

This paper earned a nearly-unheard-of 50/50. The team also included some appendices that are not included here.

A Selection System for Resident Advisors at the University of Colorado at Boulder



MGMT 4020
November 22, 2004

Team 7:

November 22, 2004

XXX, XX Hall Director
University of Colorado - Department of Housing
159 UCB
Boulder, CO 80309

Dear Ms. XXX:

We would like to express our sincere gratitude for your cooperation with our assignment of developing a hiring system for the Resident Advisors at the University of Colorado at Boulder. Your participation in this project provided us with valuable insight and information without which we would not have been able to complete this work.

The Resident Advisor position is a valuable one to the Department of Housing and the University of Colorado. As fellow students, we recognize the need to ensure that a thorough system is in place to hire the most qualified applicants for the positions available. The Resident Advisors are in direct contact with the students and, in part, are responsible for their safety and maturation while living in the dorms. The individuals in this capacity must be responsible, organized, conscientious, and operate with integrity and honesty.

It is with these values in mind that we present this analysis of the hiring system and some suggestions for modifying the current procedures. We have carefully examined the mission statements of both the University and the Residence Life division. We believe that we have created a hiring system in harmony with the ideals set forth in these mission statements, but also a system that is effective, practical, and consistent with the goals of your department.

We appreciate your support throughout this process and we hope that you are able to employ some of the procedures discussed in the following paper. If you find that our suggestions are worth possible implementation, we ask that you please pass on this paper to Regina Tirella, the Resident Life Coordinator for Recruitment and Training. It is important to note that we are not experts in this area but rather we are students in a human resource management class at the Leeds School of Business. Through coursework in this class over the semester, we are able to provide you with this information. Please feel free to contact us with any questions that you have regarding this project. Professor Joseph Rosse, our instructor in this class (MGMT 4020), is an expert in this field, has a copy of our paper and would be an excellent source to field questions regarding the topics within. Thanks again and best of luck to you and your staff next semester.

Sincerely,

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Job Analysis Summary

Our team chose to develop a hiring system for the Resident Advisor position in the dormitories here on the University of Colorado at Boulder campus. Before beginning the process, we thought critically about the best way to approach the situation in order to get the most beneficial and informative information so that we could create what we felt to be the most effective hiring system possible. Considering that most of our team was at one time living under a Resident Advisor (RA) as a freshman in college, we had valuable discussions on how to tackle our job analysis. We concluded that a top-down approach would be most advantageous in gathering an abundance of information that would be functional in our decision process

What we mean by a top-down approach is simply that instead of just looking at the RA position itself for information, we would first look at the organization as a whole. To do this, we thought about the purpose of the University of Colorado at Boulder. From this we would then look at our particular chosen unit of CU, the Resident Hall division within the Department of Housing. Once we got an understanding of the goal for the residence halls, we examined various positions within the unit. Our group chose to collect information about the RA position from their immediate boss, the Resident Hall Director. Lastly, once we had a better grasp of what the RA position entailed, we finally interviewed three individuals who had particular knowledge of the job. These individuals were either past RA's with a wealth of experience, or current RA's with only a few months under their belt. Either way, they were able to provide us with the proper understanding of the RA title and what it took to be as successful as possible in the position.

To begin our job analysis process, our group examined the University of Colorado as an organization and their following mission statement:

CU-Boulder Mission Statement

Our mission is to advance and impart knowledge across a comprehensive range of disciplines to benefit the people of Colorado, the nation, and the world by educating undergraduate and graduate students in the accumulated knowledge of humankind, discovering new knowledge through research and creative work, and fostering critical thought, artistic creativity, professional competence, and responsible citizenship. (www.colorado.edu)

After examining this mission statement our team reflected on the fact that everyone associated with the inner workings of the University should be ruminating about how to best serve this goal. This kind of pondering should particularly be upheld by the resident hall staff due to the fact that they are vitally important in the transition process for freshman students into college life. Knowing this, we decided to interview XXX, the XXX Hall Director. She supplied us with what she thought to be the most important and fundamental qualities that a successful RA should possess. It was important to get the perspective of the director in order to compare and contrast her answers to the ones we obtained from the actual RAs. After we interviewed the supervisor, we felt closer to what can be considered the critical attributes of an RA, but there is still a difference between what someone thinks the ideal qualities are, and what they actually entail. Therefore, in order to complete the investigation of the RA position we interviewed job incumbents who could finalize our examination of this title.

Now that we had analyzed the position from broader categories, it was time to get first hand knowledge of the intricacies of the Resident Advisor. Before we delved any further we

took a look at the mission statement for the RA to see if there were any links back to that of the University. Their statement reads:

The Resident Advisor Mission Statement

Our mission in Residence Life is to help people to succeed by providing an environment that encourages and supports personal growth and development. This mission includes planning and implementing programs and activities to develop characteristics desirable in a UCB educated person: developing a sense of belonging, acquiring new knowledge and skills, developing critical thinking skills, making informed and ethical choices, expanding awareness, understanding and appreciation of diversity, and assuming responsibility. (housing.colorado.edu)

It was no surprise to us that there were a number of similarities between the two mission statements. The University is an institution that was created to foster and equip students with all of the professional and personal tools they need to be as successful as they can be in work and life. Moreover, the RA plays a critical role in providing students with an environment that is most suitable and valuable in supporting this growth and development. With such words as belonging, knowledge, ethics, diversity and responsibility we knew that there were some central characteristics that every applicant for the RA position needed in order to be effective. We finalized a job description that included the critical tasks and duties essential to the RA. These include things like: being a cooperative staff member, developing a community, establishing safety procedures, and taking a role as disciplinarian. From these essential tasks/duties, we took the final step in gathering information in order to narrow down our laundry list of the most vital attributes that the RA can possess.

To do this, we interviewed three individuals who have immediate intelligence. One was an RA for two years and had a lot of information and experiences to help educate us about the position. The other two were current RAs enjoying all that the position had to offer. Our team had the significant advantage that two of our members were past RAs; therefore they were able to assist us throughout the process with their numerous connections and familiarity with the subject. For the interviews, we developed questions that we felt best probed the individual for information about day to day operations of the RA job as well as what the most important traits are. A summary of the questions and the responses can be found later in this paper. Ultimately, we narrowed down our laundry list and formatted our critical KSAOs: Knowledge, Skills, Abilities, Other. These form the basis for our hiring system and the list can be found under the critical attributes section later in the paper.

We felt that the Resident Advisor position is a certainty-based occupation in terms of the overall meaning of the job. Certainty-based jobs are positions that are relatively stable over time. The purpose of an RA is to be a guide and to aid incoming students and this purpose isn't going to change anytime soon. However, we discovered that the day to day operations of this job are uncertainty based. While the paperwork and program development might be the structured part of the job, it's the ability to resolve conflicts, be a successful mentor, and implement policies at opportune times that make this position different and challenging day in and day out. After we made the realization that the job is both predictable and unpredictable, we developed our list of attributes and came up with seven that we felt were the most critical. They include: *campus knowledge, effective communication, organization, successful mentoring, integrity, conscientiousness, and conflict resolution skills*. The RA has a lot of responsibility on their shoulders and considering that they are accountable for all the students in their hall, it is very important that you hire the best possible candidates. In order to employ the best

individuals, the Resident Hall division needs a sound and effective hiring system in place. The particulars of this system are outlined in the following pages.

