Reviewing Resumes and Applications

Learn how to approach reviewing resumes and applications.

Reviewing resumes and applications is an important step in your hiring process. If you have spread the word about your position and posted your job announcement in several places, you should start to see applications being submitted within a few days. The steps outlined in this guide will help find the most qualified candidates in that pool and set up your interview process to be efficient and successful.

Step 1: A successful search starts with the application!

Your application review process begins even before anyone applies. Investing a little time early in your hiring process to be sure the job announcement states what you are looking for will benefit your search. As you set up your application, be as clear as possible about expectations, needs, and any preferences that may be unique to your business. Also, please make sure you understand the minimum qualifications required by DECAL for the position you are filling. If you aren't getting the types of applications you need, you might want to review the way you have written your job posting and where you have posted it.

Click here to review more detailed tips and tools on child care employee recruiting.

Step 2: Review and prioritize your applications

As applications begin to come in, you may want to use a candidate scorecard to review candidates. A sample of what this scorecard may look like is below, adapted from the book *Lean Recruitment* by Romano and LaRocca (2017). The scorecard takes the essential qualifications, skills, and your individual business needs, and becomes a tool for you to prioritize applicants based on those details. It helps begin the application review process impartially based on what you have already identified as your needs for a new employee.

The qualifications and characteristics in the example below are examples, and yours should be set up according to what you included in your job announcement. Because your scorecard details come directly from the job announcement that you posted, the scorecard takes the guesswork and assumption out of the process and helps you clearly identify each candidate's strengths or where they might be lacking experience. To get started, select the qualifications and characteristics that are most important to the position and assign them a relative weight, or score.

Candidate Name	High school diploma or equivalent *(Required) (10 points)*	Knowledge of child development and teaching methods *(Required) (10 points)*	Strong communication skills *(Required) (10 points)*	Experience crafting lesson plans *(Preferred) (8 points)*	ECE certification or related continuing education course work *(Preferred) (6 points)*
Candidate A					
Candidate B					

Using Your Scorecard

You can set your scorecard up in a variety of ways: an Excel spreadsheet or Google Sheets is perfect for this tool, but pencil and paper will work too! As your applications come in, you can score them in the scorecard.

Measuring each candidate will provide a ranked list, indicating the applicants who most closely match what you are looking for. Once you have scored your applicants, you will see the group of candidates that have the highest score. Often the top group stands out from those farther down the list. The candidates in this top group are ones you might want to have an informal, short screening call with to further vet these applicants and provide you with additional information to rank your applications.

Step 3: Use short screenings to save time and gather more information from candidates.

Before a formal interview but after reviewing resumes, you can add an application screening into your process to help narrow down a candidate pool, provide some additional information to help separate applicants that seem similar on paper, and help answer any questions you have from the application packet you received. Initiating screening conversations over the phone or via video call can save time overall and increase the information available to you to make a decision. While this may seem like extra work, this screening step allows you to assess quickly whether this is a person that you would like to be part of your business. It also allows the candidate to determine whether your business is a place where they want to work. Be sure to schedule these, if possible, to allow the candidate to prepare and be ready for a conversation with you, but tell the candidate up front that this is a more casual and initial conversation than the formal interview.

Generally, these conversations have four parts:

1. Confirm the key requirements of the position with the candidate, including any necessary requirements, required location and schedule if applicable, and any salary and benefits.

2. Ask any clarifying questions you have about the candidate's resume or experience. At this stage, these questions should be specific, filling in any additional details you might need *before* a formal interview. For example, if the candidate has a significant gap in their work experience not explained on their resume, you could ask them to explain their gap in employment.

3. Offer to answer any top-of-mind questions from the candidate. They often ask about the next steps, and your response can communicate that you need time to determine the next steps and the timeline, but you will follow up with them either way.

4. Finally, confirm that the candidate is still interested in the position and moving forward with the application process. You may have also asked this at the beginning of the conversation, but it can be good to confirm at the end, after you have given details and answered the candidate's questions.

These steps will help you finalize which candidates are your top ones, the ones you will spend time interviewing and getting to know one-on-one.

Next Steps

Once you have reviewed resumes, and had any initial screening conversations with candidates, create a list of candidates who you will want to formally interview.

Additional Resources

If you have questions or need help, assistance is available.
GaPDS Website
DECAL Thriving Child Care Business Academy Website
To Find Other Study Guides: Click on Resources on the Academy home page
To Find Training: Click on Trainings on the Academy home page
To Register for Training: Click on Schedules & Registration on the Academy home page
To Sign Up for Study Groups: Fill out the Intake Assessment
For questions about coaching or study groups: Email GAcoaching@civstrat.com
To Find Other ECE Resources: Visit the DECAL Website
For General Questions about the Academy: Email thriving@decal.ga.gov
For More Information:
Family Child Care Learning Home Rules and Regulations

Child Care Learning Center Rules and Regulations

Content included in this guide has been adapted from Lean Recruitment: Finding Better Talent Faster (2017), by Gary Romano and Alison LaRocca.

DEVELOPED AND DESIGNED BY CIVITAS STRATEGIES

Disclaimer: *The information* contained *here has been prepared by Civitas Strategies and is not intended to constitute legal, tax, or financial advice. The Civitas Strategies team has used reasonable efforts in collecting, preparing, and providing this information, but does not guarantee its accuracy, completeness, adequacy, or currency. The publication and distribution of this information are not intended to create, and receipt does not constitute, an attorney-client or any other advisory relationship. Reproduction of this information is expressly prohibited. Only noncommercial uses of this work are permitted.*

Copyright © 2024 Civitas Strategies, LLC