



RUTGERS

THE STATE UNIVERSITY  
OF NEW JERSEY

Online Search Committee  
Informational Module for Faculty,  
Department Chairs, and Deans

# 1. Active Recruitment

- **Active recruitment** is the process of "generating a pool [of applicants] rather than merely tapping it"
- Approach based on the long-term cultivation of relationships and connections with those who may become applicants for a position at some future point, especially those from underrepresented groups such as women and minorities.
- Helps ensure a diverse and excellent pool of candidates for faculty positions.
- Active recruitment is a good, legally sound, practice to improve the diversity pool.

# The committee meets to get an update on the search...

**Alex:** Sorry I'm late. I just flew in from Seattle this morning.

**Denise:** How was the conference? I saw your student rolling up his poster in the mailroom the other day.

**Alex:** It was a great venue for him to present his work. We had a lot of people stop by to hear about his findings. But for us, thinking about this cluster hire in environmental justice research, this meeting was exactly the right place to be. They had students serving as diversity ambassadors and a job center for networking and recruitment.

**John:** Sounds like some kind of speed-dating service.

**Alex:** No, look at these CVs. I made copies for all of us. It just underscores that if we look beyond the routine places, we'll find a sizeable pool of excellent scholars.

**John** [flipping through the stack of papers]: This one hasn't even defended yet. And this one is in a psychology department.

**Alex:** We're going to be hiring three or four people over the next couple of years. These advanced graduate students will hit the job market just at the point where we open the next search.

**Denise:** Good strategy. Alex, let me see that one in psychology. I know the Rutgers department has a field-open search going on right now.

**Rita:** Let's all take a look at the candidates Alex identified. We'll add the ABDs to our future candidates file. We can follow up with any of the job market candidates that pass through our initial screen. We should be able to start reviewing the short-list candidates next time we meet.

## Which methods would be considered examples of active recruitment?

- a) Send a personal note and a copy of the announcement to college presidents and academic colleagues, asking for their assistance in identifying prime diversity applicants
- b) Create a standing committee to identify and cultivate potential women and/or minority candidates, who can then be considered for targeted recruitment outside of subfield-defined searches
- c) When first approaching minority and women candidates, let them know that they are being considered in part because of their gender and/or racial/ethnic status
- d) Reach out to graduate students and other promising candidates even when you are not actively hiring; meet them when giving presentations at other institutions; compliment presenters, particularly students, who give excellent conference presentations, hand-out your card to them; invite them to visit Rutgers
- e) If women or under-represented minority candidates have been hired in recent searches, ask the search committees, the department chair, and the recently hired faculty themselves how they were successfully recruited

# Active Recruitment Methods and Tips

- Previous Relationships Lead to Better Acceptance Rates
- The Far Horizon: Keep a Future Candidates File
- Personal Referrals
- Active recruitment is not the same as tapping an “old boy’s network”
- Connect with Graduate Students
- Be Aware of Hidden Bias
- Avoid Having Your Active Recruitment Efforts Backfire

Click [here](#) for more explanation

## 2. Determining Disciplinary Focus and Rank of the Position

- The work of a faculty search committee is an extension of an overall strategic plan for the Department.
- The committee interprets the department's short-term needs and long-term vision as it helps to shape the disciplinary focus and rank of the open position.
- Emerging fields in the discipline are often where the next generation of diverse faculty leaders can be found.
- Interdisciplinary work fertilizes dynamic, leading-edge scholarship and taps diversity networks.

# A department meeting to discuss a new search...

**Ed** [department chair]: I met with the Dean yesterday. We've been given the go-ahead to launch a new search.

**Carlos**: Well, we lost Günther when he retired last spring. We need this hire.

**Barbara**: Does that mean we'll be looking for an organo-metallics specialist...someone who can teach the big inorganic lecture course?

**John**: There's Lee at Harvard. She'd fill that niche and also bring some major grants with her.

**Alex**: Lee was O'Beirne's student at Stanford. Amazing pedigree.

**Rita**: I'm thinking back to the strategic planning that we did as a department last summer. We listed several goals for where we wanted to be as a department in five years.

**Barbara**: We're incredibly strong in protein chemistry. We talked about hiring in that area, maybe building in the direction of directed evolution of synthetic molecules.

**Alex**: There's Johnson at UNC. He published that paper in *Nature* last year. And he is on the board of NOBCChE.

**Barbara**: NOBCChE?

**Alex**: National Organization of Black Chemists and Chemical Engineers.

**Carlos**: But we still need someone to teach that huge undergraduate inorganic class.

**Ed:** There are a few in the department who'd be able to teach that course. Rita, I'm glad to hear you mentioned the strategic plan that we developed last year. I re-read the report last night, and we are on track with many of our department goals. One important thing that we all identified was the need to build strong connections to industry in the state.

**Barbara:** We also need to think about recruiting a more diverse faculty. To reflect our diverse student body in one of the most diverse states in the nation.

**John:** Lee's a woman. I think we should pull out all the stops.

**Carlos:** She may be a great candidate, John. And you've got my support on actively recruiting her. But let's also do this without working the old boy's network. Can't we find a way to look beyond the pool of people in the Ivy League lineages?

**John:** We shouldn't go second-rate.

**Ed:** Active recruitment today means an open search. We generate the pool of candidates, we don't simply tap it. And we leverage our strengths as a department to do it. Let's form the search committee.