Summary of Hiring Stages

To hire the best possible people, we developed a system, based on the KSAOs we had formulated, with several stages that would ultimately produce the best candidates. We incorporated a mixture of two hiring approaches that we felt complemented each other well. The two processes are that of a multiple hurdle approach, and that of a categorical decision method. The multiple hurdle tactic, also known as the multiple cut off method, breaks the hiring system up into several stages each of which the applicant must pass in order to move on to the next hiring stage. Considering that there are a large number of applicants for the position, this method allows us to narrow down the applicant pool after each stage of the process. Each stage has different causes for elimination, which will be specified later. This method will ultimately save time and money and will reduce the amount of chaos at the end of the hiring process due to the fact that it will only leave the most suitable candidates. In conjunction with this method, we felt it best to implement the approach of a categorical decision table. This is the overall evaluation of the applicants remaining after all of the consecutive hurdles. Each hiring tool will rate certain critical attributes on a desirable, acceptable, unacceptable scale and once the applicant has completed the entire hiring process, the ratings will be tabulated in the decision matrix in order to give a clear picture of which applicants are best suited for the RA position. This combination of methods will be better illustrated throughout the paper, but we are confident that this is the most effective way in hiring the most qualified applicants possible.

There are four stages/tools we use in our process and they will be described in greater length later in the paper. The first stage is the application form. Through the housing website, we obtained the current application form being used and analyzed it to see if it met our needs. We liked the structure, content, and comprehensiveness of the form and so our team decided not to make any alterations. Also, to be an RA there are certain qualifications that you must possess, including things like: being enrolled as a full time student and having 2 full college semesters completed as well as having a GPA of 2.5 or higher. The application form provides a quick answer to gathering the necessary qualifications and providing a better understanding of the person's organizational skills. Our hiring systems' main focus isn't about the qualifications though; it's about distinguishing the qualified applicants from one another by testing the critical attributes. Along with the application form is a reference checking evaluation. Our team concluded that this was a valuable component of the decision process and we liked the layout of the form currently in use. We analyzed it for our critical attributes and concluded that a few things were missing. In order to compensate for this, we added in a few questions in order to get a clearer picture of what we are trying to measure. The reference checks are primarily used to gauge the applicants' integrity, organization, and mentoring skills.

The next stage is the interview process. Currently the interview procedure has more than 30 questions and not enough time to include them all. Our team narrowed down the interview to specifically focus on our seven critical attributes. Certain questions pertain to certain attributes and the interviewer will now have a more structured system for rating the traits on a desirable, acceptable, and unacceptable scale. The interview now consists of 20 questions and should take roughly 30 minutes to complete. The evaluation form is found later in the paper. This brings us to the final stage of the hiring process. At present, the hiring system doesn't include a personality test, but our team feels that these tools are effective in predicting success in the

workplace. These tests have been proven to be reliable and valid measures of attributes that we consider to be vital for RAs. This test will mainly be used to assess the candidate's conscientiousness, but will also give us a more in depth look at their integrity and organizational skills. This test should be administered only if the applicant's interview was acceptable.

Each stage of our hiring process has been formulated for a specific reason and we feel that this systematic approach will be very effective in finding the most desirable students for the Resident Advisor position. When concluding the process, you will combine all of the ratings from the stages and use a critical attributes matrix to rank the applicants based on their performance in the four stages of our hiring process. From this, a more obvious and effortless decision should be able to be made.

Limitations & Alternatives

With our top-down approach, we didn't see any limitations at the start, but once we got down to the specifics, we discovered some constraints that were hard to work around. For instance, one of the best ways to get a feel for the job is by observation. But considering that the tasks and duties are not always certain to arise everyday, we were confined to only doing the interviews for the majority of our information gathering. It would've been a benefit to observe them first hand, but when recognizing the time commitment and inflexible work schedule we concluded that the interviews were our best shot at analyzing the RA position. In addition, with our class schedules trying to coordinate with the RA's schedules, we found it difficult to find appropriate times to arrange personal interviews with 2 of our team members present. This is one of the reasons that we felt we should look at interviewing past RA's instead of current ones. Moreover, past RA's have been through a whole year or two in the position and have more experiences to impart us with. One of the biggest limitations though is the fact the information we gathered is subjective. No part of our job analysis has empirical evidence and therefore we had to take a lot of time in sorting our information so that it could be put to good use. Every answer we got could've been different from the next, but we tried to compensate for this by interviewing multiple incumbents as well as a Hall Director.

There were also alternative approaches to analyzing this job. One of those approaches includes taking information from the bottom-up. In this method we would first gather the specific and detailed information from the RA's and work our way up to analyzing the University of Colorado at Boulder. Our team thought about this tactic and ruled it ineffective for several reasons. First, by getting the specific information first we felt like we would've been steered down the road to making too many assumptions. By going from the bottom-up, we would've taken the word of the RAs as to what the most important qualities are for the position instead of looking at the big picture first, and formulating our own opinions of what the most valuable traits are. Secondly, we would've lost most of the critical thought process that came with the top-down approach. It is more beneficial for us to frame our own opinions first so that we can compare and contrast them with individuals who have more experience and understanding of the position.

One more alternative approach that we considered was that of shadowing. As described earlier, we felt that the most advantageous way of gathering information was to observe the incumbents in their day to day operations. This would give us the clearest picture as to what the job demands. But due to the time constraints and taking into account the uncertainty of their daily duties, there was no way to predict whether we would encounter all of the various incidents that could occur during the tenure of the job.

Job Analysis Documentation

Interview Questions (Resident Advisor)

The following is a summary of the interview responses from the 3 job incumbents:

1.) What do you think the overall purpose of your job is?

The primary answer was to build a community within the dorm and helps students adjust to a new environment. Other answers included safety & security, such as keeping the noise down and ensuring that students aren't drinking in their rooms.

2.) What attracted you to this job?

Room and board was the most common answer. One job incumbent said that he/she felt a need to keep people to a certain standard, he/she had a sense of duty because he/she felt most people wouldn't step up to enforce the rules as they were set to be interpreted.

3.) What skills do you think are essential for being a successful RA?

The ability to build trust with the students and effective communication skills were the dominating responses. Listening, patience, and creativity were other characteristics that were brought up as well.

4.) What are your most frequently performed tasks?

- 1.) Rounds
- 2.) Staff meetings
- 3.) Talking with residents (i.e. informal rounds – getting to know them, ask about their day etc)
- 4.) Student meetings/social events

5.) What tasks do you perform infrequently?

- 1.) Writing students up for violations
(One job incumbent said that while there are no official quotas determined by the Hall Director (HD) for the number of write-ups per semester, the incumbent said that there is indirect pressure from the HD if the RA does not have many write-ups)
- 2.) Conflict resolution
- 3.) Decision making

6.) What are you held liable for pertaining to the students?

Keeping the students quiet and handling emergencies while on rounds were the two most common responses.

7.) Is there any previous knowledge that is useful for this position?

Negotiation and conflict management, group management skills, and your own prior experiences in the dorms are useful qualities to have preceding employment as an RA.

8.) What are the qualities that you see in yourself and your co-workers that you think are essential or important to being a great RA?

Integrity, diligence, responsibility, communication skills, being able to identify with the students, and the ability to work as a team are the qualities that distinguish a good RA from a great RA.

9.) Is there anything you would change about the hiring process? Do you feel it is effective in weeding out average applicants from exceptional applicants?

One job incumbent said that there should be a new system because he/she has seen great potential RA's not get hired. He/She thought that only asking behavioral questions was not sufficient enough to find those best for the job.

Other incumbents said the process was acceptable but was not good at weeding and it took too long.

10.) Are there any changes you would make in the overall RA position?

Less emphasis on policy enforcement and more emphasis on being a resource and building community was the common answer. One incumbent said that the amount of special projects should be reduced and that reporting once a week is too often because there is not enough information to report.

In our class, we have learned the importance of cross checking the information given by the incumbent and their manager. Sometimes the manager has an idea of how things should be done on paper but the incumbent has their own actual way of doing things. It is for this reason that we decided to ask the Hall Director (HD) the questions that we asked the RAs in order to compare if there is a difference of what should be done and what is actually being done. Furthermore, the Hall Director has been an RA in the past so he/she could speak from experience. Due to time constraints and overlap of questions, we only asked the HD the first 7 RA questions because we had 18 other questions to ask him/her. The following are the HD's responses to the RA questions:

1.) What do you think the overall purpose of your job is?

