W I S E L I
Women in Science & Engineering Leadership Institute
University of Wisconsin-Madison

SEARCHING FOR EXCELLENCE AND DIVERSITY:
A WORKSHOP FOR SEARCH COMMITTEES
EVALUATION OF SESSION CONDUCTED FOR
CALS DEPARTMENTAL ADMINISTRATORS
AND HUMAN RESOURCES
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Introduction

This report describes the results of a survey evaluating the workshop, "Searching for Excellence and Diversity: A Workshop for Search Committees." The workshop was held on August 12, 2014 and was conducted by Eve Fine, WISELI Researcher and Curriculum Developer; Jennifer Sheridan, Executive and Research Director of WISELI; and Julia Savoy, WISELI Research Specialist and Evaluator. One other campus collaborator who presented materials and helped facilitate the workshop includes Luis Piñero, Associate Vice Chancellor for Workforce Equity and Diversity and Director of the Office for Equity and Diversity.

The purpose of the survey is to assess three areas related to the workshop: the perceived value or usefulness of different components from the perspectives of the participants, the ways in which participants anticipate using the information and materials provided in the workshop, and suggestions from participants about future workshop planning and implementation.

Methods

The attached survey (see Appendix) was deployed on August 13 to a list of 18 workshop attendees. The survey population included all registered workshop attendees who signed an informed consent agreement. One reminder email was sent on August 25; the survey was closed on September 2.

For tables displaying quantitative data, we include both the percentage and the number of respondents to each item. For open-ended items, we report all responses provided for each question, coded and presented according to theme. Some responses have been edited for grammar, typographic errors, and to maintain the anonymity of the respondents or others. Furthermore, the respondents may have addressed multiple points or concerns in their open-ended answers, which were then grouped thematically. Therefore, the number of comments is not reflective of the number of people who responded to any given item.

Respondent Information

Out of 18 invitees, 12 people responded to this survey for a response rate of 67%. We asked respondents to share their title or role on campus, and their role on the search committee or in the search process.

Survey respondents' roles included departmental administrators and human resources professionals (Table 1).

	% (n)
Departmental administrator or professional	64% (7)
Human resources professional	36% (4)

Table 1: Campus position by percentage and frequency, *n* = 11.

Survey respondents identified a range of responsibilities on search committees or in the search process, including administrative support and serving as part of an interview panel (Table 2). Some respondents noted that they play more than one role in search committees.

	% (n)
Member of search committee/interview panel	36% (4)
Administrative support	73% (8)
Other	9% (1)

Table 2: Role on search committee by percentage and frequency, *n* = 11.

Results

Overall Workshop and Individual Component Ratings

We asked respondents to provide an overall rating of the workshop's usefulness, to rate the value of specific workshop components, and to provide comments about the workshop's components. The response choices for the item assessing the workshop's usefulness included ***Not at all Useful*** (assigned a value of 1), ***Somewhat Useful*** (2), and ***Very Useful*** (3). The response choices for the items about the individual workshop components included ***Not at all Valuable*** (assigned a value of 1), ***Somewhat Valuable*** (2), and ***Very Valuable*** (3). The item assessing individual workshop components also included an ***NA*** response choice, which was analyzed as missing data.

Respondents rated the overall workshop as ***Somewhat Useful*** or ***Very Useful*** (Table 3), and most of the workshop components as ***Somewhat Valuable*** or ***Very Valuable*** (Table 4).

	% (n)	Mean *(SD)*
Not at all Useful (1)	0% (0)	2.50 (0.52)
Somewhat Useful (2)	50% (6)	
Very Useful (3)	50% (6)	
Total	100% (12)	

Table 3: Overall workshop rating by percentage, frequency, and mean, *n* = 12.

Respondents rated the workshop components that addressed evaluating the pool of applicants and ensuring a fair and thorough review of candidates as the most valuable (Table 4).

	Not at all Valuable (1) % (n)	Somewhat Valuable (2) % (n)	Very Valuable (3) % (n)	NA % (n)	Mean *(SD)*
Introduction (Fine)	8% (1)	50% (6)	33% (4)	8% (1)	2.27 (0.64)
Run an Effective and Efficient Search Committee (Fine)	0% (0)	58% (7)	42% (5)	0% (0)	2.42 (0.51)
Actively Recruit an Excellent and Diverse Pool of Candidates (Fine)	0% (0)	50% (6)	50% (6)	0% (0)	2.50 (0.52)
Evaluating the Pool of Applicants (Fine, Sheridan)	0% (0)	42% (5)	58% (7)	0% (0)	2.58 (0.51)
Ensure a Fair and Thorough Review of Candidates (Fine)	0% (0)	42% (5)	58% (7)	0% (0)	2.58 (0.51)
Develop and Implement an Effective Interview Process (Piñero)	0% (0)	50% (6)	50% (6)	0% (0)	2.50 (0.52)
Close the Deal: Advice for Successfully Hiring your Selected Candidate (Fine)	0% (0)	58% (7)	42% (5)	0% (0)	2.42 (0.51)

Table 4: Workshop component ratings by percentage, frequency, and mean, *n* = 12.