## What best practices are evident in the conversation among department faculty?

- a) The department had a strategic plan to inform their short-term needs and long-term vision
- b) The department had identified their dream candidate from an elite university
- c) Faculty members exchanged information to broaden their search
- d) The department's recruitment strategy includes increasing faculty diversity
- e) The department chair asserted his positional authority to direct the search toward a particular outcome

- Departmental Strategic Planning informed the discussion and decision-making around the new faculty search described in this scenario.
- Emerging and interdisciplinary areas often present a greater possibility of producing a more diverse applicant pool.
- A diverse applicant pool is much less likely to result if the search is conducted at a senior level only; junior level or rank-open searches have a greater likelihood of attracting gender and racial/ethnic diversity.
- Consider developing a cluster hire plan and build the collaborations to make this work.

<http://www.diversityandequity.rutgers.edu/>

## 3. Constituting the Search Committee

- A diverse search committee is most likely to identify a diverse array of candidates.
- Include members with different perspectives and expertise and a demonstrated commitment to diversity.
- Include women and underrepresented minorities whenever possible, but diversity need not be solely based on race or gender.
- It is often helpful to appoint some search committee members from outside the department, particularly for interdisciplinary searches.
- The committee chair should be someone who is looked upon by faculty colleagues as a leader and who also holds diversification of the faculty as a goal.

# Charging the Committee: Set some ground rules

- Discuss and agree upon fair, objective, and uniform procedures with which to evaluate candidates before screening actually begins
- Insist on evidence and well-reasoned judgment over unsubstantiated assertions
- Agree upon the criteria of evaluation, the credentials candidates are expected to submit, the deadline for application submissions, and the manner that matters of confidentiality are to be handled
- Establish plans for actively recruiting women and underrepresented minorities prior to beginning the search
- Agree on and follow a timeline, but avoid taking shortcuts when pressed for time

# The search committee meets for the first time...

**Rita** [search chair]: I'm glad to see everyone here today. There's a nice mix of different perspectives and expertise around the table. I thought we would start by setting up a few ground rules.

**Alex**: Okay, well, as I understand it, we're charged with identifying a microeconomics scholar, but the niche is fairly open-ended.

**Carlos**: And it's also an rank-open search, but recruiting at the pre-tenure-level is more likely to attract a diverse pool.

**Barbara**: I can write up the job description.

**Rita**: Let's nail down the selection criteria first.

**John**: We just do it the way we've always done it. Why reinvent the wheel here?

**Carlos**: Passive advertising and screening? We need to conduct a more proactive outreach.

**Alex**: What I liked about the process when I was recruited here was how clear the rules of the game were. I knew that you wanted a CV, the full-text of five relevant publications in a list of at least ten, three letters of reference from senior scholars. And I knew that I had to have at least half of the required publications in top-ranked journals, and an external grant in my pocket.

**Carlos**: This all worked out in the case of Alex, but the last search turned out to be a lost opportunity.

**Barbara:** I agree. We set so many “must-have” rules, we narrowed our pool to a real inner circle.

**John:** We can’t lower our standards.

**Rita:** No one is talking about lowering standards, John, but we can designate qualifications as preferred, rather than required.

**John:** Fine, but then we’ll have every community-college economist knocking on our door.

**Carlos:** Actually no, we’ll be building our networks for long-term recruitment goals.

**Rita:** We’ll be clear about our statement of the research and teaching skills needed for the job, but let’s try to encourage a wide and inclusive search.

**Barbara:** What about ranking the candidates?

**Carlos:** As long as it’s not done too early. I’ve heard that great candidates can be cast out of an initial screening if it’s all too formulaic.

**John:** Look, we need some set of tools to move forward on this.

**Rita:** I agree with you, John. Okay, here’s what I hear around the table: we need to think as broadly as possible in terms of scholarship and experience while still being true to the goals of the department, and we should try to avoid being so fixed about required qualifications that we narrow the pool. We’ll develop clear evaluative criteria to create a short list, then we’ll implement a ranking system at that point.

**Alex:** That’s sound good, Rita.

## Which practices are most likely to facilitate a successful search that is compatible with attracting an array of diverse candidates?

- a) Define the niche specifically and advertise the qualifications as required
- b) Constitute the search committee in accordance with a well-defined disciplinary niche
- c) Discuss and agree upon fair, objective, and uniform procedures and ground rules
- d) Develop a strategy that identifies someone who will “fit” in the department
- e) Limit search committee members to full professors with extensive institutional memory

- a) Narrow definitions of specializations and qualifications tend to limit the number of qualified candidates
- b) Homogenous groups tend to have redundant knowledge and generate fewer ideas than diverse groups (Surowiecki 2004). Diversely constituted groups tend to engage in more cognitively complex problem solving, relying less on cognitive shortcuts (Phillips 2003; Phillips and Lloyd 2006).
- c) Diversity and excellence are fully compatible goals; setting fair, objective, and uniform procedures and criteria ensures achievement of these goals.
- d) Characteristics such as amorphous “fit” tend to disqualify diverse candidates.
- e) Leadership or senior ranks tend to reinforce homogeneity

## Advertising the Position

- Your search won't reach a diverse pool without a proactive recruitment plan. Advertise widely. Go beyond traditional methods of identifying applicants.
- Visit the Rutgers [Handbook for Increasing Faculty Diversity](#) for extensive resources on broadly framed, inclusive best practices.

Click [here](#) for examples of “best practices” wording for ads

## 4. Reviewing, Screening, and Ranking Applicants

- Screening applicants through several stages is critical to ensure that the final list includes both women and members of underrepresented groups.
- Search committees tend to seek candidates who are similar in educational background, experiences, and research interests to themselves. This can result in greater homogeneity in the applicant pool than is desirable, even when the committee is determined to develop an inclusive applicant pool and list of finalists.
- The specific process that a search committee follows for reviewing, screening, and ranking applicants will differ by department, position, sheer size of the applicant pool, and other factors. Best practices, however, are a guiding principle.