To facilitate a safe/living/learning community for 425 students.

2.) What attracted you to this job?

I had good connections and I loved the college environment.

3.) What skills do you think are essential for being a successful RA?

Good communication with everyone (students and supervisor), self-motivated, commitment to social justice and a willingness to learn.

4.) What are your most frequently performed tasks?

- 1.) Meetings (staff to students)
- 2.) Disciplinary responsibilities (meetings, policing, reporting)

3.) E-mailing and paperwork

5.) What tasks do you perform infrequently?

- 1.) Hanging out with students
- 2.) Going to programs

6.) What are you held liable for pertaining to the students?

RAs must create an environment to meet other people and develop life skills.

7.) Is there any previous knowledge that is useful for this position?

It is important to know student development theory. Interpersonal and group communication skills are important as well.

Interview Questions (Resident Hall Director)

The following questions are what we asked the Hall Director from a supervisory perspective:

1.) What is the overall purpose of the RA position?

To provide a safe community and to build a community with your residents.

2.) What kind of person fits best in this position? Who would not fit?

There is not one specific type but we prefer someone with a genuine concern for people. Somebody who would not fit would be a close-minded person.

3.) What are the most important skills/attributes needed to be a successful RA?

Good communication with everyone (students and supervisor), self-motivated, commitment to social justices and a willingness to learn are qualities that a successful RA embodies.

4.) Are there certain abilities that stand out for applicants?

Communication skills, open-mindedness and a genuine caring attitude are things that stand out.

5.) What qualities separate an average RA from a great one?

Getting to know your students personally is important. Also being thorough and timely in reporting is a characteristic of a great RA.

6.) What do you look for when hiring?

We look for a balanced person meaning someone who is good both behind the scenes and with the students.

7.) Are there prerequisites or experiences needed before applying for this position?

Previous involvement in a leadership position or experience that would be similar to that of being an RA, such as being a peer mentor.

8.) What is the hiring process and what are your current recruiting practices?

We have 3 info sessions in the fall and we have staff nominate residents for the position.
We also have a job resource center to help applicants.

9.) Group Interviews:

- What is the purpose for them?

To see how people interact with each other.

- What are you looking for in the process?

Their level of engagement.

- How does someone stand out?

We like to see people who are good listeners, people who have some input and are engaged in the conversation.

10.) Where do you get the majority of your applicants from?

Current residents are our only applicant pool.

11.) In the past, have you hired based on performance or time constraints/employee shortage?

We have a very large applicant pool so it is easy to find a good fit from the pool. Time constraints have not been an issue.

12.) Do you provide training after hire? What does it consist of?

We provide extensive training that includes community building, safety, security, confrontation management, sexual harassment/awareness, and responsibility on campus

13.) What are the most frequently performed jobs/tasks?

One on one conversations with the residents

Job duties

Programming/meetings

14.) What's your evaluation system of the RAs, and how do you distinguish good work from poor work?

We like to see the connection the RAs have with the students and the knowledge they have of what's going happening on the floor. We like them to keep the Hall Director informed.

15.) What's the motivation behind the live-in-hall directors?

- What do you think the benefits are?

The system is better. It is nice to have a model of leadership around the halls for the students to have as an example.

- Is the new system sufficient?

Yes, we needed the change. It's nice to have a full-time staff member in the halls.

16.) What is the current supply and demand for the RA position?

- How many are leaving (per semester/year)? How many apply?

The number of applicants increases every year. We have more applicants than we need. 10 or less people leave at the semester. Almost 1/2 of our RAs come back for another year.

17.) What is your role in overseeing the RA's and how visible are you?

I am primarily responsible for the safety and security of the residents.

18.) What would you change about the hiring process? What about the rehiring process?

Regarding the hiring process, I would like to be able to see more applicants in person but this is nearly impossible due to the large volume of applicants. Regarding the rehiring process, I like that the department trusts the Hall Directors to make decisions about rehires. However, the process doesn't require them to put a lot of thought into it.



Job Description

Job Title: Resident Hall Advisor

Summary:

Introduces, assists, and familiarizes students to the campus life. Also responsible for policy implementation and enforcement, activity planning, counseling, and communicating with students and staff.

Essential Tasks and Duties:

Cooperative Staff Member:

- Helps other resident hall staff through collaboration and assistance with projects and student aid
- Maintains organized administrative responsibilities such as thorough paperwork describing program curriculum as well as reporting policy violations to the Hall Director in a timely manner

Development of Community:

- Designs and implements programs for residents covering topics such as alcohol, social responsibility, sexual awareness, and ethics
- Acts as a mentor for students by answering questions, giving advice, and resolving concerns
- Recognizes and obtains outside assistance when necessary for struggling students

Establishes Safety Procedures:

- Takes preventative measures to ensure the safety of the students in the residence hall
 - Educate students on safety programs provided by campus (i.e.: Night Ride, Night Walk, and Blue Lights)

Role of Disciplinarian:

- Handles confrontation of policy violations, such as drug and alcohol use
- Reports situations to the Hall Director as they occur
 - Maintains an effective communication channel with Hall Director
 - Writes reports regarding breach of policy

O*Net Summary

Summary Report for:

39-9041.00 - Residential Advisors

Coordinate activities for residents of boarding schools, college fraternities or sororities, college dormitories, or similar establishments. Order supplies and determine need for maintenance, repairs, and furnishings. May maintain household records and assign rooms. May refer residents to counseling resources if needed.

Tasks

- Counsel students in the handling of issues such as family, financial, and educational problems.
- Enforce rules and regulations to ensure the smooth and orderly operation of dormitory programs.
- Observe students in order to detect and report unusual behavior.
- Administer, coordinate, or recommend disciplinary and corrective actions.
- Assign rooms to students.
- Communicate with other staff to resolve problems with individual students.
- Compile information such as residents' daily activities and the quantities of supplies used to prepare required reports.
- Determine the need for facility maintenance and repair, and notify appropriate personnel.
- Direct and participate in on- and off-campus recreational activities for residents of institutions, boarding schools, fraternities or sororities, children's homes, or similar establishments.
- Hold regular meetings with each assigned unit.

In order to fully examine the Resident Advisor position, we felt it necessary to look at the O*Net Summary as well as the job description created by the University of Colorado. We took both of these statements into account when we created our own job description.

Position Description: Resident Advisor

Department of Housing, Residential Education University of Colorado at Boulder

General:

The nature of the job tends to be that the Resident Advisor is a "people-oriented" person. The position requires the ability to develop and guide a cohesive and inclusive community while supporting the academic mission of the university through purposeful programming and demonstration of personal integrity. The successful Resident Advisor is a person who can act calmly and effectively in emergency situations. A Resident Advisor must be accepting of all personality types, and must be open-minded, non-judgmental and willing to celebrate diversity in all areas. It is important that s/he be a sensitive and empathic person, concerned with why things happen as well as what happens. The RA should have the ability to change her/his mind, to accept change in students, and encourage and benefit from constructive criticism.

The Resident Advisor must be able to communicate attitudes of trust, consistency, and honesty. It is also important that s/he be a cooperative, contributing, and cohesive member of the hall staff. A Resident Advisor should know her/his own limitations and when to ask for help.

The Resident Advisor is a staff member of the Department of Housing, and is a staff member of the University and is expected to act accordingly at all times. Being a staff member, the RA is expected to strive to accomplish the objectives of the residence hall program. Resident Advisor responsibilities include not only student personnel functions and residence hall administrative functions, but also the ability to confront a variety of disciplinary/behavioral situations.

The Resident Advisor is directly responsible to the Hall Director.



