

# Candidate Care: Considerations for Candidates during the Interview phase(s) of a Search for both Zoom and In-Person Interviews

A key point to remember while we are interviewing our candidates; they are interviewing us! Interviewing is a two-way street, and candidate care is critical. While we may not hire a potential candidate today, we can consider them for future opportunities at CU. High-level care for all candidates is critical. Candidate care can directly benefit our campus' goal of striving to develop a culture of inclusion. As such, this practice begins with recruitment and eventual onboarding. You also never know if a candidate is a parent of a student, a donor, or has another relationship with the campus, and it is our goal that candidates have a positive experience at CU Boulder, whether they are hired into our community or not.

## Advance of the Interview (In-person and Virtual):

- Make sure that the **job posting** has been shared with the candidate in advance of the interview, as well as any information that may be helpful for their preparation (i.e., strategic imperatives resource for executive-level searches, an executive profile of the committee members). We need to **consistently** share this information with all interviewees.
- **Interview questions:** Interview questions should be confirmed and assigned in advance of the interviews starting. Google documents provide a great space for shared collaboration. Your Recruiter will always provide recommendations for questions, and we highly encourage that questions are crafted in a critical behavioral interview format (i.e., past performance as an indicator for future performance).
- Consider sharing **topical areas with candidates** that will be covered during the interview. This does not necessarily mean sharing the specific questions that will be asked, rather, offering candidates information on competency areas that may be addressed (i.e., leadership, diversity-equity-inclusion, problem-solving) prior to the interview so they come prepared with examples if they are asked questions on those areas. Also, share the types of questions that will be asked (behavioral-based, multi-part, scenario, etc.), an approximation of the amount of time for the interview, and the number of questions.
- Create an **itinerary** that clearly defines who the participants are and the timing. Itineraries will vary based on the level of the position. Some final interviews can be accomplished with a one-hour meeting, where others may require multiple rounds of interviews.
- Your recruiter can highlight our benefits information as well as help to confirm salary expectations, prior to the interviews being conducted.

## Virtual Interviews Considerations:

- **Breaks:** If you anticipate that you will have a longer itinerary, including breaks are critical. We recommend providing at least 15 minutes for every hour between interviews, and if planning on a full-day itinerary, plan to provide an hour break for lunch for the candidate. This does not necessarily mean we need this hour to be engaging, rather, an opportunity for the candidate (and participants) to be off of their video, to return to the remaining session, hopefully feeling refreshed. Plan to have someone check in with the candidate, preferably the HM, at the beginning of the day and then have the recruiter or someone else check in with the candidate throughout the day, maybe after each interview to give them an update as to what interview is next and who they will be speaking with. They can also ask questions if they have any!

- **Timing:** Another consideration, for an hour-long interview, for example, is to plan to ask the candidate questions for 45 minutes (about 12 questions) and leave time at the end for the candidate to ask questions of the team. If you have a large group for your interview team, we recommend sharing participant information in advance to help maximize our time with the candidates and avoid lengthy introductions. Additionally, we recommend finalizing questions in advance and assigning a moderator to ask the questions to help keep things organized for a large group. If you have a reasonably sized interview team, brief introductions, or alternating who is asking the questions is ok.
- **Waiting room:** To ease the experience for the candidate, we recommend utilizing a single Zoom room for the duration of their interview on a single day. Either your recruiter or a liaison to your department can help to set up the Zoom invitation and would recommend that any interviews are structured to include a waiting room. The waiting room will allow for the day to run in an organized manner, with interviewers admitted to the meeting at the proper time for their session.
- **Required registration:** For executive searches, or searches that require larger participation from the campus, we recommend setting up the Zoom link to require registration. This is a helpful strategy, especially when sending out surveys for feedback, to determine who should receive the link.
- **Communication:** Clear communication is critical (whether hosting interviews in person or virtually). Whether you are hosting an interview for an hour or several hours with campus partners, we highly recommend designating a “host”, to ensure the candidate feels comfortable in this virtual environment and to keep the schedule on time. The “host” can be an individual from a department, or your recruiter supporting the search.
- **Flexibility:** Not everyone has access to the same technology resources. Be flexible with any requests that come in from candidates including preference to leave video off, mobile technologies, etc. Candidates may also want to test Zoom functionality in advance, and your recruiter can assist with this. In addition, technical glitches or unexpected distractions can occur with a video interview and the interview team should be prepared and gracious in working through these with candidates.
- One thing that has been helpful in virtual interviews recently is to acknowledge that we are in a virtual space and that sometimes there can be disruptions or interruptions due to connectivity, home circumstances (family, pets, etc.). With that in mind, it is nice to let the candidate know that if this does happen, not to worry and that we will work to rejoin the meeting. The same goes for the candidate - if they lose connectivity, we will work with them to resolve the issue, even if it means adapting and connecting via phone instead. It is also nice to let the candidate know that we can repeat a question if needed.

### **In-Person Interview Considerations:**

- **Candidate Logistics:** Arrange for parking as needed and provide clear directions to the interview location. For executive positions, consider arranging transportation to/from campus for the candidate.
- **Agenda:** Provide the candidate with a clear agenda in advance. The candidate should know whom they are meeting with and how long they should expect to be on campus. If the interview will last more than 2 hours, and/or involve multiple locations on campus, a host should be assigned to the candidate for the day.
- **Breaks:** Similar to the virtual space for interviews, breaks for candidates are essential, especially if there is potential accommodation needed. Breaks for walking between buildings is key before other sessions

start, but making sure candidates have opportunities for short breaks is equally as important (restroom, water, etc.). Many candidates are visiting from out of state and may have difficulty adjusting to the altitude. During breaks and interview sessions, it is important to provide water for the candidate. Similarly, ensure the candidate has ample time to eat throughout the day.

- Travel logistics (but, consider if you can accomplish the interview virtually as this is a time/cost-saving measure).

#### **After the Interviews:**

- Define a “neutral” point of contact (either your Recruiter or a member from your department), to help candidates with questions that may not be related to the job (i.e. information about the surrounding area, school districts). By including a neutral representative, information can be discussed in a safe environment, so that this information does not affect the interviewers/participants as a part of the evaluation process.
- Continue to communicate with candidates:
  - **Clear communication and expectations for candidates and committee members are essential.** We cannot assume that we are the only employer these candidates are interviewing with. We highly recommend that there is a clear timeline proposed as to when we will have an update for the process. The hiring manager and recruiter can help to craft and determine the communication plan.

#### **Sources:**

- [Universal Design Principles for Accommodations](#)
- [Sample Interview Questions](#)
- [Interview Review Rubric](#)
- [Lawful/Unlawful Inquiries](#)