

GLENN COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PERSONNEL



SCREENING/INTERVIEW PANEL HANDBOOK

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Table of Contents

Panel Member Roles and Responsibilities.....	3
Panel Overview	3
Panel Chair	3
Panel Member.....	3
Confidentiality.....	3
Recruitment Process Timeline.....	3
Paper Screening Process.....	5
Developing Screening Criteria.....	5
Utilizing the Screening Criteria Form.....	5
Oral Interview Process.....	5
Developing Interview Questions.....	5
Interviewing the Candidate.....	6
Rating a Candidate.....	7
Communication During Interviews.....	7
Certifying, Rating, and Forwarding Finalists	10
Personnel Rules: Recruitment and Appointment.....	10
Checking References.....	11
Forms, Etc.....	12
Confidentiality Form.....	13
Screening Criteria Rating Sheet.....	14
Oral Interview Rating Sheet.....	16
Recruitment Selection Form.....	18
Employment Offer – Script.....	19

PANEL MEMBER ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

PANEL OVERVIEW

Screening and Oral Interview Panels are selected by the Appointing Authority in accordance with Glenn County Personnel Rules. All Panels shall have a Chair either designated by the Appointing Authority or, in the absence of a designation, self-voted by the Panel.

PANEL CHAIR

The Chair coordinates the recruitment and hiring process and directs panel members in how to carry out their responsibilities. The Chair answers questions posed by both panel members and candidates and works closely with the Appointing Authority and the Personnel Department in carrying out the recruitment process.

Chairs need to be good planners, organizers, and facilitators. The recruitment process is most efficient when timelines are set well in advance, schedules are communicated to members, and those schedules are followed.

PANEL MEMBER

All Panel Members have the following responsibilities:

- Support the mission and vision of the County and the Department.
- Fully participate in all panel meetings.
- Demonstrate objectivity, fairness, and equality of treatment for all participants.
- Maintain strict confidentiality during and after the recruitment process.
- Assist and contribute in the development of interview questions/topics.
- Evaluate candidates with relation to minimum requirements/qualifications and desirable qualifications.

CONFIDENTIALITY

The recruitment/hiring process is a highly sensitive and confidential process. It is critical that all screening/interview panel members, and those associated with this activity, maintain the highest degree of confidentiality in order to preserve the integrity of the process. All Panel Members will sign a Confidentiality Form acknowledging their responsibilities and commitment.

Failure to maintain confidentiality may result in disciplinary action.

RECRUITMENT PROCESS TIMELINE

STEP BY STEP PROCESS OUTLINE

Step 1: Recruitment Request and Selection Plan Form (GPER22) submitted to the Personnel Department.

- Step 2: The Personnel Department ensures position allocation vacancy.
- Step 3: The Personnel Department coordinates with the Department Contact to:
- Confirm Panel composition
 - Review Job Specification to ensure the existing language is accurate
 - Review, develop, add Distinguishing Characteristics for the position
 - Establish a Recruitment Timeline
- Step 4: The position is advertised for the recruitment period.
- Step 5: The Panel and Appointing Authority (if applicable) meet to:
- Sign Confidentiality Forms
 - Develop Questions
 - Develop Screening Criterion
- Step 5: The position closes.
- Step 6: The Personnel Department screens for Minimum Qualifications. Testing, if applicable, occurs.
- Step 7: Applications are forwarded to the Panel for review. Note, all examinations must already be completed and approved.
- Step 8: Panel screens applications and finalists are selected and contacted for an Interview.
- Step 9: Interviews occur.
- Step 10: Panel certifies and forwards finalists to Appointing Authority.
- Step 11: Second Interviews (if applicable) occur by Appointing Authority.
- Step 12: References Checked.
- Step 13: Appointing Authority makes a conditional offer of employment (please see “example script”). Appointing Authority notifies the Personnel Department via Recruitment Selection Form, in writing, of who was made a conditional offer.
- Step 14: The Personnel Department will issue an “official” Glenn County Offer of Employment Letter; “conditional” if applicable.
- Step 15: Completed Recruitment Packet returned to Personnel Department.