## Screening applications is a multi-step process:

- Studies show you can avoid homogeneity in your short list if you screen applications in a multi-step process.
- A checklist is useful for removing highly incomplete or distinctly unqualified candidates from your applicant pool.
- Avoid rank-ordering candidates prematurely, but “grading” applicants using some systematic method is a helpful best practice for creating an initial short list.
- Use an evaluation form and checklist and support opinions with facts and evidence.

## The search committee reconvenes a few weeks later with a short-list of candidates...

**Rita:** I want to thank everyone for their hard work these last couple of weeks.

**Barbara:** I saw in our database that we're down to 26 candidates with average ratings "2.5" or better.

**Rita:** Our goal today is to get that list down to fewer than 10 candidates.

**Jordan:** This list includes 5 women, but knowing how we're doing on creating a diverse pool is not at all clear to me.

**Denise:** We know from NSF data reported in 2007 that women are now earning about 14% of the PhDs in electrical and computer engineering. We've got 23% on this short-list, so I guess that's about right.

**Jordan:** What about for underrepresented groups?

**Denise:** The data from 2005 indicate that it's a little less than 10% in ECE.

**Carlos:** Student diversity seems much higher than that today. And every program or grant aimed at students brings in some component to increase STEM diversity.

**Alex:** Speaking of students, I met this guy Nick Poole at the IEEE conference two years ago. He's been on our graduate student and post-doc future candidates list. And we all gave him a 3—an unequivocal "Yes" vote.

**John:** He did his degree at Stanford and was with a Silicon Valley start-up before returning to graduate school. He ranked high on my list from the start.

**Denise:** Ronald Simms belongs to the National Society of Black Engineers. This is a group that started at Purdue in 1971 and has grown to over 31,000 members.

**John:** I gave that guy a 2. His graduate transcript is a little weak.

**Denise:** He got a 2.7 overall from the group. His letters are terrific. And University of Florida is a great school for engineering.

**Barbara:** Is that a yes vote for Simms?

**Rita:** Show of hands...[looks around at her colleagues for consensus]. Yes, Simms moves to the short list.

**Carlos:** Let's look at this one. Isabel Vega. She had a GEM fellowship.

**John:** She was on my "No" list. One of her letters is show-stopper as far as I'm concerned.

**Carlos:** The letter doesn't bowl you over with heaps of praise, but some letter writers are restrained. Besides, everything else in Vega's file looks impressive. She got a 2.5 rating overall.

**John:** Do we even want a haptics specialist?

**Carlos:** I see you highly rated Charles Lin. His dissertation also focuses on haptic interface systems.

**John:** Lin got his degree at Johns Hopkins.

**Alex:** Lin seems to be highly specialized in haptic interactions. Vega's expertise is pretty broad in robotics and control systems design. She might be ideal to teach the sensor devices class.

**Barbara:** Yeah, she probably would be good for that class.

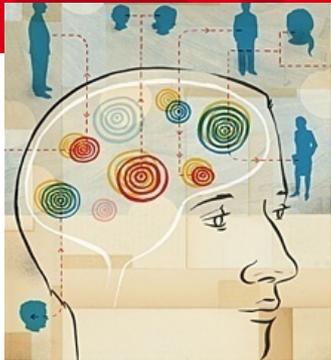
## Which methods of screening and ranking candidates would be considered best practices?

- a) The committee had clear evaluation criteria and made use of evaluation forms and checklists for determining general eligibility and for screening a short-list of promising candidates.
- b) A list of candidates in the “Maybe” group, with average consensus grades above 2.5, were discussed in-depth and opinions were supported by facts and evidence.
- c) The committee openly discussed a process for identifying diversity candidates.
- d) The committee placed high value on prestige networks.
- e) The committee was aware of the national demographics on the percentages of women and underrepresented minorities in their field.

# Best Practices for Reviewing and Ranking

- Search committee ground rules include evaluation criteria, a process for discussion and handling disagreements, and a method for determining who will be invited to interview.
- Slow down. Make time to review the complete application.
- Do not rank-order immediately. Consider alternatives to rank ordering, such as summaries of each finalist.
- Insist on the evidence. Require search committee members to back up statements and opinions with facts and evidence.
- Be aware of the possibility of your own hidden bias or cognitive errors in evaluating competence and merit.

## 5. Avoiding Pitfalls in the Process



Cognitive errors are mental distortions or shortcuts that can lead to...

- **Snap judgment** - making a decision without substantive thought and/or one that is not based on evidence
- **Elitism** - assuming that the best candidates always come from schools/social classes/regions that have traditionally been considered "the best," without careful attention to CVs, recommendations, needs of the department, etc.
- **Premature ranking** - a rush to rank candidates; a focus on filtering out rather than filtering in
- **Momentum of the group** - if most group members have rallied together for their favorite candidate, it may be difficult to encourage people to step back and look more objectively at other qualified candidates
- **Longing to clone** - seeking candidates who would be a mirror image of oneself or one's colleagues, instead of carefully assessing which candidate would be best overall for the department

## Which cognitive errors or shortcuts can you detect in this conversation?

**Rita** [search committee chair]: John, we're discussing Dr. Houston now, not Dr. Smith.

**John**: But Smith is the obvious choice—I mean, he went to Harvard undergrad, then did his Ph.D. at Johns Hopkins. What else do we need to know?

**Jordan**: He's in the same circle as my advisor at Princeton. He'll make a great collaborator for me.

**Alex**: I heard his wife is a patent attorney in Washington. I wouldn't be so sure he'd come to New Jersey.

**John**: Attorneys can work anywhere. I can't see that being an obstacle.

**Rita**: I'm going to pretend we're not having this conversation. Let's get back to the other candidates.

**Denise**: [interrupting] It seems like a waste of time to spend the first meeting looking at the strengths of all the candidates. I know the dean suggested it, but really, we're all very busy people. A lot of these candidates just aren't that good. And we all know which one is best. Smith first, then Mullins, and ah, then, ah [she looks up at Carlos] maybe Arroyo.

