical competence and subject matter expertise with diverse communities with demonstrated positive contributions to equity and inclusion.

# Current Challenges

* Subject matter expertise is overvalued in the evaluation of applicants during interviews and ability to serve people from diverse communities equitably is undervalued.
* Traditional interview processes tend to reinforce cultural biases which undervalue job-related performance within a culturally diverse environment.
* Interview committees may lack training to create and assess interview questions through a DEI framework.
* Interview committees lacking diversity and/or an understanding of how to serve people from diverse communities effectively may struggle to implement DEI-focused interview scoring methods.
* Selection committees may mistake a DEI focus in evaluating interviews as an EEO violation or preference for hiring candidate based on race, ethnicity, gender, etc.
* Districts may encourage resistance in participatory governance committees to changes to interview processes that emphasize DEI engagement.
* Committee members may be reluctant to engage in robust deliberations focused on DEI engagement.
* If not designed properly, interview scoring tools may be manipulated by resistant committee members to diminish the importance of DEI-related criteria.

# Strategy Recommendations

## Training

* Training for effective participation in interview formats prioritizing DEI engagement should be required for all individuals serving on screening committees.
* Training should provide tools for assessing interview responses for DEI engagement with emphasis on recognizing deficit-minded language in interview responses, evidence of positive outcomes, and applicability within the job requirements and working environment.
* Training should provide tools for engaging in conversations about DEI engagement and including diverse perspectives in a collaborative, productive way.
* Training should provide tools for developing DEI-focused interview questions, defining desired DEI-related qualifications, and using scoring rubrics correctly.

## Develop a DEI-Focused Scoring Rubric

* Develop a standard interview scoring rubric all committee members must use to assess candidates’ responses.
* Develop a scoring system that assigns points for technical knowledge and application of technical knowledge with diverse communities (*see Attachment for examples*).
* Provide clear directions for defining assessment criteria and awarding points.
* Require assessment criteria to have a direct correlation with the essential job duties.
* Scoring Framework:
  + Candidates earn 1-3 points based on their technical knowledge, skills, and abilities related to the position
  + Candidates earn a 4th point for articulating successful application of technical abilities within a diverse working environment (e.g. using skills in an inclusive way contributing to equity of outcomes)
  + Candidates earn a 5th point for articulating successful contributions to organizational DEI culture beyond their individual job performance
  + Quarter and half point scores should be used when candidates provide some evidence of desired behaviors and outcomes, but fail to fully articulate the level of desired job performance

## Monitor for Adverse Impact

* HR or appropriate area should review scoring rubrics prior to use to ensure they do not specifically assess or preference candidates based on race, ethnicity, sex, or another protected status under applicable EEO laws and regulations.
* HR or appropriate area should review scoring ratings and selection decisions periodically for patterns of adverse impact based on race, ethnicity, and gender.
* HR or appropriate area should evaluate individual ratings in selection decisions where credible EEO concerns are identified.

# EEO and Compliance Considerations and Recommendations

* Scoring interviews based on a candidate’s race, ethnicity, sex, or another protected status under Title VII, FEHA, Education Code, Title V, and other applicable laws and regulations is discriminatory under current EEO law.
* DEI-focused scoring rubrics should not be misunderstood or used as an attempt to reduce the likelihood of any individual being hired based on their race, ethnicity, gender, or other legally-protected status.
* The goal DEI-focused scoring rubrics is to elevate the ability to work with and serve diverse communities to a primary qualification for all positions; committees should not think or act as if the purpose is to preference candidates from specific protected statuses.
* HR or the appropriate staff should review scoring rubrics for legal compliance and EEO concerns before they are used by a committee

# References, Tools, and Resources

* Equity-Minded Interview Scoring Rubric Template