KSAOs and Rationale

Knowledge: “Information that an employee must know to be an effective performer”

Campus Layout

It is important that the RA has a general knowledge of the campus in order to assist students in locating classes and activities

Skills: “Proficiency and function of underlying knowledge and practice of a specific task”

Organization

As an RA is expected to stay on top of paperwork, reporting, as well as implementing programs in a timely fashion; organization is a critical attribute for the position

Conflict Resolution Skills

Most RAs embark upon conflicts pertaining to students throughout their time as RAs. Conflict resolution skills as well as experience in confrontation are highly necessary in these particular situations.

Abilities: “Attributes that indicate the potential to do a job, given subsequent training or experience”

Effective Communication

This is a crucial ability for the RA to have perfected as s/he is required to effectively communicate with students, co-workers, and the Hall Director

Successful Mentoring

The RA must be a successful mentor as s/he will be expected to give advice, and resolve concerns related to student life.

Other: “Any other critical attributes not characterized above”

Integrity

It is critical to employ RAs of integrity as they are entrusted with the student’s safety in the dormitories

Conscientiousness

All RAs must possess this characteristic as they must appreciate the rules and have a willingness to enforce them

Definitions provided by *High-Impact Hiring*, p.34

Performance Attributes:

When determining what qualities are important while looking at an applicant it is important to understand and organize how these qualities will be assessed. The performance attributes matrix below outlines the top seven attributes that we will be looking for in a Resident Advisor for the University of Colorado. It is also crucial to follow certain guidelines while identifying these attributes. We have listed attributes that fall under all four sections (knowledge, skills, abilities, other). We have also removed all attributes that can be learned on the job, if the applicant is hired.

When reading the Performance Attributes Matrix, simply use the “X” as an indicator to which row you will find the attribute, correlated with the tool in the column used to measure the attribute. This matrix, ties together both the managers expectations in what they hope to see in each applicant as well as where we anticipate to see these attributes.

Matrix:

Attribute:	Application / Resume	Reference Checks	Interview	Personality Test
Campus Knowledge	X		X	
Effective Communication		X	X	
Organization	X	X	X	X
Successful Mentoring		X	X	
Integrity		X	X	X
Conscientiousness			X	X
Conflict Resolution Skills			X	

Risk and Fit Factors

Risk Factors: non task-specific factors that affect success

Tenure is not a significant concern with this position due to turnover occurring every year as students graduate, move on etc.

Problem Behaviors: counter-productive behavior that affects success

- Potential RAs may allow problematic activities:
 - Underage drinking
 - Solution: Reference Check, Personality Test, and Application (letter of reference from applicant's RA)
 - Conflict avoidance – if RA lacks confrontation skills, this could lead to students participating in actions contradicting policy
 - Solution: Interview & Personality Test
- Potential RAs may participate in illegal activities:
 - Underage drinking
 - Solution: Reference Check & Application (letter of reference from applicant's RA)
 - Theft – RAs have access to dorm keys and conduct room checks over Christmas
 - Solution: Reference Check

Fit Factors: organizational and/or cultural factors that affect success

Culture Fit: types of personalities/styles/behaviors that are not well-suited with the culture of the organization/department

- Close-mindedness – this affects interactions with a diverse student population
 - Solution: Personality Test
- Introversion – this affects the applicant's ability to interact with students and establish a relationship based on trust and mutual respect
 - Solution: Personality Test, Interview, Reference Check

Proposed Selection System

Stage 1: Application/Resume

The first step in the hiring process is the application and resume. Our team feels that the current form being used by the Housing Department is more than sufficient at assessing the necessary attributes needed for an RA applicant. We don't propose any modifications to the form because it has been updated and improved over time and we don't feel that we have any suggestions that would add value to the document. The form adequately gauges the two attributes listed in our performance attributes matrix.

Scoring System for the Application/Resume Stage:

Scoring Critical Attributes:

- **Campus Knowledge:** the applicant will either be acceptable or unacceptable depending upon their academic status (a candidate is not qualified if they have not been a full time student for 2 full semesters)
- **Organization:**
 - Unacceptable:* unable to articulate their ability to multi task.
 - Acceptable:* gives an example of when they had to handle many things at one time, but isn't too thorough in their explanation.
 - Desirable:* the applicant demonstrated critical thinking skills when they had to deal with an unexpected situation and had to handle many things at one time. Shows foresight in dealing with future instances, meaning that they learned something from the situation and used knowledge for future occurrences.

Once the scoring has been decided, enter the ranking into the Individual Applicant evaluation in the box that matches the tool used (application/resume) and the attribute measured (organization or campus knowledge). The Individual Applicant Evaluation Form can be found in Appendix A.

Causes for elimination: not meeting qualifications or having problematic situations in prior campus life; if applicant receives one or more rating of unacceptable

The current application form is included in Appendix C.

Stage 2: Reference Check

The second step in the hiring process is the reference check. Reference checks find out *additional information* about a potential employee from his/her previous employment and they *verify information* that the applicant provided throughout the hiring process. It is often argued that checking references are an insignificant step in finding new employees. However, it is very wise for an employer to do this because often applicants will embellish their application or leave out important information. The department currently uses reference checks and the form is included in the application packet. We think this is perfectly acceptable as long as the reference checking form is not read unless all of the necessary qualifications are met in stage 1. The form is comprehensive and coincidentally it measures many of the attributes that we indicated in the job description. The reference form measures: team work, time management, diversity awareness, leadership, accountability, communication, character, administrative tasks, and attitude. This coincides with the following attributes: organization, successful mentoring, communication and integrity. Although the form is very thorough, we recommend the following two questions be added to the form:

- 1.) What are his/her strengths as an employee?
- 2.) What are the areas in which the applicant could improve?

These questions don't necessarily relate to the attributes discussed above, but we believe that it is important to know any assets and limitations that any applicant brings to the work environment.

Scoring System for the Reference Checking Stage:

Scoring the reference checking stage is quite simple. Four critical attributes can be measured by the scale below:

Unacceptable: there is nothing but negative comments from the past RA's recommendation concerning the applicant

Acceptable: applicant has good recommendations but some weaknesses are shown through previous actions and experiences

Desirable: the majority of the reference check is filled with nothing but glowing remarks

Once the scoring has been decided, enter the ranking into the Individual Applicant evaluation in the box that matches the tool used (reference check) and the attribute measured (organization, successful mentoring, communication and integrity). The Individual Applicant Evaluation Form can be found in Appendix A.

Causes for elimination: If the candidate receives two or more unacceptables after rating all seven attributes.

The current reference checking form is included in Appendix D.

Stage 3: Interview

The third stage is the interview and we have created our own interview form that is consistent with the attributes discussed throughout the paper. The format of the interview has

been structured in a way that each question relates to a specific attribute and each attribute is measured in the interview. The new interview form and the ratings for the questions can be found on the following pages.

Scoring the Interview Stage:

In the interview evaluation form, each critical attribute is measured on the same scale as used in the previous stages. There are boxes located in the form to rate each attribute desirable, acceptable, or unacceptable. Once each attribute is categorized, place the ranking in the proper box located in the Individual Applicant Evaluation Form in Appendix A.

Causes for elimination: If the candidate receives two or more unacceptables after rating all seven attributes.

Detailed descriptions of what desirable, acceptable, and unacceptable mean for each attribute is listed in the evaluation form.

Resident Advisor Interview Evaluation

Candidate: _____

SS#: _____

Evaluator: _____

Interview Date: _____

Welcome/Introduction:

When applicant arrives, introduce yourself and get acquainted through small talk. Attempt to make the applicant as comfortable as possible because a comfortable applicant will provide more natural answers. Some suggestions for small talk include asking the applicant about the ride over, parking, academic classes, etc. Make sure to keep you own composure and professionalism when making small talk. Try not to allow this to go over the first five minutes. Explain what the intent of the interview is (to assess their competency in this position, to get a better insight of their personality, and to make sure they will enjoy this position.) Begin questioning.

Please evaluate the candidate using the scale and criteria listed below.