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We also invited respondents to provide comments about the ratings they assigned to particular components. Five respondents provided additional information, as shown below.

Workshop Valuable, Validates Current Practices
- The information presented was valuable for me in my supportive role to the committee.
- This workshop was very helpful. It helped us learn about what faculty will learn in their workshops and how we can assist them in their search process.
- The group activities were beneficial. Finding out how others handle situations helpful.
- I received most of this advice in the 1990s and have followed it when I've been in a role to do so.

Suggestions for Improvement
- I felt the workshop should be directed at faculty and academic staff recruitments. Perhaps the approval of the position should also include a link and directions to forward your materials to the chair of the search and screen committee.
- I realize that your workshop is usually for faculty. However, there was not a single faculty member in attendance and you knew this ahead of time. I think not making any effort what-so-ever to modify your examples and change it up to better capture your audience turned a lot of participants off right from the beginning of the workshop.

Overall Workshop Recommendation

When asked, the majority of respondents reported that they would recommend the workshop to others (Table 5).

	% (n)
Yes	90% (10)
No	10% (1)
Total	100% (11)

Table 5: Would/would not recommend workshop to others
by percentage and frequency, *n* = 11.

When asked why or why not, two respondents provided additional information. Comments from those who said they ***would*** recommend the workshop, included:
- I think everyone, not just faculty, should have to take it. It's excellent.

Comments from those who said they ***would not*** recommend the workshop, included:
- We don't know when search committees will form.

Implementation of Materials and Information

We then asked respondents to indicate what new strategies or resources they learned about in the workshop, and which of the strategies or resources from the workshop they would recommend be used in a faculty search committee (Table 6). The most common strategies or resources that respondents learned of in the workshop were the recruiting resources on the WISELI website, resources provided by the Provost's Faculty Diversity Initiative, and the brochure, "Reviewing Applicants: Research on Bias and Assumptions." The strategies or resources that respondents would recommend to faculty search committees included the recruiting resources on the WISELI website and in the HR Toolkit, discussing and establishing ground rules for committees, and

developing and prioritizing criteria for candidates. All respondents who answered this item said they would recommend the workshop itself.

	Learned of Strategy or Resource % (n)	Would Recommend % (n)
Considering the membership of the search committee and adjusting accordingly.	45% (5)	55% (6)
Consulting with the workshop presenters or others on campus about conducting an effective search process.	36% (4)	36% (4)
Discussing and/or establishing ground rules for the search committee (e.g., about decision-making, attendance, expectations).	36% (4)	82% (9)
Publicizing the position in different venues (compared to previous searches).	45% (5)	64% (7)
Using networking and other means to recruit a diverse pool of candidates.	36% (4)	64% (7)
Using "Recruiting Resources" on WISELI's website.	64% (7)	91% (10)
Using resources in the HR Recruitment Toolkit.	45% (5)	82% (9)
Using resources provided by the Provost's Faculty Diversity Initiative (Strategic Pipeline and Recruitment Fund).	55% (6)	64% (7)
Distributing the brochure, "Reviewing Applicants: Research on Bias and Assumptions," to others.	55% (6)	45% (5)
Sharing information about biases and assumptions with others.	45% (5)	64% (7)
Developing and prioritizing specific criteria for evaluation of candidates.	45% (5)	82% (9)
Spending more time reviewing applications.	27% (3)	45% (5)
Sharing information about inappropriate questions for on-campus interviews and events with unit members.	27% (3)	55% (6)
Considering the needs and comfort of candidates when planning on-campus interviews.	18% (2)	64% (7)
Relying on advice/resources in WISELI's Guidebook for Search Committees.	45% (5)	100% (11)

Table 6. Respondent actions completed and planned by percentage and frequency, *n* = 11.

One respondent described an additional strategy they would recommend because of their participation in the workshop, which was:

- That the committee meet early set ground rules, goals, not just after they start to receive applications.

Respondent Suggestions and Recommendations

In this section of the evaluation, we asked respondents for their feedback on the workshop and for suggestions about how to improve it in the future. We invited them to share ideas or suggestions that would have improved their experience in the workshop, and whether there were any topics they would have liked addressed in the workshop, but were not. We also asked whether they would recommend the workshop to others, and to explain why or why not.

