Get the Right People On The Bus: Recruiting Quality Faculty

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“Whenever the topic of ‘decisions that seemed right at the time but that are now driving me crazy’ arises, many department chairs are likely to mention the search that went wrong.”

Read the Room

- How many of us have chaired search committees?
- How many of us had have issues with a search?
- What is your most interesting faculty search anecdote?
Good To Great

- Studied over 1400 companies
- 11 companies went from “good” to “great.” Why?
- Organizations succeed because of their people
- “First who, then what.”
First Who... Then What

“We expected that good-to-great leaders would begin by setting a new vision and strategy. We found instead that they first got the right people on the bus, the wrong people off the bus, and the right people in the right seats—and then they figured out where to drive it. The old adage ‘People are your most important asset’ turns out to be wrong. People are not your most important asset. The right people are.”

- Jim Collins, Good to Great (2001)
"If I were running a company today, I would have one priority above all others: to acquire as many of the best people I could. I’d put off everything else to fill my bus. Because things are going to come back. My flywheel is going to start to turn. And the single biggest constraint on the success of my organization is the ability to get and to hang on to enough of the right people."

Justifying the Need
Justifying the Need

- New line or existing?
- Is there budget to support it?
- What is the teaching load? Other duties?
- What is the impact of this position? What will suffer if we don’t fill/create it?
- Accreditation support?
- Time frame and budget cycles - what can be anticipated?
Writing the Position Announcement

- Minimum qualifications vs. Preferred qualifications
  - Check with HR on their procedures and interpretations
- Growing the pool:
  - Remove minimum qualifications
  - Move minimum qualifications to preferred
  - Get less specific
- Shrinking the pool
  - Add minimum qualifications
  - Move preferred qualifications to minimum
  - Get more specific
Writing the Position Announcement

❖ Search for model announcements for similar positions
  ❖ Borrow their language
❖ Remember - the position announcement reflects on the university, the department, and its leader
Forming the Committee

❖ The committee should serve the search, the candidates and the department
❖ It’s not just who wants to be on the committee, but who should be on the committee (and who shouldn’t)
❖ Availability should be considered
❖ Opportunity to develop early career faculty
❖ OPEN, FAIR, CONFIDENTIAL
“Sifting through the pile”

- Spreadsheets and ratings
- Reading between the lines of a CV
  - Red Flags (breaks in employment, unexplained backwards career moves)
    - Remember that all candidates need to be considered fairly, regardless of red flags
  - Understanding candidates credentials/experience
- The importance of “fit”
Phone / Video Interviews

- Consider technological needs
- Double-check contact info and time zone
- Note the questions the candidates ask
- Be sure to ask permission to contact references:
  - “Do we have your permission to contact your references, as well as others you may have worked with, about your candidacy for this position?”
Reference Checks

Revealing Reference Check Questions

❖ “How would you characterize his/her teaching ability?”
❖ “Can you speak to his/her scholarship?”
❖ “How well does he/she work with others? Is he/she a team player?”
❖ “Is this a person of integrity? Of energy?”
❖ “Is there any reason you know that might cause us to regret a decision to hire him/her?”
On-Campus Visits

❖ The grueling right of passage
❖ Over-scheduling versus under-scheduling
❖ Meetings with important constituencies
❖ Demonstrations of important job duties/skills
❖ Sell the institution and the area
  ❖ Tour the town
Final Recommendations

❖ What does your campus policy require from you?
  ❖ Recommendation? Rating? Strengths and weakness?
❖ Be prepared for your second choice
  ❖ Your goal is for more than one acceptable candidate
❖ The importance of “fit”
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