- **UNDESIRABLE** indicates that the candidate would not be successful even with extensive training.
- **ACCEPTABLE** indicates that the candidate could be successful with focused training.
- **DESIRABLE** indicates that the candidate would be successful with appropriate and minimal training.

In each area, you must ask the questions listed. **Please let the candidate know that the interview will be no longer than 30 minutes and there are six areas to cover. This should give them insight about the length of their answers.**

COMMUNICATION SKILLS

The ability to effectively communicate with students, co-workers, and the Hall Director. Factors to consider: natural reaction to situations, natural ability to communicate, and examples of how the applicant has dealt with communication issues in the past.

* Describe a situation in which you were forced to use effective communication.

- * Have you worked in a group or with a staff in the past? What was your role in that group/staff?
- * Give an example of a personality type that you have problems with and tell us how you dealt with it.

COMMUNICATION SKILLS EVALUATION

Please select one of the following options.

- Desirable**
 Acceptable
 Undesirable

Individual Interview Evaluation Form – Page 2 Candidate Name: _____

KNOWLEDGE OF THE POSITION

Job specific skills held by applicant at time of hire. Factors to consider: correlation to RA position, past knowledge possibly reflecting future behavior, and general knowledge of the campus in order to assist students.

- * In your opinion, please name the resident advisor roles that you feel you will excel in. Please list any role(s) that you may feel uncomfortable with.
- * Describe how you might prioritize and manage your academic and social time once selected to be a resident advisor.
- * Please give any examples that you feel reflect your ability to do this job.

KNOWLEDGE OF POSITION EVALUATION

Please select one of the following options. See front page for descriptions.

- Desirable**
 Acceptable
 Undesirable

CONSCIENTIOUSNESS/INTEGRITY

The ability to examine information with the intention to make a choice of action in order to resolve a problem. Directly involves decision making and judgment. Decisions should be sound and rational according to Housing and University objectives. Factors to consider: responding to relevant information, defining an action plan, and considering consequences.

- * What type of people frustrates or angers you? How do you work effectively with these individuals?
- * When would it be most difficult to maintain your RA role when dealing with your peers?
- * What was the most difficult decision you have made in the last six months?
(What made it difficult? What factors or variables did you consider? What did you learn? What would you do differently?)
- * Describe a situation in which you were forced to seek out relevant information, define key issues, and decide on the steps which will provide desired results.

Individual Interview Evaluation – Page 3 Candidate Name: _____

CONSCIENTIOUSNESS/INTEGRITY EVALUATION

Please select one of the following options. See front page for descriptions.

- Desirable** **Acceptable** **Undesirable**

PROGRAMMING/COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

The ability to assess and influence the environment around the Resident Advisor. Relates to the RA's relationships with students, the students' interaction with the larger community, and the development of an environment conducive to learning and support. Factors to consider: awareness of community needs, creativity.

- * What were some of the best/worst programs your RA did and why were they good or bad?
- * What are some key factors in knowing something is wrong on your floor? How would you remedy those factors?
- * Describe a situation when you were able to have a positive influence on the actions of others.

PROGRAMMING/COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Please select one of the following options. See front page for descriptions.

- Desirable** **Acceptable** **Undesirable**

DIVERSITY PERSPECTIVE (INTEGRITY)

Demonstrates an understanding and appreciation for diversity. Factors to consider: awareness of critical issues facing students from underrepresented populations, sensitivity and openness to diversity, and the ability to recognize the need to educate students about diversity issues.

- * How would you respond to inappropriate behavior, or comments, directed at a person specifically because of their race, religion, sex, gender, or sexual orientation?
- * What do you think are important factors to consider when interacting with residents who have beliefs, values, and ethics with which you may personally disagree? In what way would you include the needs and interests of these students in your programming efforts?
- * Through specific examples, please demonstrate instances in which you have adapted to a wide variety of people, situations, & environments.

Individual Interview Evaluation – Page 5 Candidate Name: _____

DIVERSITY/INTEGRITY EVALUATION

Please select one of the following options. See front page for descriptions.

- Desirable** **Acceptable** **Undesirable**

CONFLICT RESOLUTION SKILLS (COUNSELING, MEDIATION, and CONFRONTATION)

Demonstrates an understanding of conflict resolution skills and understands how they play a role in supporting and developing the individual student while maintaining the rapport of the community. Factors to consider: approachability, knowledge of policies, and willingness to confront inappropriate behavior

- * Explain a time in your life when your personal views conflicted with your job and how you dealt with it?
- * Explain a situation where you had to confront another person. What did you learn about your confrontation style?
- * Describe a time in any job you held in which you were faced with problems or stresses that tested your coping skills.
- * Give an example of situation where you had to work with someone who was difficult to get along with. Why was this person difficult? How were you effective?
- * Give an example of a time when you had to counsel or guide someone.

COMMUNICATION

The ability to effectively communicate with students, co-workers, and the Hall Director. Factors to consider: natural reaction to situations, natural ability to communicate, and examples of how the applicant has dealt with communication issues in the past.

- * Describe a situation in which you were forced to use effective communication.
- * Have you worked in a group or with a staff in the past? What was your role in that group/staff?
- * Give an example of a personality type that you have problems with and tell us how you dealt with it.

Unacceptable: Any answer involving some form of physical, emotional, or sexual violence/harassment as a result of some conflict. Example: physically assaulting someone to deal with a confrontational personality type.

Acceptable: Their communication was effective but could have been better. It left room for possible problems in the future. Example: the applicant got the job done, but alternative methods would have been more effective.

Desirable: Displays the ability to successfully communicate in any situation under stressful circumstances regardless of the personality type. Example: the applicant feels comfortable with confrontation and has had experience dealing with it.

KNOWLEDGE OF THE POSITION

Job specific skills held by applicant at time of hire. Factors to consider: correlation to RA position, past knowledge possibly reflecting future behavior, and general knowledge of the campus in order to assist students.

- * In your opinion, please name the resident advisor roles that you feel you will excel in. Please list any role(s) that you may feel uncomfortable with.
 - * Describe how you might prioritize and manage your academic and social time once selected to be a resident advisor.
 - * Please give any examples that you feel reflect your ability to do this job.
-

Unacceptable: Any answer showing a lack of openness to experience. Specifically, any tendency toward discrimination including race, sex, creed, gender, and national origin. Example: the applicant is uncomfortable around homosexuals.

Acceptable: If the applicant mentions an area that is not covered in training but will not impact the position directly. Example: if the applicant mentions having some difficulties confronting peers as a disciplinarian

Desirable: In the answer, the applicant is only uncomfortable with an aspect of the job that is explicitly taught in training. Example: if the applicant is unfamiliar with campus resources.

CONSCIENTIOUSNESS/INTEGRITY

The ability to examine information with the intention to make a choice of action in order to resolve a problem. Directly involves decision making and judgment. Decisions should be sound and rational according to Housing and University objectives. Factors to consider: responding to sensitive information, developing an action plan, and considering consequences.

- * What type of people frustrate or anger you? How do you work effectively with these individuals?
 - * When would it be most difficult to maintain your RA role when dealing with your peers?
 - * What was the most difficult decision you have made in the last six months?
(What made it difficult? What factors or variables did you consider? What did you learn? What would you do differently?)
 - * Describe a situation in which you were forced to seek out relevant information, define key issues, and decide on the steps which will provide desired results.
-

Unacceptable: If the applicant mentions anything degrading about a protected characteristic.

Acceptable: If the applicant is well perceived by his or her peers and maintains composure in dealing with difficult situations. Example: if the applicant conveys good ethics but does not mention anything about putting the job as a priority.

Desirable: Displays strong integrity throughout their experiences while emphasizing that even though some situations may be difficult, the job comes first. Example: the applicant is willing to report a violation regardless of his or her relationship to that person.

PROGRAMMING/COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

The ability to assess and influence the environment around the Resident Advisor. Relates to the RA's relationships with students, the students' interaction with the larger community, and the development of an environment conducive to learning and support. Factors to consider: awareness of community needs, creativity, and ability to use resources to effectively build a community.