We first invited respondents to provide ideas or suggestions for that would have improved their experiences in the workshop. Two respondents provided feedback for this item. The comments included:

- I thought the workshop was very beneficial for me. I am new to my position and the more resources that I have access to the better.
- I think this was a valuable training session, but I would have geared some of the information more toward the administrators themselves. Often we are involved in aspects not directly related to the actual search itself. And I would also make the focus of this not just on faculty searches, but any type of recruitment effort.

We also asked respondents about topics that they would have liked addressed in the workshop, yet were not. One respondent provided an additional topic area, which was:

- We talked a lot about unconscious bias what about conscious bias? How to deal with panel members who purposely exclude the internal candidate, the white male, etc.

General Comments

Finally, we asked respondents to share any other comments they might have about the workshop or their experience overall. Four respondents provided feedback for this item:

- Develop a workshop for non-faculty hires.
- In our department we also have students and academic staff participate on search committees. Again, I would gear the presentation towards anyone who serves on a search committee, not just faculty.
- The presentation was done in a timely and effective manner. The presentations and small groups were effective in involving all participants. Looking forward to getting info on ordering folders and publication mentioned at the end.
- I think the UW-Madison faculty are generally beyond this workshop. They may not know the literature cited, but our most recent hires, when they have not been spouses/partners or candidates already selected by other departments, have included international hires.

Appendix: Survey Instrument

Thank you!

As part of the workshop, you signed a consent form to participate in the evaluation of this session. Please take a few minutes to click on the button below and complete a survey. Results from you and your colleagues are reported in aggregate and are used to improve the workshop and to identify any outcomes from your participation. Thank you, in advance, for the time it takes you to complete this and for your candid feedback. Any questions? Please contact: Christine Pribbenow, (608) 263-4256; cmpribbenow@wisc.edu

1. Your title or role on campus:

2. Your role on the search committee or in the search process:

3. Please rate the value of each of the aspects of the workshop using the scale below (Not at all valuable, Somewhat valuable, Very valuable). Also, feel free to include additional comments in Question 4.

	Not at all valuable	Somewhat valuable	Very valuable	N/A
Introduction (Fine)	○	○	○	○
Run an Effective and Efficient Search Committee (Fine)	○	○	○	○
Actively Recruit an Excellent and Diverse Pool of Candidates (Fine)	○	○	○	○
Evaluating the Pool of Applicants (Fine, Sheridan)	○	○	○	○
Ensure a Fair and Thorough Review of Candidates (Fine)	○	○	○	○
Develop and Implement an Effective Interview Process (Piñero)	○	○	○	○
Close the Deal: Advice for Successfully Hiring your Selected Candidate (Fine)	○	○	○	○

4. Please use this space for comments about any of the workshop's components:

5. What new strategies or resources did you learn about in this workshop? Which of the strategies or

resources from the workshop would you recommend be used in a faculty search committee?

	Learned of strategy or resource	Would recommend
Considering the membership of the search committee and adjusting accordingly.	☐	☐
Consulting with the workshop presenters or others on campus about conducting an effective search process.	☐	☐
Discussing and/or establishing ground rules for the search committee (e.g., about decision-making, attendance, expectations).	☐	☐
Publicizing the position in different venues (compared to previous searches).	☐	☐
Using networking and other means to recruit a diverse pool of candidates.	☐	☐
Using "Recruiting Resources" on WISELI's website.	☐	☐
Using resources in the HR Recruitment Toolkit.	☐	☐
Using resources provided by the Provost's Faculty Diversity Initiative (Strategic Pipeline and Recruitment Fund).	☐	☐
Distributing the brochure, "Reviewing Applicants: Research on Bias and Assumptions," to others.	☐	☐
Sharing information about biases and assumptions with others.	☐	☐
Developing and prioritizing specific criteria for evaluation of candidates.	☐	☐
Spending more time reviewing applications.	☐	☐
Sharing information about inappropriate questions for on-campus interviews and events with others.	☐	☐
Considering the needs and comfort of candidates when planning on-campus interviews.	☐	☐
Relying on advice/resources in WISELI's Guidebook for Search Committees.	☐	☐

6. Please describe other strategies or resources you would recommend because of this workshop:

7. Please provide us with ideas or suggestions that would have improved your experience in this workshop:

8. What topics did you hope would be covered in this workshop, yet were not?

9. Please provide an overall rating for this session.

Not at all useful	Somewhat useful	Very useful
○	○	○

10. Would you recommend this workshop to faculty in your department?

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ Why or why not?

[text field]

11. Any other comments?

[text area]

Please click on the SUBMIT button below. You will know that your results have been recorded if you see WISELI's website about Searching for Excellence & Diversity. Feel free to browse through these resources. Thank you for completing this survey!