**Throughout the process, candidates will receive notices from the Personnel Department regarding their status (e.g.: No interview, not selected, etc.)*

PAPER SCREENING PROCESS

DEVELOPING SCREENING CRITERIA

The development of screening criteria represents a “test” under the law. Therefore, the criteria used in paper screening and interviews, including the questions themselves, must be job-related and predictive of future job success.

The Appointing Authority will provide direction regarding any additional Screening Criteria that will help the Panel successfully identify those candidates most qualified for an oral interview.

UTILIZING THE SCREENING CRITERIA FORM

All applications that meet Minimum Qualifications are forward to the Panel for consideration. It is the Screening Panel’s job to review the contents of these applications against pre-established, job related criteria and assign a value/score.

The form provides for FOUR categories of evaluation: 1) Educational Training and Background, 2) Experience, 3) Indication of Job Related Skills, Abilities and Attitude, and 4) Additional Screening Criteria (as determined by the Panel). Each category may receive up to 20 points. The total cumulative score for each candidate shall assist the panel in determining who will be invited for an oral interview.

ORAL INTERVIEW PROCESS

DEVELOPING INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

An interview represents a test under the law. Therefore, the criteria used in the interview, including the questions themselves, must be job-related and predictive of future job success.

In developing questions, the panel must be able to distinguish an applicant’s ability to do the job from their ability to get the job.

Shift the focus from experience to results:

- Job performance in a former position, accomplishments, and productivity.
- Be less concerned with years of experience and more concerned with *what they have done*.
- Past performance is the best predictor of future performance.

Interview questions should be behavioral based. Create questions that make the candidate tell the panel about specific work experience and their professional accomplishments.

This type of examination tests an applicant’s knowledge of subject matter determined relevant to the position applied for. The exam is structure, which essentially means it is like a written essay test, given orally. Each applicant will be asked to answer the same set of questions. Follow-up questions are only permitted to clarify the candidate’s answer to a previous question. Otherwise, every candidate is asked exactly the same question in exactly the same manner as all other candidates.

INTERVIEWING THE CANDIDATE

The Panel Chair serves as the facilitator of the interview process. The Chair should coordinate which panel member will ask what questions and provide the guidance for introductions, etc. In addition, the Chair should do the following:

1. Get the first candidate, introduce yourself and get their name (including correct pronunciation), and then take him/her to the interview room. Show them where to sit.
2. Introduce the candidate to the panel and ask the panel members to introduce themselves.
3. Explain to the candidate the following:
 1. number of questions
 2. allotted interview time
 3. there will be time at the end for the candidate to ask questions of the panel if they didn't use all of their allowed time.
4. Begin Interview
5. After interview, ask the candidate if he/she has any questions for the panel. Watch out! This close to the 'finish line' panel members may relax and, being off guard, say something inappropriate or promise something not theirs to promise. You should actively listen and interrupt if necessary.
6. Thank the candidate for their time and interest and show them to the door.
7. Provide the candidate with the GLENN COUNTY CONVICTION RECORD form, along with the attached stamped envelope. Inform the candidate that they are to complete the form and return *by mail* to the Personnel Department. **Note – in some cases, applicants have already completed this form.
8. Return to the interview room immediately and direct the panel to score or finalize their notes for the last candidate and to prepare for the next candidate.

While interviewing, the panel should function as a relaxed, informal team. This will help the candidate make a good presentation of his/her qualifications for the job. Panel members should always base their ratings on the information being provided at the time, not on assumptions.

It is important that the panel try to keep the interviews on schedule. However, if the panel falls behind, no interview should be unduly shortened in order to return to the schedule. Often a later candidate will withdraw or take less interviewing time than others. This helps get the interviews back on schedule.

During the interview, panel members will be asking questions designed to assist in evaluating whether the candidate possesses the knowledge and skills necessary for satisfactory job performance. Open ended questions, phrased so that the desired answer is not revealed, are best suited to this process.