- * What were some of the best/worst programs your RA did and why were they good or bad?
- * What are some key factors in knowing something is wrong on your floor? How would you remedy those factors?
- * Describe a situation when you were able to have a positive influence on the actions of others.

Unacceptable: Applicant inadvertently creates an unfriendly environment not in the best interests of the community. Example: the applicant sees no wrongdoing in hazing of residents.

Acceptable: Applicant shows the ability to create a positive environment out of *normal or positive* circumstances. Example: if there was not a problem present but the most was still made out of it.

Desirable: If the applicant is able to assess why a program was effective or ineffective.

Example: if the applicant was able to understand that a program was ineffective because it involved the RA's personal interests instead of the majority of the floor's interests. Also, if the applicant is able to create a positive influence out of negative circumstances.

DIVERSITY PERSPECTIVE (INTEGRITY)

Demonstrates an understanding and appreciation for diversity. Factors to consider: awareness of critical issues facing students from underrepresented populations, sensitivity and openness to diversity, and the ability to recognize the need to educate students about diversity issues.

- * How would you respond to inappropriate behavior, or comments, directed at a person specifically because of their race, religion, sex, gender, or sexual orientation?
 - * What do you think are important factors to consider when interacting with residents who have beliefs, values, and ethics with which you may personally disagree? In what way would you include the needs and interests of these students in your programming efforts?
 - * Through specific examples, please demonstrate instances in which you have adapted to a wide variety of people, situations, & environments.
-

Unacceptable: If the applicant feels that comments or jokes about someone because of their race, religion, sex, gender, or sexual orientation is tolerable. Example: if the applicant is not willing to stand up to others who are making those comments or jokes.

Acceptable: If the applicant has very little or no real experience with diversity. Example: the person may have grown up in a Caucasian, middle-class community but still appears open to new ideas.

Desirable: If the applicant comes from a very diverse background, has a lot of experience with diversity, or is appears extremely open to new ideas. Example: if the applicant has been in some form of community similar to Housing before and has had some form of leadership position other than resident.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION SKILLS (COUNSELING, MEDIATION, and CONFRONTATION)

Demonstrates an understanding of personal counseling, mediation, and conflict resolution skills and understands how they play a role in supporting and developing the individual student while maintaining a rapport within the community. Factors to consider: approachability, knowledge of policies, and willingness to confront inappropriate behavior.

- * Explain a time in your life when your personal views conflicted with your job and how you dealt with it?
- * Explain a situation where you had to confront another person. What did you learn about your confrontation style?
- * Describe a time in any job you held in which you were faced with problems or stresses that tested your coping skills.
- * Give an example of situation where you had to work with someone who was difficult to get along with. Why was this person difficult? How were you effective?
- * Explain a situation where you had to assist with a personal crisis. What did you learn about your counseling style?

Unacceptable: Applicant seems to display characteristics which make them unapproachable. Example: in dealing with confrontation, applicant is easily frustrated.

Acceptable: Applicant is confident in communicating with his/her peers but may have some difficulty with confrontation in uncomfortable situations. Example: applicant has developed a strong relationship with an individual and as a result, may have difficulty in confronting that individual.

Desirable: Applicant has the ability to approach confrontation with a calm and collected attitude. He or she displays the ability to maintain good poise under stress and complicated situations. Example: when dealing with confrontation in the past, applicant gives an example where he or she calmly explained what the problem was, what the solution is, and how that solution should be attained.

Proposed Selection System (cont.)

Stage 4: Personality Testing

After further reviewing our hiring process for the Resident Advisor position, we have decided that a personality test (or inventory) would greatly aid in the overall hiring decision. Personality psychology has been developing since the 19th century, but it hasn't been until recent times that this assessment practice has had a clear influence on predicting performance in the workplace. Personality is concerned with the qualities and characteristics different people possess that explain why they do the things they do. By using a personality test, we can get a clearer picture as to how a certain candidate for the RA position will be the best fit for the job. An RA is constantly interacting with students and faculty and it is imperative that their behavior and demeanor follow the best interests of the organization. If their personality isn't properly assessed, they could end up causing more harm than good. It is important to communicate to the applicant that the results of the personality test are not used as an elimination tool, but rather as a matching measurement that will ultimately produce the best fit for the position. The fundamental measures of these tests are known as the "Big Five" personality traits, and they consist of:

Conscientiousness – organized, thorough, careful, practical, focused

Emotional Stability – moodiness, anxiety, temperament, emotion

Extraversion – assertive, energetic, active

Agreeableness - kind, cooperative, trustful, helpful

Openness to Experience - creativity, and deviant behavior.

With these "big five" traits in mind and considering the attributes and qualities someone needs to be a successful Resident Advisor, our team is confident that a personality test will ultimately make way for a higher caliber employee to fulfill the position.

It's hard to imagine that a standardized test can accurately and reliably measure personality, but these tests have been proven time and time again at being reliable measures of

predicting job performance. Through their systematic construction and carefully selected set of items, personality tests cover issues concerning validity, practicality, fairness, legality, and susceptibility to faking. In conjunction with all the other tools being used in this selection process, these personality tests will only enhance the understanding of the potential of an applicant for the RA position.

When looking for the best test for your organization, we took into account all the necessary qualities that an individual must possess in order to be as successful in the RA position as possible. For example, qualities such as integrity, organizational skills, social interaction, kindness, energy, responsibility and many more were recognized as critical to the position. After careful research, we would like to recommend the NEO Five-Factor Inventory (NEO-FFI) as the primary personality assessment tool. This test was developed by Psychological Assessment Resources Inc. and is principally based on the “big five” personality traits that were listed above. It’s efficient, inexpensive and doesn’t take a lot of time to administer. In addition, the company provides a version of the test that is geared towards college age applicants, which is the majority of people who apply for the RA position. This version is known as the NEO-FFI form S. The details of the NEO-FFI are listed on the next page.

We do however understand that you are ultimately making the final decision on whether or not to use a personality test in your hiring process, and that the NEO-FFI may not fit all your requirements. Due to this fact, we have listed a couple alternative tests that we felt were just as qualified as the NEO-FFI. These include the Hogan Personality Inventory (HPI) and the Wonderlic Personal Characteristics Inventory (PCI). Both of these tests are held in high esteem and will give you comparable results to that of the NEO-FFI. However, the cost isn’t as practical in the alternatives. They are a little more in depth in their assessment, but we feel that they aren’t a reasonable choice when considering the budget for your hiring process. The descriptions of the alternative tests are in greater detail below.

NEO Five-Factor Inventory

The NEO-FFI form S is a quick measure of the “big five” personality traits. It helps to understand an individual’s emotional, interpersonal, attitudinal and motivational styles. The test is geared towards ages 17 and up and can be administered individually or in a group setting. Ultimately, an RA needs to be someone who is organized, reliable, emotionally stable, and active in creating a comfortable environment for the students they are supervising. We are confident that this test, along with all of the other necessary tools, will greatly assist in distinguishing among the qualified applicants and separating the good candidates from the great candidates. We specifically chose this test because it is more reasonable in cost and more efficient in time.



Technical Facts:

- Exam time is approximately 10-15 minutes

- 60 questions, rated on a 5 point scale (strongly agree-strongly disagree)
- 12 items for each of the big five factors ranging from 0-4 points each
- 1-2 minutes for calculation of raw scores
- Internal consistency values ranging from .68-.86 (1 being the best)
- This test is only offered in pencil and paper form.