**John:** Absolutely. Smith is the one, and if we can't get him, I'd agree that Mullins is the next best, though not nearly as good as Smith. Forget the rest.

**Jordan:** I agree about Smith, and Mullins.

**Rita:** Wait. Wait. This is absurd. We need to look at all of them, strengths first, and not think about ranking them until after we've given all of them an honest shake, and carefully, and *thoughtfully*, looked at their strengths, and then their limitations, against the criteria that we developed before we posted the position.

**John:** Well, my mind's made up.

**Jordan:** [nodding in agreement]

**Barbara:** [looking a little sheepish] Yeah, I agree too. Smith is really good.

## Which cognitive errors can you detect in this conversation?

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**John:** But Smith is the obvious choice—I mean, he went to Harvard undergrad, then did his Ph.D. at Johns Hopkins. What else do we need to know? [elitism, snap judgment]

**Jordan:** He's in the same circle as my advisor at Princeton. He'll make a great collaborator for me. [longing to clone]

**Alex:** I heard his wife is a patent attorney in Washington. I wouldn't be so sure he'd come to New Jersey. [snap judgment]

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**John:** Absolutely. Smith is the one, and if we can't get him, I'd agree that Mullins is the next best, though not nearly as good as Smith. Forget the rest. [premature ranking, momentum of the group]

**Jordan:** I agree about Smith, and Mullins. [premature ranking, momentum of the group]

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**Jordan:** [nodding in agreement] [momentum of the group]

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# Learn more about Making Cognitive Errors

- Project Implicit: <https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/>
- Laurie Rudman: implicit assessment of attitudes, stereotypes, self-concept, and identity
  - <http://www.rci.rutgers.edu/~rudman/>
- Monica Biernat: stereotyping and prejudices—how they affect judgment
  - [http://www.psych.ku.edu/psych\\_people/faculty\\_Monica\\_Biernat.shtml](http://www.psych.ku.edu/psych_people/faculty_Monica_Biernat.shtml)
- Mahzarin Banaji: mental systems that operate in implicit or unconscious mode
  - <http://banaji.socialpsychology.org/>
- Virginia Valian: gender and equity
  - <http://www.hunter.cuny.edu/genderequity/equitymaterials.html>
- Martha Foschi: double standards in evaluation of competence and merit
  - <http://www.soci.ubc.ca/index.php?id=11663>
- Shelley Correll: structures of gender inequality
  - <http://www.stanford.edu/dept/soc/people/shelleycorrell/shelleycorrell.html>
- Daniel Kahneman: intuitive judgment, heuristics, biases
  - <http://www.princeton.edu/~kahneman/publications.html>

## 6. Unconscious Bias

Unconscious biases are mental associations that are so well-established as to operate without awareness, without intention, or without control. They are not only hidden from public view, but in many cases, are also hidden from the person who holds them. Unconscious biases can be brought to full awareness.

- **Positive and negative stereotypes** - presumption of innate competence/incompetence, ability/lack of ability to fit in, etc., based on race, gender, and other personal characteristics
- **Raising or lowering the bar** - setting higher/lower standards for some candidates based on negative/positive stereotypes
- **Provincialism** - limiting a definition of excellence to those schools/individuals/ geographic areas one knows
- **Seizing a pretext** - giving excessive weight to a relatively minor point, in order to justify disqualifying a candidate
- **Good fit / bad fit** - may refer to the disciplinary niche or programmatic needs of the department, but it also may be an indicator of how comfortable or culturally at ease we feel about the candidate

# Which unconscious biases can you detect in this conversation?

**Jordan:** [rushing in and sitting down] Sorry I'm late—one of my students stopped me in the hall. [he waves some papers around] I happened to pull up Lucia Arroyo's file. I was looking at her references. You know, I have to say they seem almost too good, and they're from her advisors and co-researchers. I have to wonder...Maybe we should get some more references for her, maybe from people who are more, I don't know, at an arm's length or something.

**Rita:** [looking puzzled] Her references are *too* good? I don't think I've ever heard anyone say that before. And who else besides advisors and co-workers should we be getting references from?

**John:** Hmmm, interesting point, Jordan. Besides, would she feel comfortable here? I mean, it would probably be too humid for her; given that she's from New Mexico.

**Rita:** [to herself] Am I really hearing this? [to the others] Come on, guys. We've gotten off track; we were talking about candidates' strengths. Before you came in, Jordan, I was saying that Houston had done some really interesting research on salt marshes.

**John:** Where did this Houston guy get his Ph.D.? [He shuffles through his papers.] Here it is. University of Maryland, Baltimore County? Give me a break. Sounds like a community college.

**Carlos:** I spent some time with Houston's file this morning. He was a Meyerhoff Fellow at UMBC.

**Rita:** Yes, I was about to bring that up. [She glares at John.] Carlos, what do you know about Meyerhoff?

**Carlos:** Cindy Anders was a Meyerhoff—she's the one who just got that huge NIH grant. She is doing really amazing research. She told me about Meyerhoff. It's a really top-notch, and successful, fellows program to encourage high-achieving people of color to stay in science and technology.

**John:** [rolls his eyes]

**Rita:** Do you have a problem with that, John?

**John:** You know, I just get a little tired of everybody thinking they have to hold these people's hands. If they don't have what it takes, why waste time and resources? Nobody gave me a leg up and I managed just fine, thank you.

**Carlos:** And nobody decided just by taking one look at you—or finding out what school you went to, for that matter—that you couldn't make it as a faculty member at Rutgers.

