



RAPID HIRE EVENT TOOLKIT

Developed by

The South Carolina Department of Administration's

Division of State Human Resources

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Introduction

The South Carolina Department of Administration's (Admin) Division of State Human Resources (DSHR) designed this toolkit to provide agencies guidance on the design and implementation of a rapid hire event. The primary users of this toolkit will be agency human resources staff. Human resources staff will partner with agency communications staff and hiring managers to plan and execute rapid hire events.

Topics covered include:

- General information concerning rapid hire events.
- Benefits of rapid hire events.
- Guidance for planning and hosting a rapid hire event.

For additional assistance, please contact DSHR (803-896-5300).

General Information

DSHR recognizes that agencies face challenges when recruiting for certain types of positions. These hiring challenges may be related to the economy, location of the position, the specialized skills needed for the position or the nature of the job itself.

To address these challenges, DSHR has created a rapid hire event toolkit (toolkit). This toolkit will provide agencies with a plan and process to hold rapid hire events for specific positions with the intent of making same-day conditional job offers to qualified candidates. Rapid hire events are not intended to replace traditional recruiting and hiring methods, but rather supplement traditional methods. The events show applicants that state government can be as agile and responsive as other organizations. Receiving immediate feedback on their employability makes rapid hire events appealing to candidates and efficient for hiring agencies.

An agency may use rapid hire events to recruit for various types of positions: temporary, temporary grant, time limited or full-time equivalent. Positions well suited for rapid hire events are those that are: critical to the mission of the agency, historically hard to fill, have historically high turnover (particularly if this turnover often occurs early in an employee's tenure), or where many vacancies are expected in the near future. Potential examples of such positions include health care, call center, social work, trades, correctional or other positions that are continually needed at an agency. Shortening the time to fill positions through rapid hire events can make the difference between hiring or losing an ideal candidate. Conditional offers can also be made to students before their graduation to gain commitment before they are employed by other entities.

The cost of implementing a rapid hire event can be very low. The primary cost is staffing for the event itself if it is held at the hiring agency. This is cost-effective and gives applicants the

opportunity to see their potential work environment. An agency may offer a tour of the facility as part of the event. Other potential locations for a rapid hire event include South Carolina Department of Employment and Workforce (SCDEW) offices, high schools, state technical colleges, other colleges and universities or a Goodwill Job Connection location.

DSHR will ask agencies at the end of each fiscal year to report the number of rapid hire events held, the position(s) for which recruitment took place, the number of job seekers that attended each event, the number of qualified applicants in attendance, the number of qualified applicants interviewed, the number of conditional job offers made during the event(s), and the number of hires resulting from each event.

Benefits of Rapid Hire Events

Rapid hire events offer benefits to both agencies and job seekers. Agencies benefit from:

- An increased applicant pool for positions that are in high demand.
- Reduced time to fill for positions that are in high demand.
- Low cost.

Job seekers benefit from:

- The opportunity to speak directly with a recruiter and discover if they are a good fit for the position and agency.
- The opportunity to obtain a same-day conditional job offer.

Guidance for Planning and Hosting a Rapid Hire Event

Hosting a rapid hire event requires planning well in advance of the event. See Appendix A for a sample timeline for planning a rapid hire event. The topics below are discussed in the following pages, which reference sample documents located in the appendices:

- Event Resource List
- Job Posting(s)
- Advertising Plan and Materials
- Pre-Registration Process
- Screening Process
- Interview Questions
- Interview Rating Guide
- Conditional Offer Script and Letter
- “Turn-Down” Language
- Post-Event Activities

Event Resource List

The resources needed for a rapid hire event depend on the scope and size of the event. See Appendix B for a sample event resource list. Please note that resources are needed before, during and after the event.

Job Posting(s)

Section 19-703.02.A. of the State Human Resources Regulations requires that “In addition to any other requirement provided by law, when a job vacancy occurs in any state office, agency, department, or other division of the executive branch of state government, the appointing authority must post a notice with the Division of State Human Resources of the Department of Administration and the South Carolina Department of Employment and Workforce at least five working days before employing a person to fill the vacancy.” Therefore, the job(s) included in the rapid hire event should be posted at least five working days before the date of the event or alternatively posted on a continuous basis. This requirement applies to the announcement of vacancies in all positions in the classified service. Agencies are not required to post non-classified positions, but it is recommended, particularly when recruiting is a challenge.

Advertising Plan and Materials

A plan for advertising the rapid hire event should be developed in conjunction with the agency’s communications staff four to six months in advance of the event. The plan should include any costs associated with advertising and those should be included in the overall budget for the event. Suggestions for advertising include: a flyer with details about the event and how to pre-register; posts on the agency’s social media platforms and website, and press releases for radio and television. The breadth of advertising should be consistent with the geographical area of the expected applicant pool. All advertising materials should be approved through the required channels within the agency before publication.