Cost:

- Introductory Kit: \$131.00
 - 25 NEO-FFI form S test booklets and 25 Feedback sheets
- 25 NEO-FFI form S test booklets: \$69.00
- 25 NEO-FFI form S feedback booklets: \$31.00

For more information and ordering forms please visit:



<http://www.parinc.com/product.cfm?ProductID=222>

Alternative Personality Tests

1.) The Hogan Personality Inventory (HPI)



For 25 years the HPI has been helping companies improve turnover, absenteeism and service. It is useful for selection and development and is also based on the “big five” factor model like the NEO-FFI. It’s an assessment of normal personality and is a good predictor of occupational success. However, we didn’t choose this test as our primary recommendation because of the higher cost and time commitment. It involves seven primary scales and six occupational scales. The scales are as follows:

Primary Scales:

Adjustment: self-confidence, composure under pressure, and self esteem

Ambition: initiative, and desire for leadership

Sociability: extraversion, and need for social interaction

Interpersonal Sensitivity: warmth, and ability to maintain relationships

Prudence: being planful, discipline, responsible, and conscientious

Inquisitive: imagination, vision and creative potential

Learning Approach: enjoys learning and keeps up to date with current material

Occupational Scales:

Service Orientation: attentiveness, pleasant, courteous

Stress Tolerance: being able to handle stress, even tempered, calm under pressure

Reliability : honesty, integrity, positive organizational citizenship

Clerical Potential: following directions, attention to detail and clear communicating skills

Sales Potential: energy, social skills, and ability to solve problems

Managerial Potential: leadership ability, planning, and decision making skills

Technical Facts:

- 206 true or false questions
- Exam time is approximately 15-20 minutes
- Test retest reliabilities are .74-.86
- HPI has over 400 validity studies in predicting job performance
- Test booklets are free, but assessments range from \$25-\$40 and have to be mailed in

Information and details can be found by visiting:

<http://www.hoganassessments.com/HPI.aspx>

2.) The Wonderlic Personal Characteristics Inventory (PCI)



If you aren't worried about money being an issue, this is the test to go with. The Wonderlic organization has been around for many years and they have proven their tests to be effective in hiring good employees. This test, like the NEO-FFI, measures the "big five" personality characteristics. It was developed in order to predict job-related behavior and compares the applicant to the occupational norm. Along with the big five of: conscientiousness, agreeableness, emotional stability, extraversion, and openness to change, it also measures twelve subcategories. These include:

- Sociability
- Need for recognition
- Leadership Orientation
- Cooperation
- Consideration
- Dependability
- Efficiency
- Even-Temperament
- Achievement Striving
- Self Confidence
- Abstract thinking
- Creative thinking

Technical Facts:

- 150 questions
- Test Time is approximately 25-30 minutes
- Can be taken over the internet or in pencil and paper form
- \$25 for one test, \$1,750 for 100 tests

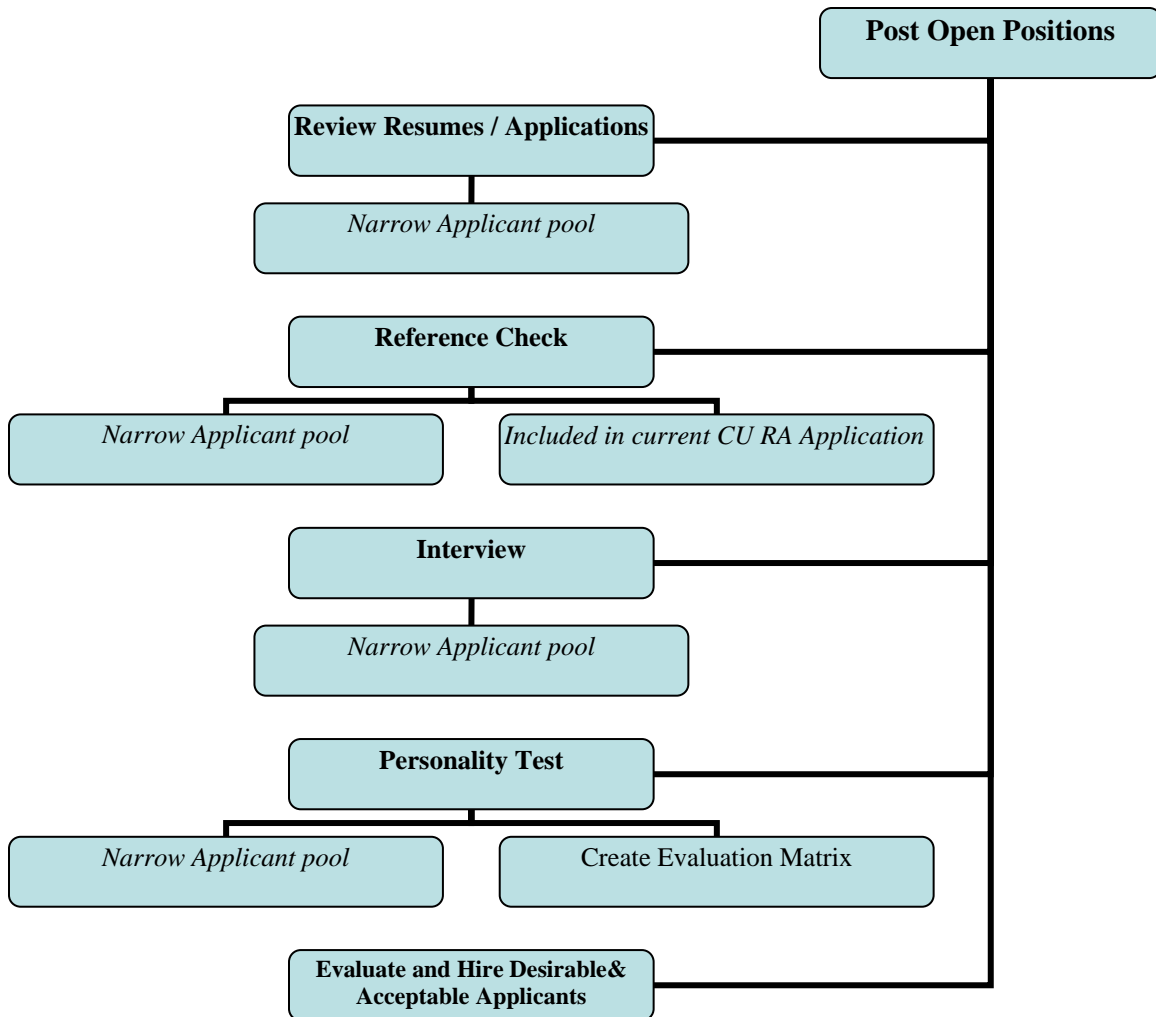
For more information visit: http://www.wonderlic.com/products/product.asp?prod_id=12

Scoring Tests

With all of these personality tests, especially the NEO-FFI, scoring them with your overall hiring process is fairly straightforward. The assessment sheets will produce numbers and ratings of above average, average, and below average for the categories of the big five personality traits. When assessing a candidate, use their scores to determine if their results are: *-Desirable* (above average) *-Acceptable* (average) *-Unacceptable* (below average) Once the critical attributes of organization, integrity and conscientiousness have been rated, place their rankings in the appropriate box located in the Individual Applicant Evaluation Form located in Appendix C.

Multiple Hurdle Approach

This is a depiction of the four-stage multiple hurdle process that we previously described.