# Which uncounscious biases can you detect in this conversation?

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**John:** You know, I just get a little tired of everybody thinking they have to hold these people's hands. If they don't have what it takes, why waste time and resources? [negative stereotype] Nobody gave me a leg up and I managed just fine, thank you.

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## Project Implicit and IATs

- Project Implicit is a virtual laboratory for the social and behavioral sciences designed to facilitate the research of implicit social cognition: cognitions, feelings, and evaluations that are not necessarily available to conscious awareness, conscious control, conscious intention, or self-reflection. IATs (Implicit Association Tests) are tools to demonstrate and examine conscious and unconscious divergences related to attitudes and beliefs about race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, disability, and other social categories. <https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/>)
- Visitors to Project Implicit websites hosted in more than 30 countries world-wide have completed more than 4.5 million IATs since 1998, currently averaging over 15,000 tests completed each week.

Click [here](#) for some examples of hidden biases demonstrated by IAT research

## 7. Evaluating Letters of Reference, CVs, and Published Work

Letters of reference, CVs, published work, and an applicant's written statements about his or her research, teaching, and service figure highly in the committee's overall evaluation of competence, merit, productivity, reputation, "fit," and potential as a recruited member of the department.

For more information, please go to:

<http://search.committee.module.rutgers.edu/theresearch.shtml>

## The search committee dissects and discusses reference letters, CVs, and published work...

**Carlos:** Let's look at this one. Isabel Vega. She had a GEM fellowship.

**John:** She was on my "No" list. One of her letters is show-stopper as far as I'm concerned.

**Carlos:** The letter doesn't bowl you over with heaps of praise, but some letter writers are restrained. Besides, everything else in Vega's file looks impressive. She got a 2.5 rating overall.

**John:** It's more than that, Carlos. Look at this, the letter talks more about the microelectrode array she built than the data she collected. The track-record here is thin, as far as I'm concerned.

**Barbara:** She's a recent PhD as well. Most of our other candidates have completed one or two postdocs.

**Alex:** One of her publications is in the *Journal of Neuroscience*. That's one of the top-ranking journals in the field.

**John:** She's second author on that paper.

**Carlos:** And she's first-author on the *J Comp Physiol* paper.

**John:** That's not a top journal, as far as I'm concerned.

**Rita:** There are enough concerns about her publications and this letter in her file that I think a phone call is warranted. It's a known fact that some referees are more reserved on paper than in person. I can talk directly with the head of her postdoc lab and try to get some insight on Vega.

**Barbara:** Can we talk about Milos Bogdan for a minute? This letter by Lawton Jones calls him a rising star. His work on hippocampus shows incredible promise for Alzheimer's research.

**John:** I like Bogdan as well. His work would be a good fit with Barbara's and Ed's Memory cluster. [flipping through the CV]. He's an author on Jones's big hippocampal neurogenesis paper published in *Nature* last year.

**Carlos:** He's the fourth author of seven. Didn't we just have this conversation about Vega?

**John:** But Bogdan is exactly the one we're looking for. You can't get a better fit for us.

**Carlos:** This is classic double standard thinking here. You're holding Vega and Bogdan to different standards.

**John:** Wait a minute, Carlos. You're comparing someone whose work shows incredible potential to be breakthrough science in Alzheimer's with someone whose track-record is a couple of papers on auditory processing.

**Carlos:** You just keep digging yourself deeper, John. There's research that shows women are more often judged by their past accomplishments and men by what they might accomplish in the future.

**John:** Well, I'd rather put my money on the one who's going to bring the research dollars in this department.

**Carlos:** We're not going to reach our goal of being a top-five department by cloning people like you.

## What best practices are evident in the conversation among department faculty?

- a) The committee counted publications in only the top-ranking journals and eliminated all in which the candidate was not first-author.
- b) Reference letters are not always reliable indicators of a candidate's potential.
- c) The committee applied a double-standard to evaluating publication records.
- d) The chair suggested contacting the referee whose letter seemed a little restrained.
- e) The committee placed a high value on hiring within an established research cluster in the Department.

- A key factor that weakened Isabel Vega's reference letters in our example was the fact that she was a more recent PhD graduate, had spent considerable time building new equipment, and consequently was somewhat behind her competition in terms of analysis and final results. In the follow-up phone conversation with the head of her postdoc lab, it became clear that the candidate's demonstrated potential was as high as that of any previous scientist in her position, and that one year later, with her full results in hand, she would be one of the hottest candidates in her field nationwide. At that point the department might not be able to successfully recruit her.
- The search committee ended up recommending unanimously that Vega be pursued as an exceptional opportunity hire. The search chair, and others in the department, realized that they might have lost out on hiring a great colleague if they had not paid attention to the discrepancy between the recommendation letters and the apparent excellence of the candidate.
- The other candidate, Milos Bogdan, was also put on the final list of candidates to bring in for an interview. His academic record, letters of support, published works, and areas of interest and expertise were all top-notch. For the committee to have done otherwise would have been an example of a reverse double-standard.

To learn more about double-standards of competence and merit, click [here](#).

## 8. Interviewing and the Campus Visit

The campus visit is an important opportunity for the department to communicate three messages:

- You are seriously interested in the candidate's scholarly credentials and work
- Rutgers University is a good place to come because it is intellectually lively and committed to diversity in the faculty, staff and student body
- Rutgers University is a good place to come because it has a variety of humane, family-friendly policies in place.



