University of Tennessee, Knoxville  
Exempt Staff Search Procedures

1. Draft position description, have the position evaluated, create a position, and post it on UT’s website. When the position is live on Taleo, request that only search committee members be added to the requisition. Anyone outside of the search committee (even the hiring decision-maker) is not to be included.

2. Determine who will be on the search committee. If you are the hiring decision-maker, determine who will chair the committee; the hiring decision-maker cannot be on the search committee.

3. The search chair should contact Nicole Cangey (ncangey@utk.edu) to schedule an exempt staff search orientation session. Under limited circumstances, this orientation can be waived. However, attendance is mandatory annually. Also, the search chair must complete the Exempt Staff Search Summary Report, sections 1 and 2 before the start of the search, and the remainder of the report throughout the life of the search.

4. Search Committee Instructions:
   a. Invite the hiring decision-maker to the initial committee meeting to convey what the needs are for the position.
   b. Discuss an anticipated timeline with committee members.
   c. Discuss active recruitment.
   d. Determine how the committee will share information and access application materials via UT Vault or Taleo access only.
   e. Discuss commitment to confidentiality throughout and after the search.
   f. Create (if desired) a method of evaluating applicants.
   g. Have a thorough conversation with the committee regarding the Required qualifications and the Preferred qualifications.
   h. Discuss any work experience requirements and related degree requirements.
   i. Agree to responsibilities for providing applicants information (Chair)
   j. Discuss social media searches (NOT recommended as an independent search committee member endeavor)

5. Initial screening methods prior to on-campus interviews:
   a. Telephone or Zoom interviews and writing samples.
   b. Questions must be pre-determined, as well as be fair and consistent across applicants.

6. Pool development:
   a. Primary pool candidates are invited for on-campus interviews.
   b. Primary pool must be greater than 1 (generally).
   c. Secondary pool – beneficial if primary candidates are not selected but not required.
   d. All primary and secondary candidates MUST meet the required qualifications.
   e. The search chair, with input from the committee, must complete the Exempt Staff Search Summary Report, including the strengths and weaknesses of candidates in the pools.
   f. Send the completed report to Nicole Cangey, ncangey@utk.edu

Office of Equity and Diversity
1840 Melrose Ave, Knoxville TN 37996
865-974-2498  865-974-0943 fax  oed.utk.edu

Flagship Campus of the University of Tennessee System
7. Diversity considerations:
   a. OED will review the full applicant list for the demographics of applicants.
   b. OED will review the list of Primary and Secondary candidates compared to the full list.
   c. OED may require additional strengths and weaknesses for diverse candidates who appear to meet qualifications but are not under further consideration.
   d. Committee chair may contact OED (Nicole Cange) to review and discuss the diversity of the pool prior to making primary and secondary pool decisions to determine whether additional recruiting should occur.

8. On-Campus interviews:
   a. Determine the length and scope of the interview process.
   b. Be consistent with the itinerary – it should contain the same elements for each candidate.
   c. All primary candidates must be interviewed before an offer can be extended.
   d. Be sure to include the hiring decision-maker in the interview process as a one-on-one meeting.
   e. For all positions **director-level or higher**, unless waived, the Office of Equity and Diversity (OED) must be included as part of the interview itinerary for all on-campus interviews held.
   f. Secondary candidates can be interviewed one at a time.
   g. Meals and “casual” times are all part of the interview.
       i. Avoid problematic questions or discussions of personal issues.
       ii. Answer candidate questions, but do not probe areas that would not be appropriate for questioning (can provide a list of “inappropriate questions” prior to interview).
       iii. If inappropriate questions are asked, address them immediately and inform the candidate that the question will not be used to evaluate the candidacy. Document any issues that arise and discuss with OED as soon as possible.
       iv. Be consistent with initial questions to elicit the same type of information, but feel free to probe answers further.

9. Reference checks:
   a. Notify successful candidates that you will be contacting references.
   b. Ask to speak to the direct supervisor if not provided as a reference.
   c. Be consistent with questions. Do not probe inappropriate areas.

10. Internal Candidates:
    a. Treat the same way as external candidates.
    b. Avoid consideration of unsolicited information as a basis for rejection of a candidate in the initial evaluation.
    c. Personal knowledge of the candidate may be appropriate later in the process at the time references are checked.

11. TALEO Processes throughout

12. In the event you would like to perform an internal exempt staff search you must submit a Request for Exemption form, with a rationale memo statement to Katrice Morgan (kmorgan4@utk.edu) for consideration.