Final Decision Guide

Now it's time to use these hiring tools to make decisions about the applicants. We have gone through four systematic and well developed stages and now we can put all of the information we've gathered to use. If the hiring process is working effectively, there should be a

noticeable difference in the number of applicants at the beginning and the number here at the end. The multiple hurdle method should prove to be valuable because it will reduce the amount of chaos caused by an abundance of information. If everything is systematically carried out, there should be an individual applicant evaluation form filled out for each candidate remaining in the process. In order to get an overall rating of the individual candidate, a numerical system will be used based on the seven critical attributes and a weighting system for the tools. This is discussed in further detail on the following page. This is a sample of the Individual Applicant Evaluation Form:

In this matrix each attribute is measured by one or more of our hiring tools. To get an overall rating for each of the seven attributes, we have determined which tool should be given the most importance. Here are the weights:

Interview – 40%

Attributes & Tools	Application/ Resume	Reference Check	Interview	Personality Test	Overall Rating
Campus Knowledge	Acceptable		Acceptable		Acceptable
Effective Communication		Unacceptable	Desirable		Acceptable
Organization	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Desirable	Acceptable
Successful Mentoring		Desirable	Desirable		Desirable
Integrity		Acceptable	Acceptable	Unacceptable	Unacceptable
Conscientiousness			Desirable	Acceptable	Desirable
Conflict Resolution Skills			Unacceptable		Unacceptable

Reference Check – 30%

Personality – 20%

Application/Resume – 10%

We determined which tool should be given the most importance by examining the thoroughness with which the tool explores the attribute. For example, in the interview we have designed five questions that measure the applicant’s conflict resolution skills. This extensive questioning and personal contact should provide the basis for making an educated rating decision.

We have assigned points for each rating. The rating is as follows:

Desirable = 5

Acceptable = 3

Unacceptable = 1

Once the matrix is filled, use the weightings and the points and multiply them to get a rating for that particular tool. Then add left to right across each attribute to get the overall rating score. The cut off number for each attribute is determined by an acceptable rating on each tool. The ranges for each attribute were determined by assigning a combination of various ratings for each tool. For example, to be in the desirable range, the applicant needed to score a desirable in the interview for each attribute. This allows for the applicant to receive an acceptable rating within another tool and still be deemed desirable for that attribute. For the acceptable range, we used the lower end of the desirable range in conjunction with the cut off score. The unacceptable range was determined by using the range below the cut off score. An example numerical matrix and a guideline is below:

Attributes & Tools	Application / Resume	Reference Check	Interview	Personality Test	Overall Rating	Cut Off Score
Campus Knowledge	$(3 \times .1) = .3$		$(3 \times .4) = 1.2$		1.5	1.5
Effective Communication		$(1 \times .3) = .3$	$(5 \times .4) = 2$		2.3	2.1
Organization	$(3 \times .1) = .3$	$(3 \times .3) = .9$	$(3 \times .4) = 1.2$	$(5 \times .2) = 1$	3.4	3
Successful Mentoring		$(5 \times .3) = 1.5$	$(5 \times .4) = 2$		3.5	2.1
Integrity		$(3 \times .3) = .9$	$(3 \times .4) = 1.2$	$(1 \times .2) = .2$	2.3	2.7
Conscientiousness			$(5 \times .4) = 2$	$(3 \times .2) = .6$	2.6	1.8
Conflict Resolution Skills			$(1 \times .4) = .4$.4	1.2

Sample Matrix Guideline:

Campus Knowledge: The applicant has received a score of 1.5 and the cut off score is a 1.5, so therefore the applicant is deemed *acceptable* in this category.

Ranges:

Desirable (2.5 - 2.3)	Acceptable (2.3 - 1.5)	Unacceptable (1.5 or less)
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Effective Communication: The applicant has received a score of 2.3 and the cut off score is a 2.1, therefore the applicant is deemed *acceptable* in this category.

Ranges:

Desirable (3.5 - 2.9)	Acceptable (2.9 - 2.1)	Unacceptable (2.1 or less)
---------------------------------	----------------------------------	--------------------------------------

Organization: The applicant has received a score of 3.4 and the cut off score is a 3, therefore the applicant is deemed *acceptable* in this category

Ranges:

Desirable (5 - 4.4)	Acceptable (4.4 - 3)	Unacceptable (3 or less)
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Successful Mentoring: The applicant has received a score of 3.5 and the cut off is 2.1, therefore the applicant is deemed *desirable* in this category.

Ranges:

Desirable (3.5 - 2.9)	Acceptable (2.9 - 2.1)	Unacceptable (2.1 or less)
---------------------------------	----------------------------------	--------------------------------------

Integrity: The applicant has received a score of 2.3 and the cut off score is 2.7, therefore the applicant is deemed *unacceptable* in this category.

Ranges:

Desirable (4.5 - 3.9)	Acceptable (3.9 - 2.7)	Unacceptable (2.7 or less)
---------------------------------	----------------------------------	--------------------------------------

Conscientiousness: The applicant has received a score of 2.6 and the cut off score is 1.8, therefore the applicant is deemed *desirable* in this category.

Ranges:

Desirable (3 - 2.6)	Acceptable (2.6 - 1.8)	Unacceptable (1.8 or less)
-------------------------------	----------------------------------	--------------------------------------

Conflict Resolution Skills: The applicant has received a score of .4 and the cut off score is .4, therefore the applicant is deemed *unacceptable* in this category.

Ranges:

Desirable (2)	Acceptable (1.2)	Unacceptable (.4)
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Overall Decision Matrix

A sample overall decision matrix and its explanation are as follows:

The form can be found in Appendix D.

Attributes & Applicants	Applicant 1	Applicant 2	Applicant 3	Applicant 4
Campus Knowledge	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
Effective Communication	Acceptable	Desirable	Acceptable	Acceptable
Organization	Acceptable	Acceptable	Desirable	Acceptable
Successful Mentoring	Desirable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
Integrity	Desirable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Desirable
Conscientiousness	Desirable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Unacceptable
Conflict Resolution Skills	Acceptable	Desirable	Acceptable	Acceptable
Final Decision	Hire # 1	Hire # 2	Hire # 3	NO HIRE

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On the decision matrix, take the results of the individual applicant evaluation form and submit them in the proper columns. From here, it is easier to distinguish among all the qualified applicants. Once this stage has been reached, the final decision on whether to hire or not hire the applicant can be made. The first step is to eliminate all the applicants that have received an unacceptable rating on any of the seven critical attributes. For example in the above sample matrix, applicant 4 has been eliminated for receiving an unacceptable rating for conscientiousness. Once the unacceptables are eliminated, rank the applicants by the number of desirables they have obtained. The applicants with the most desirables will be hired first and so forth. For example, applicant 1 has 3 desirables while applicant 2 has 2 desirables. Applicant 1 would be hired before applicant 2.

Conclusion

This analysis was designed for the specific position of a Resident Advisor here at the University of Colorado at Boulder. The goal is to help the Resident Life division of the Housing Department make the best possible hiring decisions during their candidate search. We have ensured that every tool and every attribute is specifically related to the job in order to produce the most effective and suitable applicants for the position. We encourage the use of our system in the order that it was described because of the incorporation of the multiple hurdle approach. The applicant must pass each stage, which includes: application/resume, reference check, interview, and personality test. When an applicant has successfully reached the end of the process, the individual applicant evaluation form and the overall decision matrix should be used to distinguish among all qualified applicants. By using this systematic approach, it should filter out all unqualified applicants and make the final decision more efficient, ensuring that only those desirable and acceptable candidates will be offered a position.

We have thoroughly enjoyed this learning experience and we thank you for your assistance with this project. We hope that you find this paper constructive and useful to your organization. We wish you the best in your hiring endeavors.

Appendix A

Individual Applicant Evaluation Form

Applicant Name: _____

Attributes & Tools	Application/ Resume	Reference Check	Interview	Personality Test	Overall Rating
Campus Knowledge					
Effective Communication					
Organization					
Successful Mentoring					
Integrity					
Conscientiousness					
Conflict Resolution Skills					

Attributes & Tools	Application / Resume	Reference Check	Interview	Personality Test	Overall Rating	Cut Off Score
Campus Knowledge						1.5
Effective Communication						2.1
Organization						3
Successful Mentoring						2.1
Integrity						2.7
Conscientiousness						1.8
Conflict Resolution Skills						1.2

Appendix B

Overall Decision Matrix

Attributes & Applicants	Applicant 1	Applicant 2	Applicant 3	Applicant 4
Campus Knowledge				
Effective Communication				
Organization				
Successful Mentoring				
Integrity				
Conscientiousness				
Conflict Resolution Skills				
Final Decision				

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