# Best Practices for Interviewing and the Campus Visit

- Schedule interviews and events to ensure consistent treatment of all candidates, including internal candidates.
- Send the candidate an itinerary before the visit and make sure they are aware of the kind of presentation you have scheduled, and the audience expected to be there.
- Give the candidate a chance to interact with the department's faculty in multiple venues. Formal talks may not reveal every candidate's strengths. Consider including Q + A sessions, "chalk talks," and other less formal interactions.
- Make sure to discuss the department's expectations, especially if the position is a Joint Appointment

# Best Practices for Interviewing and the Campus Visit

- Develop a group of core questions based on the position-related criteria by which the candidates are to be evaluated.
- Use core questions with all candidates to allow comparative judgment and ensure that crucial position-related information is obtained.
- Aim questions at discovering what the candidate can bring to the position and limit them to issues that directly relate to the job to be performed.
- Provide an opportunity for the candidate to discuss any special requirements or circumstances, such as the need to find a position for a partner.
- Avoid questions related to age, arrests (convictions are a different matter), citizenship, disability, health, marital status, nationality, race, religion, and sexual orientation in both formal and informal conversations. Structure your questions so that they get to the crucial point immediately.

## Example:

Bad Question: Were you born in Mexico?

Reason for Asking: We need someone who knows more than “book Spanish.”

Better Question: Are you fluent in Spanish?

Read the full article from The Chronicle on Higher Education here. (<- insert hyperlink to our “web resources section”)

## Which of the following guidelines might be incorporated into a best practices approach to the interview and campus visit?

- a) Send the candidate an itinerary before the visit and make sure they are aware of the kind of presentation they are expected to make, and the audience expected to be there.
- b) Tell women and minority candidates that the department is very eager to hire a diversity candidate.
- c) Introduce women and minority members of the department to all candidates, not just women and minorities.
- d) Distribute information about the University's various diversity and equity offices to faculty of color and information about "family-friendly" policies (dual career, maternity leave, modified duties, etc.) to women candidates.
- e) Conduct the interview as a panel, rather than as a series of one-on-one interviews with search committee members.
- f) Arrange for the candidate to meet with faculty outside the department as a way to create interdisciplinary connections.

- Focus on the candidate's ability to perform the essential functions of the job and avoid making assumptions based on perceived race, ethnic background, religion, marital or familial status, age, disability, sexual orientation, or veteran status.
- Make it clear that you are interested in the candidate's scholarship and skills, rather than his or her demographic characteristics. It is generally not helpful to make a point with candidates that the department is eager to hire women and minorities.
- Consider how the department will represent the university as a whole and as a place in which women and minority faculty can thrive.
- Introduce women and minority members of the department to *all candidates*, not just women and minorities. Moreover, if women and minority faculty members are expected to play an especially active role in recruiting new faculty, be sure to recognize this additional service burden in their overall service load.
- Provide the candidate with an opportunity to meet with diverse faculty and students (demographic and disciplinary) from both within and outside the department.
- Distribute information about the University's various diversity and equity offices and about "family-friendly" policies (dual career, maternity leave, modified duties, etc.) to *all job candidates* regardless of gender, partner or parental status, and race or ethnicity.

## 9. Confidentiality and Compliance

The ethic of academe is one of free and open communication, the sharing and testing of ideas and information. Indeed, with most other campus committees, members are expected to report back to colleagues; committee doings, indeed, become a staple for campus gossip.

It is against strong winds, then, that search committees must insist upon totally different norms: no open sharing, no snippets of gossip.

The overriding needs are to protect the integrity and candor of member-to-member discussion, and to protect the identity of people (including internal candidates) who have allowed you to consider their names.

The following email was sent by Denise, a search committee member, to Nell, a colleague in the same department who was not on the search committee:

Nell, Just between you and me, we did a first-round telephone interview today with a fantastic candidate—she seems really excited about our department and I think we may get her. Of course I can't tell you her name but she is fantastic candidate and recipient of the Margaret Mead award. It would be great to have another woman in the department. I had to let you know. Oh, and here's the article reference you asked for. –Denise

This is:

Not a breach of confidentiality; no name was mentioned

A minor breach of confidentiality

A serious confidentiality problem

# Why would this be a serious breach of confidentiality?

C

## Because of what happened after the email was sent...

Even though the person was not named, Nell had no trouble figuring out who Denise was referring to based on the reference to the Margaret Mead Award. She was delighted. Fatima Lennox was a young anthropologist who had built an international reputation when her second book was published. Nell also had 23 things on her "to do" list so she printed the email as a reminder to look at the reference Denise had mentioned. Then she rushed off to deliver a stack of manuscript pages to Ben, the departmental administrative assistant, before her next class.

Ben found the copy of the email from Denise to Nell on the bottom of the stack. He was about to put it in Nell's box when a call came through about a small emergency. He scrawled a note saying he would be right back and put it on the corner of his desk, not realizing that it was right next to Nell's email.

A few minutes later George, a senior member of the department who was not on the search committee, strolled into the office with a question for Ben and saw Ben's note. Eventually he got bored waiting and casually glanced at Nell's email. Then "fantastic candidate" and "Margaret Mead award" caught his eye, and he found himself reading it more closely. "Hah!" he thought. "Looks like we're going to steal Fatima away from Johnson's department. Serves him right!"

Like Nell, George had known immediately who Denise was referring to. She would indeed be a prize catch. It also happened that George and Paul Johnson, Fatima's current department chair, had had a very antagonistic relationship for years. Without thinking about the possible repercussions, George shot off an email to Paul: "I see you're having trouble keeping your young star!"

Paul instantly realized that Fatima was the "young star" and was very surprised she was looking for a new position. He immediately picked up the phone and called Fatima, willing to do whatever it would take to keep her.

George's counter-offer proved very attractive. Fatima was very upset that someone at Rutgers had breached confidentiality. She decided that she would be better off staying where she was and withdrew her application, even though she was very interested in joining the department and moving to New Jersey.

So a simple "just between you and me" email, a relatively innocent series of events, and an old antagonism resulted in the loss of a top-notch potential candidate.