A panel member should not hesitate to repeat a question if the candidate fails to fully comprehend it. Be alert to follow up on leads by asking a candidate to explain or elaborate on any answer given. Do not, however, "dig" for an answer that obviously isn't there.

Remember that the oral interview is an examination of qualifications, not a hiring interview. The panel need not be concerned with gaps in employment, reasons for leaving a job, or a candidate's willingness to accept various conditions of employment. These issues will be covered in the final

selection process with the Appointing Authority. The panel's job is to sort out the candidates on the basis of most to least qualified upon the presentation of their qualifications.

Occasionally, a panel member may be in a position of rating a candidate that they know personally. The rating could, as a result, appear biased either for or against the candidate. Professionalism is the key; however, panel members must disqualify themselves from the process if they possess an intimate or familial relationship with a candidate.

RATING A CANDIDATE

After the interview, panel members evaluate the candidate on each category in the appropriate space on the rating sheet. Ratings must be based on information brought out during the interview and upon the candidate's observable behavior in the interview. The ratings you assign should measure the candidate's qualifications against the requirements of the job. This rating is a prediction of the candidate's potential for satisfactory job performance.

Panel members should rate the candidate independently of the other panel members. At the end of each interview members will compare and discuss their ratings with other panel members to determine if the same factors were considered and to be certain significant aspects are not being overlooked. Ratings are tentative and, if there is good reason to do so, may be changed. Often a comparison of candidates throughout the day will require adjustments to be made in earlier ratings.

If a panel member assigns a failing score, the specific reasons must be documented in the member's notes to determine if the same factors are being considered for all candidates, and be certain significant aspects are not being overlooked.

Ideally, comments should be made for all assigned ratings; if necessary, please use a separate sheet of paper.

It is particularly important for members to write the specific reason a candidate was rated very high or very low.

All notes and forms must be turned over to the Chair at the end of the interviews. Copies are not allowed to be made for panel member files. As such, consider that whatever is written down will be seen by a reviewing official and shouldn't contain any inappropriate entry that a panel member would not want a judge or jury to potentially see later

COMMUNICATION DURING INTERVIEWS

The hiring process, when handled incorrectly, can be extremely costly for employers. The expenses associated with turnover of a position are approximately 30% of the annual salary, and potential legal outlays which can result from an improper interview can be huge. The interview is the most important step in the hiring process. Panel members play a critical role in effective, successful, and legal interviewing.

Doing a good job of conducting employment interviews and evaluating applicants takes more than having an informal conversation. It requires training in the skills, techniques and requirements of successful interviewing. The following provides some basic concepts of proper interviewing

DO'S

1. Feel free to let the applicant know about the department/county if they ask.

Relate information about the county. Discuss your background with the county or what caused you to join the county. Remember, don't "oversell" the organization or a particular job. And don't use too much time giving information.

2. Develop good interview questions.

Review the specific job requirements and all available information about the job. Decide what information you need and what the candidates should know about the job. Make sure questions allow for "measurable" results.

3. Schedule the interview so that you have enough time. Situate it in an accessible location.

Too many interviews can be too short which result in obtaining only superficial information. Don't allow interruptions during the interview. Don't schedule too many in succession - this makes it difficult to maintain a high level of concentration.

4. Work at making the applicant feel at ease.

Remove any unnecessary physical barriers. Establish rapport. If the candidate is nervous or ill at ease, it is probable that you are only going to get surface level information and not the true picture of attitudes, feelings, motivation, etc.

5. Be aware of the biases or preferences that may unduly influence your decision.

Some people tend to accept or reject someone automatically because of a certain background factor or personal characteristic. Avoid bias.

6. Let the applicant do most of the talking.

If you are doing much of the talking, you will learn very little about the candidate. Rule of Thumb: The interviewer should talk no more than 25% of the interview.