Other locations to consider when advertising a rapid hire event include: university and college career centers, technical college career centers, niche or targeted job boards, professional journals or websites related to the job(s), SCDEW offices, Goodwill Job Connection sites, human services agencies (for example: South Carolina Commission for the Blind and the South Carolina Vocational Rehabilitation Department) and military career services. Also advertise the event within the agency through email blasts and the agency newsletter. Current employees are an excellent resource for identifying quality candidates. Advertising materials offer the agency the opportunity to communicate to job seekers the mission of the agency and any unique, positive, aspects of working with the agency.

Admin has social media sites marketing state government employment opportunities. Contact your HR Consultant at DSHR to request that a rapid hire event be advertised through those sites. An agency may also use retractable South Carolina Careers banners and brochures provided by Admin during the event.

Pre-Registration Process

It is helpful for planning purposes to encourage job seekers to pre-register for the rapid hire event(s). A pre-registration process can be set up through a website such as <https://www.eventbrite.com/>. The registration services are free for the employer and provide event tickets for job seekers at no charge. If the agency decides to use an online registration process, ensure that the link to the website is included in all advertising. Consider offering incentives for pre-registration, such as VIP access to application screening on the day of the event or promotional materials from the agency. The agency should encourage job seekers who have pre-registered to submit their application(s) for positions in advance of the event. This will reduce the number of applications that will need to be reviewed for possible interviews on the day of the event. A pre-registered job seeker could have an interview time set prior to arriving at the event. This is another advantage of the pre-registration process for the agency and the job seeker.

Screening Process

Whether applications are screened prior to the event, or on the day of the event, screeners should keep the following points in mind:

- Is the application signed?
- Are there gaps in employment that should be explored in an interview?
- Are there any insufficient responses to questions or inconsistencies in information provided?
- Is spelling and grammar acceptable for the type of position sought?

Interview Questions

The interview questions to be asked of job seekers should be prepared in advance and the same questions should be asked of each candidate selected for an interview. Questions should be based on the essential job functions on the position description for the position(s) for which the agency is recruiting. Include rapport-building, informational, behavioral and situational questions in the interview. Allow enough time for the job seeker to ask questions as well. This will help the interviewer(s) gauge the interest level of the applicant and their knowledge of the position. The structured interview process reduces the possibility of discrimination during the interview(s) and tends to be more reliable and objective.

Interview Rating Guide(s)

Provide interviewers with ratings guides for the jobs for which they are interviewing candidates. This allows the interviewer(s) to document responses to interview questions and rate the responses on a standardized scale.

Conditional Job Offer Script and Letter

Hiring officials must have the authority to make same-day conditional job offers and must know the parameters within which salary offers may be made. Below is sample language for making the conditional job offer. A sample conditional job offer letter for a classified position is located in Appendix C.

“Thank you for attending the hiring event today. We would like to extend a conditional offer of employment. Please read this letter (give to the potential employee) and let me know if you have any questions. We look forward to the opportunity to have you on board.”

“Turn-down” Language

Application screeners and hiring officials must have a consistent, professional message to deliver when a job seeker is either not offered an interview or not given a conditional job offer after an interview. The following is suggested language: “Thank you for applying, but we have decided to pursue other applicants.”

It is important to keep the language simple and to the point for the following reasons:

- It is easy to be consistent.
- It does not open itself up to arguments from the applicant.
- It stops HR from being a career counselor to a host of applicants.
- It eliminates the risk of inadvertent, unlawfully discriminatory statements being made.

Post-Event Activities

Maintain records on the number of job seekers that attended the rapid hire event, the number of qualified job seekers in attendance, the number of job seekers interviewed, the number of conditional job offers made during the event(s), and the number of hires resulting from the event. Analysis of this data will speak to the effectiveness of the event.

Also, administer a survey to the agency staff that participated in the rapid hire event. Focus on gauging the staff’s opinions on what worked well, what needed improvement and what went well. If the event was not as successful as anticipated, brainstorm ideas for changes to future events to improve success.

Conclusion

A well-designed rapid hire event provides benefits to the agency, the job seeker and the state. Using the guidelines provided in this toolkit will help maximize the benefits of a rapid hire event.

Appendix A: Sample Timeline for Rapid Hire Event Planning

Four to Six Months Ahead

- Select and secure facility.
- Draft event agenda.
- Prepare advertising budget.
- Research local reporters who have covered past job fairs.
- Work closely with agency communications department, if applicable, to design flyers for the event and a draft press release.
- Inventory promotional materials.
- Create job fair survey/evaluation.