## Appropriate questions to ask oneself as a search committee member

- Am I in any way failing to protect the identity of people who have allowed me to consider them as a candidate?
- Am I breaching the integrity and candor of my colleagues on the search committee who are assuming their discussions are being kept confidential?
- Am I discussing the search, the candidates, or my search committee colleagues in any way, even just a "snippet"?
- Is this the right time to share this information or am I sharing it prematurely?
  - Click [here](#) for more information on confidentiality and compliance issues related to faculty searches.

## 10. Making the Offer

- Faculty recruitment is highly competitive. Speed, responsiveness, and flexibility are key in attracting the best.
- Know in advance what your degrees of freedom are regarding the various components of the offer and be ready to negotiate as soon as the initial offer is made.
  - The [Academic Appointments Manual](#) is a primary resource at this stage of the process.
  - Guidance on procedures for extending an offer of employment to a foreign national can be found on the website for the [Center for International Faculty and Student Services](#)

Department/  
Search Committee

- Recommend candidate and financial terms
- Document best practices; submit form UPF-1F

Dean

- Ensure that the salary level and any start-up costs are consistent with what is being offered in similar departments at Rutgers and comparable universities

Chancellor or the  
Executive Vice  
President for  
Academic Affairs

- Approves candidate and certifies terms of offer
- Is available to outreach directly to the finalist during negotiations

## Which of the following ideas about job offers and negotiations are not true?

- a) Negotiating the best offer is a competitive, combative process
- b) The way an offer is negotiated can have huge impact not only on the immediate hiring outcome, but also on a new hire's future career (retention).
- c) Women who assertively negotiate are often perceived as less likeable
- d) Everything is negotiable—salary, teaching load, start-up details, course release, office and lab, a decision deadline for accepting the offer, and more
- e) Central administration can play a decisive role in job offer negotiations
- f) Low-balling the offer is always the best strategy

## Which of the following ideas about job offers and negotiations are not true?

a,f

- a) Negotiating the best offer should *not* be a competitive, combative process. Ideally it is a collaborative process aimed at finding the best solution for everyone involved.
- b) The way an offer is negotiated can have huge impact not only on the immediate hiring outcome, but also on a new hire's future career (retention).
- c) Women who assertively negotiate are often perceived as less likeable. Being a skilled negotiator contradicts the gender stereotype of women as warm, nurturing, friendly, "other-oriented."
- d) Everything is negotiable—salary, teaching load, start-up details, course release, office and lab, a decision deadline for accepting the offer, and more
- e) Central administration can definitely play a decisive role in job offer negotiations
- f) Low-balling the offer is typically *not* the best strategy. The candidate may have other offers and a low-ball offer will not send the message that the University is serious about hiring him/her. Also helping a new colleague off to a good start is a central part of the recruitment process.

# Rutgers University Online Resources

- [Increasing Faculty Diversity: A Handbook for Deans, Department Chairs, and Members of Faculty Search Committees](#)
- [Academic Appointments Manual](#)
- [Office of Institutional Diversity and Equity](#)
- [Camden Office of Institutional Diversity and Equity](#)
- [University Libraries/Newark Dana Library Diversity Research Center](#)
- [Diversity @ Rutgers](#)
- [University Human Resources](#)
- [Office of Employment Equity](#)
- [Office of Labor Relations](#)
- [Office of the Vice President and General Counsel](#)
- [Center for Race and Ethnicity](#)
- [Office for the Promotion of Women in Science, Engineering, and Mathematics](#)

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We would especially like to thank the following institutions for their leadership and support in the development of faculty search committee best practices toolkits

- [The Online Search Committee Program at University of Virginia](#)
- [University of Florida Faculty Recruitment Toolkit](#)
- [University of Michigan Diversity Recruitment](#) and [University of Michigan ADVANCE handbook on faculty recruitment](#)
- [University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill Online Search Committee Training](#)
- [University of Washington Faculty Recruitment Toolkit](#)
- [University of Illinois-Chicago WISEST Faculty Search Committee Toolkit](#)
- [Hunter College Gender Equity Project](#)
- [Cornell University Office of Diversity and Inclusion](#) and [Cornell Interactive Theater Ensemble](#)

A complete webliography of resources is available on the Rutgers Search Committee Module website

## Departmental Strategic Planning...

- Takes advantage of everyone in the department being together in the same place
  - Creates a clear and shared sense of aspiration and direction
  - Establishes priority goals and initiatives for progress toward those aspirations
  - Determines what you are working on in common for the greater good
  - Taps into collective energy and focus as a unit
  - Provides a forum for diverse perspectives and ideas
- Rutgers has a nationally recognized internal resource for departmental strategic planning through the [Center for Organizational Development and Leadership](#), directed by Dr. Brent Ruben.
- If your department has not engaged in strategic planning over the past few years, it is important to consider this process as part of an overall approach to active recruitment for diverse faculty excellence.

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## Developing Department Goals

- ✓ Meet annually as a department to discuss hiring priorities in light of retirements, resignations, and new directions or subfields
- ✓ Develop a position profile that outlines briefly the benefits, challenges, opportunities, and advantages of the position. This profile will help ground the committee's focus and agreed-upon agenda./
- ✓ Develop general recruitment and retention plans for diverse faculty, including such components as mentoring programs, professional development, and building connections across the University
- ✓ Discuss hiring efforts with chairs or faculty in other departments or programs or with relevant administrators to enhance the chances of a successful recruitment of diverse faculty (you'll be ready for opportunities like dual-career hires)

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## Advertising the Position

- Advertisements should always include the EOE statement for the University:
  - “Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey is an Equal Opportunity Employer” or “EOE.” Such proactive language conveys a level of commitment beyond that required by regulation and tells potential applicants that the University values diversity.
- Examples include:
  - “The college is especially interested in qualified candidates who can contribute, through their research, teaching, and/or service, to the diversity and excellence of the academic community.”
  - “The University is responsive to the needs of dual career couples.”
  - “Women, minorities, individuals with disabilities, and veterans are encouraged to apply.”
  - “The University and the School/Department of [ \_\_ ] have a strong commitment to achieving diversity among faculty and staff, and strongly encourage women and members of underrepresented groups to apply.”
  - “Rutgers University is an ADVANCE institution, one of a limited number of universities in receipt of NSF funds in support of our commitment to increasing diversity and the participation and advancement of women in the STEM disciplines.”
  - The ad might also mention the diversity of the Rutgers student body, and the State of New Jersey as among the most diverse in the nation.