7. Phrase questions in such a way that they do not suggest an answer that you would like.

Candidates want to please you. If your point of view is implied in the question, you may not get a totally frank response. Watch your non-verbal questions: Don't nod your head, shrug your shoulders, smile/frown, etc., when such an action would logically indicate to the applicant they are or are not on the right track in their response.

8. Avoid asking questions that can be answered "yes" or "no" unless this type of answer is

sufficient.

9. Pause a few seconds after the candidate appears to have completed a response.

Take the time to evaluate the candidate immediately after the interview.

Too often, especially when several candidates are interviewed, the interviewer will compare candidates before rating, confuse one applicant's answers with those of another, or allow someone else's opinion to prejudice theirs. Confirm your thoughts immediately on paper

DONT'S

1. Prejudge a candidate.

This occurs when the interviewer develops positive or negative ideas about the applicant before the interview based upon the application form, resume, letters of recommendation, or a verbal comment from someone else. Where a judgment is job related, it is appropriate. Otherwise, it is not.

2. Rely on first impression.

Some people unconsciously "lock in" their first impression and, during the interview, look only for the information that will back up that initial impression.

3. Compare candidates with each other.

Research has found that if you rate an "average" candidate after evaluating 3-4 unfavorable candidates, you tend to rate the average one very high. Rate each candidate against the pre-established standard.

4. Make the "Horn/Halo Effect" effort.

The "Horn/Halo Effect" occurs when the interviewer is overly impressed by one positive or negative factor and then judges all other factors in the same light.

5. Rely on your intuition.

Some interviewers feel that their "intuitive feel" is more reliable than objective factors or evidence. Research has shown that this is not a desirable practice - our memory conveniently allows us to forget the number of times our intuition let us down. Look, however, for a correlation of intuition and fact.

6. Waste time by asking questions that are already answered on the application or other written information unless clarification is needed.
7. Ask trick questions or questions designed to trap the candidate.
8. Ask questions that violate the candidate's civil rights.

Individual rights can be violated when questions are asked regarding information, characteristics and/or behavior that are not job-related or intrude into areas of privacy.

9. Contradict or argue with the candidate or appear to cross-examine him or her.

This does not mean that you should not seek to have the candidate reconcile ambiguities or perceived contradictions. Just be careful to keep follow-up questions appropriate and job-related.

10. Ask questions or pursue answers that are not clearly job related or that deal with race, color, religion, sex, disability, or national origin. Any question you ask must be legal. Your questions should not offend and should be designed to help you establish the applicant's qualifications for the job.

11. Ask a person with a disability about:

- the nature of a disability,
- the severity of a disability,
- the condition causing a disability,
- any prognosis or expectation regarding a disability, or
- whether or not the person will need treatment or special leave because of a disability

CERTIFYING, RATING, AND FORWARDING FINALISTS

In selecting finalists for recommendation, it is important to assess the strength and weakness of each applicant and to use a consensus approach. As a reminder, the interview panel is not hiring the individual; they are making a recommendation for hiring consideration.

Panel members are to **ONLY** use the application materials and interview in assessing each candidate. Any issues regarding a candidate will surface during the reference check process.

The Panel, through the chair, will submit a ranked list of a minimum of two and no more than five finalists to the Appointing Authority noting the "strengths" and "weaknesses" of each candidate.

****Note**, if the panel cannot forward at least two names, please work with the Personnel Director and Appointing Authority.

The Appointing Authority ultimately has the final authority in selecting their staff.

PERSONNEL RULES – RECRUITMENT AND APPOINTMENT

See the Administrative Manual, Chapter 10, Section 8 at

http://www.countyofglenn.net/govt/administrative_manual/adminmanual.aspx complete listing of the County's Policies and Procedures as it relates to Recruitment and Appointment.

