**SPC 2019 Information Security Hiring Panel: Techniques & Resources**

**Drafting job descriptions**

* “Sell” the organization and position - how is the organization appealing in relation to the job duties?
* Accurately describe the work performed in the position
* Minimum requirements
	+ Put as few things as possible in minimum requirements. This opens up the pool for individuals who have non-traditional backgrounds. Do you really need that CS degree? Does all of the rest of your team have it?
	+ High minimum requirements favor candidates who overestimate their skills/experience. Those who underestimate their skills/experience may be discouraged from applying to positions with lots of minimums. Do you want a team member who overestimates their skills or underestimates?
* Preferred attributes
	+ Include a combination of technical, professional and interpersonal skills.
	+ Only include items that are truly beneficial to the job. For example, be thoughtful about whether certifications are really important to a good hire.
* Consider using NIST NICE framework for roles, KSAs and tasks
	+ This is a resource that categorizes and describes cybersecurity work. The publication serves as a fundamental reference to support a workforce capable of meeting an organization's cybersecurity needs by establishing a taxonomy and common lexicon that describes cybersecurity work and workers irrespective of where or for whom the work is performed.
	+ <https://niccs.us-cert.gov/workforce-development/cyber-security-workforce-framework/>
* Removing bias - does your choice of wording discourage any candidates from applying?
	+ Harvard and Arizona have used this tool for gender bias: <http://gender-decoder.katmatfield.com>
	+ Textio.com is a vendor that can be used to check the language used in a posting
* Additional considerations
	+ Are you willing to accomodate a good candidate who cannot work 100% time? For example, if a strong candidate has child care, elder care or other life situations that make an 80% time position a better fit, will you hire at 80% and respect the reduced demands on the team member? If so, note that in the posting.
	+ Does your posting process ask about physical capability needs of the job (lifting, hearing, seeing, talking, etc.)? If so, are you doing a fair assessment of what is really needed versus what is convenient to have? If simple accommodations mean a strong candidate with a disability can perform the job, then don’t require those capabilities.

**What to say to HR/Recruiting:**

* Reducing minimum requirements doesn’t mean we accept minimum skills.
* How to get recruiting to know what to ask/look for when they’re screening - meet with them and tell them what you need.
* Salary matching - getting them to think bigger than your town/city/region - give them the macro view of the shortage of talent.
* Consider relocation support for candidates.
* Consider remote/flexible work arrangements for candidates.

**Posting and advertising postings**

* Does your HR department have data on which posting locations have provided the most, or best, candidates for your organization?
* Find out what all the places are that the job will be posted and whether there are “optional” places that may have a small cost (you may find out that there are options that no one tells you about unless you ask)
* Connect with your campus career center to both find opportunities to get junior level postings in front of graduating seniors as well as learn about the advice they are giving students about getting hired.
* Use your and your team’s networks! Have team members promote the job posting on LinkedIn and other communities.
* Use word of mouth from your existing team to other internal and external contacts.
* Consider offering a referral bonus to staff.

**Initial screening (paper reviews)**

* Evaluate each of the requirements separately, rather than reading the entire resume/application at one time (e.g. if you require X years of experience, look at each resume just for that requirement). Then, move to the next requirement and review all resumes again.
* Consider removing names from the resumes/apps to make them “blind” to the assessors. This process is time consuming, but can be a great way to remove unconscious bias. Research has shown that identical resumes are evaluated differently depending on the perceived gender or ethnicity of the name.

**“Phone” screening**

* Give careful consideration to whether video based screenings are fair to all candidates. Not all people may have environments suitable for a quiet conversation without distractions that can be seen or heard. If video discussions are needed, consider providing the candidate with a commercial location that can be used for video conferencing (some FedEx Kinkos locations have this service).
* Also consider biases that come into play with video. Normally, you have no view into someone’s home at this phase of a job interview and hiring team members can get distracted by what the candidate’s home looks like. Video may also introduce information about ethnicity, disability, age and other attributes that could bias the process.

**Interviews**

* Have a set list of questions that you use for everyone AND a consistent guide or benchmark for evaluating candidates. Benchmarks should be reflective of the job duties or the skill sets listed in the position description.
	+ Example:
* Have the interviewers complete written evaluations BEFORE they discuss with anyone else (and refer back to these, especially if you have two candidates who seem “close” based on discussion).
* Be sure to review the most current information on allowed and prohibited questions before the interview processes.

**Selection and offers**

* Consider “culture add” to the team, instead of “culture fit”.
* Consider the strengths/needs of the existing team, and look for candidates that add to the team.
* Consider verifying key qualifications (degree, certifications, etc.) prior to employment.
* Don’t ask for existing salary, or expected salary. Instead, present the candidate the salary range and the other compensation throughout the process (e.g.: <https://www.wisconsin.edu/ohrwd/benefits/totalcomp/>).
	+ Some states have laws that prevent asking a candidate his/her current salary.