

## How to Evaluate Resumes and CVs

Allot sufficient time to screen all or a sizable portion of the résumés at once. Compare the credentials of applicants with the context of other applicants in mind.

- Create a rating standard that you will use throughout the resume review.
- Avoid ranking candidates from best to least, 1 to “n”.
- Review the position description before reviewing applicant materials.
- Review the advertisement for the vacant position.
- Review the charge.
- Use a predetermined screening instrument to evaluate candidates against objective criteria.
- Make comments, notes, or other observations on the screening instrument about each candidate. This will be a useful reminder when you start to discuss candidates with the committee as a whole.
- Use an agreed-upon rating scheme: Yes = consider further, Maybe = hold, No = do not consider further; 1= very qualified, 2 = qualified, 3 = not qualified; 1 = poor, 10 = best.
- Be aware of potential unconscious biases related to an applicant’s name, address, gender or other personal information to limit unconscious biases.
- On your first evaluation of résumés, do not overemphasize the format or writing style of the resume; look instead for the quality of the content.
- Compare stated education and experience requirements with those listed on the resume.
- Ensure that colleges attended also indicate that a degree was awarded.
- Ensure that the candidates are still employed in the most recent position-check dates.
- Compare employment history and its applicability to the position for which the candidates are applying (e.g., positions in similar industry, similar responsibilities, etc.); length of time in each position; promotions or awards received; and reason for leaving each position; check dates.
- Note gaps in employment but do not assume they were due to negative reasons (i.e., note whether this is addressed in the cover letter).
- Look for an excessive number of jobs in a short time.
- Note whether changes in position appear to be promotional, progressive, lateral moves, or simply changes.

- Notice whether there is a career pattern, and industry pattern, or a random collection of past jobs.
- Note special skills or intangible characteristics or experiences not required for the position and add these to comments (e.g., familiarity with certain computer software, alumna of your school, different degree, etc.); however, do not use such preferential criteria to qualify candidates.
- Make a list of questions about applicants that arise from reviewing their résumés.
- If necessary, screen the top group again to narrow down the candidates further.
- Group résumés into piles of yes, no, and maybe candidates. (if you have too many “yes” candidates, you might review the “yes” pile to narrow it down to a more manageable number. In addition, if you do not have sufficient “yes” candidates, re-review the “maybe” pile to see if you can increase the size of the pool of those considered).
- Share your grouping with the committee chair.

One can use these considerations and others to guide a thorough evaluation of the competitiveness of applicants.