CHECKING REFERENCES

When you do a reference check, you are actually conducting an interview. For example, don't appear to be threatening or overly assertive. Listen carefully for what is and isn't said. Explore ambiguities. Get the references talking. Consider the following guidelines:

Introduction: Begin the conversation by introducing yourself, "Hi my name is Jim Brown calling from the County of Glenn. I am the department head for the Human Resources department. Mary Smith is a finalist for our XXXX position and she has indicated that she worked with/for you. I would like to ask you a few questions about what she did, how she performed her job and who she interacted with. Is this a good time to talk?"

Applicant's Authority: First of all, make it clear that you have been authorized by the applicant to make the inquiry (our application includes this authorization). If a reference then tries to avoid answering questions, you can suggest that they are not doing the applicant a favor; the assumption might be that no news is bad news.

The Right Person: Make sure that you are talking to the "right" person. If possible, talk to the applicant's prior or current supervisor. Try to avoid dealing with someone who may only have a written record of the applicant's performance.

Network: Ask the references listed if they know of anyone else that the applicant worked with that would have information relative to job performance.

Below are several guidelines that should be followed:

1. Ask open-ended questions.
2. Evaluate the information both in light of what the applicant has already told you, and your own impressions of him or her.
3. Ask for copies of past performance evaluations.
4. Ask the reference how he/she believes the person would perform in the position we are considering them for.

Remember to ask several questions about areas where the applicant could grow or further develop professionally. (If you ask it this way rather than "what are the applicant's weaknesses", you are more likely to get feedback.)

This area is often overlooked or ignored and is one of the most troublesome areas when looking back at a problem hire.

Ask questions that are related to the performance of their job and their interpersonal skills on the job.

DO NOT ask questions that could be construed as discriminatory, e.g.:

- Do they go to church? Are they married?
- Do you think they are too old to perform the job?
- Do they need any cultural accommodations?,etc

FORMS, etc.

- Confidentiality Form
- Glenn County Paper Screening Criteria
- Glenn County Oral Interview Rating Sheet
- Offer of Employment Script

****See next page**

Glenn County Screening Panel

CONFIDENTIALITY FORM

As a member of the selection/interview process for the County of Glenn, I am acting as an agent of the County and I understand that I am participating in a confidential process. All of my actions related to this process are subject to the laws and regulations relating to equal and fair employment practices. Failure to maintain confidentiality could result in a violating of Federal and State regulations and incur liability on behalf of the County.

Specifically, I agree not to release information to any non-authorized person regarding:

- Number of applicants who applied.
- Number of applicants who have been selected for an interview
- Names of applicants who have applied or are interviewing.
- Criteria/scoring and Interview questions/scoring.
- Information concerning applicant qualifications and ratings.
- Any information obtained from candidates' application materials.
- Interview ratings.
- Conversations that take place during panel meetings and interviews.

I understand that I may be held personally responsible for any unauthorized disclosure of information. If I am asked questions and the process, I will refer them to the Personnel Director.

I agree to comply with the County policies and procedures assuring compliance with the selection/recruitment process. I understand that I am obligated to remove myself from a panel if I am deemed to have a conflicting or close relationship with a candidate.

Panel Member Name

Panel Member Signature

Date

Position being Screened

Glenn County Paper Screening Criteria

Position: _____

Applicant's Name: _____ **Date:** _____

SCORING CRITERIA:	Superior	=	17-20	points
	Well Qualified	=	9-16	points
	Qualified	=	1-8	points
	Unacceptable	=	0	points

EDUCATIONAL TRAINING AND BACKGROUND (20 points possible):

POINT VALUE: _____

EXPERIENCE – PAID AND UNPAID (20 points possible)

POINT VALUE: _____

INDICATION OF JOB RELATED SKILLS, ABILITIES, AND ATTITUDE (20 points possible)

POINT VALUE: _____

ADDITIONAL SCREENING CRITERIA – if applicable (20 points possible)

POINT VALUE: _____

Rater's Signature: _____ **TOTAL POINTS (80 possible):** _____

Paper Screening Criteria Key

It is important to have the panel members agree to the screening criteria and to evaluate information consistently. The Appointing Authority will further provide information as to what key is needed in each particular recruitment.