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# Active Recruitment Methods and Tips

- **Previous Relationships Lead to Better Acceptance Rates.** Research indicates that while 39% of those without any previous relationship to the university declined an offer, only 17% of those who had a previous relationship declined.
- **The Far Horizon.** In order to be successful in the recruitment process, search committees need to think and act very creatively. Cultivating future candidates, and having a long-term perspective on recruitment goals is part of an overall strategic vision.
- **Personal Referrals.** One of the schools that sent out personal notes to colleagues and presidents reported the following: "One of the candidates was referred by two and another by three external colleagues. We knew immediately that they were exceptional candidates." Referrals typically receive immediate and personal attention in the process. Blanketing mailing lists with position announcements is rarely successful, but targeted networking can often yield fruitful results.
- **But isn't this the same as tapping an "old boy's network"?** When patterns of hidden bias and cognitive shortcuts like elitism and provincialism are taken out of the mix, the network patterns are much more dynamic and inclusive.

## Active Recruitment Methods and Tips

- **Connect with Graduate Students.** The development of ongoing relationships with graduate students and postdoctoral researchers with an eye to future faculty candidates is considered to be an excellent mode of active recruitment.
- **Be Aware of Hidden Bias.** When you reach out to graduate students at conferences, however, be aware of possible subtle bias in your choice of who to meet.
- **How to Avoid Having Your Active Recruitment Efforts Backfire.** Women and minority faculty candidates wish to be evaluated for academic positions on the basis of their scholarly credentials (choice C). They will not appreciate subtle or overt indications that they are being valued on other characteristics, such as their gender or race. Women candidates and candidates of color already realize that their gender or race may be a factor in your considerations. It is important that contacts with women and minority candidates for faculty positions focus on their scholarship, qualifications, and potential academic role in the department.



# Common Concerns about Diversity Recruiting

- The Pipeline and the Bidding War...

The limited pipeline argument is a legitimate concern that nonetheless can feed a bias that hiring underrepresented faculty is too challenging to try. Many also assume “bidding wars” are a typical experience of minority scholars and institutions opt out before the interview stage, “believing their institution is not comparably rich enough, located well enough, or prestigious enough to attract the few candidates who are in such high demand,” and such short supply (White 1995; Smith et al. 2004).

- Mobility, Family, and the Trailing Spouse...

A limited pipeline, competition among institutions for the few, the challenge of finding a position for a spouse, the issue of balancing career and family—all of these concerns factored in a general perception by department chairs in the physical sciences that hiring women was harder to accomplish for reasons beyond their control (National Academy of Sciences 2006).

Increased awareness about active recruitment and workplace diversity issues places *more control* over successful diversity hiring in the hands of the departments.

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## How pervasive are unconscious or implicit biases in social and professional contexts?

### Race and Implicit Bias

- In the race IAT, respondents classified black and white faces or names while classifying words of positive or negative valence. Overall, the observed IAT effect revealed respondents' automatic preference for white relative to black. Specifically, 75-80% of self-identified non-blacks show an implicit preference for racial white relative to black.
- In a study in which subjects were primed with either a Black or White face and asked to judge whether adjectives were “good” or “bad,” white subjects responded faster to white-positive pairings and to black-negative pairings than to black-positive pairings and white-negative pairings. (Fazio et al 1995)
- Implicit and explicit racial attitudes changed little as a result of Barack Obama’s election to the Presidency of the United States, suggesting that the “mere presence of high-status counter-stereotypic exemplars” is not enough to induce a cultural shift in implicit racial attitudes (Schmidt and Nosek 2010)

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NEXT

## How pervasive are unconscious or implicit biases in social and professional contexts?

### Gender and Implicit Bias

- About 70% of more than half a million IATs taken world-wide revealed implicit stereotypes associating science with males more than females. These stereotypes predicted nation-level sex differences in 8th-grade science and mathematics achievement (Nosek et al 2009).
- We think of males as capable of independent action, as oriented to the task at hand, and as fit for leadership. We think of females as nurturing, expressive, and behaving communally. In brief, men are instrumental while women feel and express their feelings (Williams & Best, 1990). When women behave like leaders, they conquer negative stereotypes about their competence, but they then risk prejudice and discrimination for being “insufficiently feminine” (Rudman & Phelan 2008) .
- Uhlmann and Cohen (2005) presented subjects with male and female applicants for either masculine or feminine jobs. They did not view the applicants as having different strengths and weaknesses. Instead, subjects redefined the criteria for success at the job as requiring the specific credentials a candidate of the desired gender happened to have. Commitment to hiring criteria prior to disclosure of the applicant's gender eliminated discrimination, suggesting that bias in the construction of hiring criteria plays a causal role in discrimination.

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# Curious about IATs?

IATs demonstrations are now available on the following topics at <https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/>:

Age  
Arab/Muslim  
Asian-European  
Americans  
Disability

Gender-Career  
Gender-Science  
Native - White  
Americans  
Presidents

Race: Black -  
White  
Religion  
Sexual  
Orientation

Skin-tone  
Weapons  
Weight

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