Two to Three Months Ahead

- Recruit staff needed for the event.
- Create pre-registration mechanism (e.g., Eventbrite).
- Work with agency communications department to finalize press release and distribute it.
- Identify vacant positions.
- Finalize agenda for event.
- Assemble information packets for event staff and job seekers.
- Purchase needed supplies.
- Finalize and submit all materials to be printed.

Two to Four Weeks Ahead

- Advertise on agency website with pre-registration link.
- Advertise on social media with pre-registration link.
- Follow-up with partners and facility staff.
- Review staffing assignments and discuss event etiquette with agency representatives.

One Week Ahead

- Send venue map, staff assignments and final agenda to agency representatives working at the event.
- Ensure chairs, tables and other supplies are in place the day prior to or the morning of the event.

The Day of the Event

- Arrive early to double check setup and address any issues.
- Arrange materials.

After the Event

- Thank all event staff and partners.
- Distribute evaluations and compile results.
- Document any planned changes to procedures resulting from feedback and observation.

Appendix B: Sample Event Resource List

Before the event:

- Staff for event:
 - Number needed depends on size of event.
 - Roles: greeters, application assistants, screeners, interviewers, hiring officials, floaters.
 - Multiple roles can be filled by one person if the event is smaller.
 - SCDEW may be able to provide staff.
 - Staff should be oriented to the requirements of the event in advance.
- Budget for event: venue, printing, advertising, promotional materials for job seekers, security if desired.
- Branding materials: South Carolina Careers and agency specific.

During the event:

- Venue maps for staff and packet for job seekers to include a venue map, an organizational chart of the agency or division/department, and interviewing tips.
- Promotional materials for job seekers, if desired, such as pens, notepads, tote bags.
- Name tags for staff.
- Paper applications and/or kiosks for electronic applications.
- Realistic job preview videos, if applicable.
- Schedule for agency tours, if applicable.
- Pens, pencils, paper.
- Sign in sheets for attendees.
- Tables, tablecloths, chairs.
- Copies of job postings.
- Interview questions for interviews.
- Note taking sheets for interviewers.
- Interview rating guide, if applicable.
- Conditional job offer script.
- Conditional offer letters, including contingent steps (background check, drug screen, transcripts, licenses, certifications, etc.).
- Turn-down script.

After the event:

- Survey for staff.
- Event statistics sheet.



Appendix C: Sample Conditional Job Offer Letter for a Classified Position

[Date]

[Candidate Name]

[Street Address]

[City, State, Zip code]

Dear [Candidate Name]:

It is with pleasure that [Agency Name] offers you the position of [job title]. You will be reporting to [Name, Title], and your start date is scheduled for [date].

This is a full-time [exempt position that is not eligible for overtime/nonexempt position eligible for overtime pay after 40 hours in a workweek]. We are offering you a starting base wage of \$_____ [per hour, week] paid [biweekly, semimonthly, etc.].

In addition, your compensation package includes the following (these details are for information purposes and are subject to any policy or plan changes) options: eligibility for health and dental coverage, 401(k) plan and flexible spending accounts, subject to plan terms; eligibility for benefits such as life insurance, short- and long-term disability, subject to applicable waiting periods; annual and sick leave earned on an accrual basis; and paid holidays.

This job offer is contingent upon the following [*insert any or all of the following based on agency policy*]: completion of a satisfactory background check, passing a drug test, satisfactory reference checks, obtaining or providing proof of _____ certification/licensure.

[If applicable, add: Once the above contingencies are successfully completed, this job offer will also be contingent upon receipt of results of a satisfactory physical examination designed solely to determine your physical ability to perform the duties of the position being offered to you.]

On your first day, you will be given an orientation by Human Resources. This orientation will include completing employment forms, reviewing fringe benefits, introduction to management and touring the premises. Please bring appropriate documentation for the completion of your new-hire forms, including proof that you are presently eligible to work in the United States for I-9 Form purposes. Failure to provide appropriate documentation within three days of hire will result in immediate termination of employment in accordance with the terms of the Immigration Reform and Control Act.



Please indicate your acceptance of our offer by signing below and returning one copy of the letter, with your original signature, to me no later than [date]. If you have any questions about this offer, please contact [Name, Title] at [phone and email].

We look forward to having you as part of our team and believe you will find this opportunity both challenging and rewarding.

Sincerely,
[Insert name]
[Insert title]

I have read and understood the provisions of this offer of employment, and I accept the above conditional job offer. I understand that my employment with [Agency Name] is considered at will, meaning that either the company or I may terminate this employment relationship at any time with or without cause or notice.

This offer shall remain open until [date]. Any acceptance postmarked after this date will be considered invalid.

Date: _____

Signature: _____