Each panel is responsible for determining what criteria are appropriate for each of the following broad guidelines and for defining what constitutes a “superior”, “well qualified”, “qualified” or “unacceptable” score of each guideline.

In ranking candidates, specific evidence of future potential should be considered along with actual experience. Superb training and skill are usually preferable to mediocre experience.

EDUCATIONAL TRAINING AND BACKGROUND

(degrees, course work, workshops, memberships)

In evaluating candidates’ training and education, a panel may want to look at level of degree, relatedness of major and/or additional course work, recency of training, and grades earned in relevant course.

Evidence of education (through workshops, seminars and conferences, industry-sponsored training, apprenticeships, etc.) related to techniques or recent developments, specific to the position, should also be considered.

EXPERIENCE – PAID AND UNPAID

(internships, work experience, additional experience of any kind likely to have prepared a candidate for the position)

In evaluating a candidates’ experience, length, and quality of experience should both be considered. The quality of experience, and particularly the variety and level of responsibility may be more important than the length of experience.

INDICATION OF JOB RELATED SKILLS, ABILITIES, AND ATTITUDE

(initiative, creativity, organization, accuracy, cooperative relationships, attitudes towards the public, etc.)

In determining whether or not the candidate possesses the required job-related skills, abilities and attitudes, scrutinize their application materials in an attempt to ascertain their basic values and general abilities and interests as related to the position in a local government setting. In considering this criterion, try to look beyond the factors considered in evaluating the first two criteria (Education and Experience).

ADDITIONAL SCREENING CRITERIA – if applicable

The Panel may want to identify and define additional screening criterion. If an additional criterion is used it should be specific, measurable, and related to successful performance in the position.

Glenn County Oral Interview Rating Sheet

Position: _____

Applicant's Name: _____ **Date:** _____

SCORING CRITERIA:	Superior	=	3	points
	Well Qualified	=	2	points
	Qualified	=	1	points
	Unacceptable	=	0	points

1. _____ (3 pts possible)

2. _____ (3 pts possible)

3. _____ (3 pts possible)

4. _____ (3 pts possible)

5. _____ (3 pts possible)

6. _____ (3 pts possible)

7. _____ (3 pts possible)

8. _____ (3 pts possible)

9. _____(3 pts possible)

10. _____(3 pts possible)

11. _____(3 pts possible)

12. _____(3 pts possible)

13. _____(3 pts possible)

14. _____(3 pts possible)

15. _____(3 pts possible)

Rater's Signature: _____ TOTAL POINTS: _____

Recruitment Selection Form

(Please complete once a selection has been made.
Must be submitted to the Personnel Department at least one week prior to start date.)

Name of New Employee: _____

Desired Start Date: _____

Desired Step: _____
(If step B or C, requires Personnel Department Approval, if step D or above, requires Board of Supervisor approval.)

Personnel Department Approval (If applicable):

Board of Supervisor Approval (If applicable):

References checked

Background processing complete

Special Instructions for offer letter (If applicable):

Employment Offer – SCRIPT

When a candidate has been identified to fill a position, and the Appointing Authority, has given approval, an offer can be made. The following steps should be followed:

- Inform the Personnel Department that a candidate has been identified.
- Work with the Personnel Department to confirm salary placement (if above Step A).
- Extend the offer to the candidate using the script below:

“Congratulations CANDIDATE. I am pleased to offer you the position of POSITION. The salary for this position is \$XXX and reports to SUPERVISOR/MANAGER’S NAME.

Your start date is tentatively scheduled for DATE. Please come to LOCATION on your first day of employment and see NAME.

This offer of employment is contingent upon the completion of a PRE-EMPLOYMENT PHYSICAL, BACKGROUND, DRUG SCREEN, ETC.

Once you have accepted the offer, I will notify the Personnel Department and you should receive a formal offer letter soon after with instructions regarding your New Employee Orientation.

Once again, we are pleased to offer you this position and look forward to you becoming an employee at Glenn County.”