

SCREENING TO CREATE A SHORT-LIST

Focus efforts on identifying the best candidates, rather than those who are minimally qualified.

- You may provide the hiring manager with a short list of candidates, providing candidates who best match the position and the desired attributes listed in the job posting.
- Use your understanding of the job and your judgement as you screen. Focus on the overall content rather than specific words. Remember, applicants typically write their job responsibilities in brief bullet statements. You will have to look at the application materials as a whole and not for specific words.
- Glean information for all required application materials: cover letter, resume, pre-screening questions.
- Screening is only one stage of the selection process. Identifying a finalist requires all stages of the selection process (screening, interviewing, required pre-employment tests, reference checking) to evaluate and verify the possession of qualifications.

Review applications and Resumes

1. Review the job posting again to refresh your understanding of the qualifications needed for success on the job. Focus on desired attributes.
2. If you have a large applicant pool and used points, identify a natural break to look at the top third or quarter of the applicant pool.
 - a. If you find enough quality candidates for your shortlist, you do not have to continue reviewing the rest of the pool, but you must review all veterans' preference applicants.
3. Ignore the applicant's name and address (this helps to reduce unconscious bias.

4. Start with a quick scan to look for:
 - a. Similar experience such as same industry, same occupation, same discipline (subject, field, or specialty)
 - b. Specific degree (if appropriate, i.e. the occupation requires it, the manager prefers the specific degree for success on the job)
 - c. Licenses (if required)
 - d. Certifications (e.g. Professional Human Resource (PHR), Certified Professional Public Buyer (CPPB))
 - e. Technical skills
 - f. Focus on content over grammar and typos unless directly related to the position. (For example, if writing reports and memos is a major part of the job and there are multiple errors in the application, you can justify not forwarding to an interview.)
5. The following questions will help guide your analysis of the applicant.
 - a. How similar or dissimilar is the applicant's work experience compared to the job?
 - b. Any obvious factors that clearly remove the applicant from further consideration? (e.g. truck driver applying for a clerical position)
 - c. How do the candidate's professional experiences and educational background map to the desired attributes in the job posting?
 - d. Does the candidate's cover letter (if provided) provide a clear picture of the applicants experience compared to the job?
 - e. Are there transferable skills and experience that obviously match well with the job?
 - f. Is there evidence of progression in career? (may indicate good performance, but also must be balanced against early career applicants)
6. As you scan through the applicants, note those that you won't look at further, those that are a "yes" to move forward, and those that you may want to look at again.

7. Take a second look at the applicants that look like a good match for the job after the initial scan, and spend time reviewing for soft skills to further narrow your short-list.

a. If you are unsure how to spot soft skills in a resume, here are some examples:

- interpersonal
 - Communication
 - Collaboration/teamwork
 - Empathetic

Resume Example: Built trusting relationships with patients as well as family members, educating them on treatment plans, actively listening to concerns, and ensuring fellow medical personnel were up to date on individual care needs.

- Leadership
 - Conflict management
 - Mentoring
 - Ability to build rapport

Resume Example: Following company merger, led teambuilding activities, clearly communicated performance objectives, and achieved cohesion among newly formed departments.

- Decision making
 - Adaptability/flexibility
 - Problem solving
 - Accepting and integrating feedback

Resume Example: Ran customer survey to gain valuable insights into product and service preferences, identify key areas of improvement, and implement changes to increase sales and satisfaction.

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8. Identify items you want to ask questions about or recommend that the manager ask.

- i. Desired attributes, such as soft skills, that the applicant may have, but aren't clearly addressed.
- ii. Several jobs with short timeframes (this may be worth looking into further, but doesn't necessarily have a negative implication)
- iii. Vague wording "familiar with", "participated in" (what level of experience or participation does the candidate really possess?)

9. Conduct a telephone screen or forward to the manager for further review.

10. Don't leave any veterans' preference candidate out. Review all veterans' preference candidates and document evaluation.

11. Review the candidates you provided for manager review with the hiring manager. How do the candidates match up with who he/she wants to interview? What do you see differently? The more you do this, the easier it will become to provide your manager quality candidates.

RESOURCES

[Writing Soft Skills into Your Resume](#)

By Erin Coursey, iHire, LLC