UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI – ST. LOUIS

Manager/Supervisor Human Resource Manual

HIRING PROCESS MANUAL - ADMINISTRATIVE

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Overview

Below is a brief summary of the process for hiring all regular full-time and part-time staff positions and all temporary positions (which will exist for a period of 30 days to five months). If your position requirements are different from these, please be sure to contact your HR Consultant.

1. Obtain a Position Number (either through Job Data or the Human Resource Office) and create a job opening through PeopleSoft.
2. Position is posted on the HR online application system.
3. All job posting will list an application deadline. Applications may be reviewed up to the deadline date but an offer cannot be made until all applications are considered. Click here to view the PeopleSoft training materials.
    - View/status applicants
    - Create offer
    - Interviewers training guide
4. After HR has approved a salary in PeopleSoft and the verbal salary offer has been extended to and accepted by the final candidate, a confirming offer letter is sent to the candidate. The letter will provide the candidate with instructions on completing the Criminal Background Check (CBC) Authorization (via e-mail notification from HireRight). The POET Instruction Sheet will need to be sent as necessary.
5. HR requests the CBC once they have received a copy of the offer letter.
6. The new hire must submit the CBC information online **no less than** five (5) full business days before the intended start date to ensure the results are received before the start date.
7. When the CBC report is returned to HR, HR notifies the department via email regarding the CBC status.
8. **Actions**:
   - Check is clear -- candidate can begin working
   - Adverse report -- offer rescinded
9. Signed offer letter is attached to the ePAF for the file.
10. New employees should start work on New Employee Orientation (NEO) which is offered every other Monday in the Recreation and Wellness Center.

Beginning the Hiring Process

All staff positions (including full-time and part-time) must be posted on the University's official job posting. (If you need a temporary worker for five months or less, you may contact a temporary agency and process the paperwork without posting the position.)

There are two hiring situations in which you may find yourself. You may be creating a position or you may be filling a vacant position. Follow the steps below for each situation.

To create a position and subsequently post the position, complete these two steps:

1. Submit a job description and Position Number Request Form in order for the appropriate position title can be determined.

    - Job Description – All descriptions must be submitted in this template format in Times New Roman 10-point font without any special characters.

      See the next section of the manual for specific instructions on creating a job description.

    - If the position is new and does exist on the UMSL campus, you **must** include an organizational chart showing the position being added.

2. Use the Create a New Job Posting Manual to submit the position for approval and posting through Human Resources.

To fill a vacated position with no title change, complete these two steps:

1. Obtain the Position Number – Look up the employee being replaced in PeopleSoft Job Data. If you are changing the title of the employee being replaced fill out the Position Number Request Form.

2. Use the How to Create a New Job Posting Manual to submit the position for approval and posting through Human Resources.

Writing a Job Description (2 Pages)

Without a good clear job description, an employee cannot properly commit to, or be held accountable for, his or her job. The job description:

- Serves as the basis for your relationship from the time you post the job throughout the person's employment with you
- Tells the candidate what is really needed to do the job
- Serves as a good communication tool
- Provides legal protection for you and the University

Follow these three steps in developing a job description:

1. **Conduct a Position Analysis**
   Determine 4-8 major responsibilities of the job, which will be the main headings under which you will list the required duties of the job.

   Examples:

   Office Support Staff

   1. Typing
   2. Correspondence
   3. Reception/Public contact
   4. Meeting coordination
   5. Filing

   Assistant Director XYZ:

   1. Directing programs
   2. Managing budgets and staff
   3. Establishing procedures
   4. Staffing
   5. Monitoring building schedules and maintenance
2. **Determine the Required Job Duties**

   - Duties describe what is done, how it is done, and why it is done.
   - These are actions that others can see, hear, or observe.
   - They are usually action verbs such as "types," "files," or "monitors" and usually in the present tense.
   - Avoid using words which are subject to differing interpretations such as "frequently," "some," or "occasional."

Examples:

Office Support Staff

- **Responsibility**: Meeting coordination
- **Duties**: Schedules monthly department meetings by calling department directors and managers from established lists to obtain their availability, determines date, and composes confirmation memoranda

Assistant Director XYZ

- **Responsibility**: Staffing
- **Duties**: Initiates personnel actions including selecting new employees, conducting performance appraisals, recommending salary increases, and providing counseling when necessary.

3. **Identify the minimum qualifications required for the job:**
Determine specifically what is necessary to perform the position responsibilities. You must use the UM system job descriptions as the reference and bottom line for all job descriptions - **and then you can specialize to your department.**

- Minimum amount of formal education
- Minimum years experience a person would typically need to do this job satisfactorily
- Specific skills and knowledge required to be successful in this position

Examples:

Secretary

- High school diploma
- At least two years of related experience
- Proficiency with Microsoft Word and Excel
- Ability to accurately type at least 40 wpm

Academic Advisor

- Bachelor's degree in Psychology
- Education or related field
- At least one year of advising, counseling, or teaching experience required.

Posting & Advertising Your Position

Posting the Position

Use the [How to Create a New Job Posting Manual] to submit the position for approval and posting through Human Resources.

Every position must be posted for a minimum of seven days.

Advertising the Position

To advertise your position, fill out the Advertising Request Form and submit by email. HR will place an announcement in display ads referring applicants to our website. You will receive an invoice directly from Graystone Group Advertising which places all position advertisements.

In special cases where positions are particularly difficult to fill, HR will work with you to place appropriate advertisements. Please contact us.

If your department would like to place an ad, let us know because we can:

- Make sure you are not taking any legal risks.
- Help you save money by taking advantage of our volume discount.
- Advise you regarding desirable placement and verbiage, if necessary.

Send us a draft of your ad by email if the ad will look different than the job posting.

Screening Applications

You have posted your position and HR has routed applications and resumes of applicants who meet or exceed the minimum qualifications for the job through PeopleSoft. Now it is time to begin narrowing the pool to a handful of finalists that you would like to interview.

Reviewing Application Materials

Review the applications by comparing them directly to your position description. Use the criteria you established in the position description to objectively evaluate each candidate's set of qualifications.

As you evaluate the application materials, it is helpful to arrange them in three piles - YES, NO, MAYBE.

- Many applications will immediately go into the "NO" pile because it is obvious that there is no match.
- If you find you have many applications in the "YES" and "MAYBE" piles, re-evaluate these to decide which applicants you would like to interview.

Consider developing a chart that lists the names of the candidates across the top and the essential knowledge, skills, experience, and education along the side. Then, on a scale of 1-5, rank each candidate's level of proficiency for each of the criteria listed.

- You can deduct points or eliminate a candidate from further consideration, based on evidence of deficiency in skills required for the position.
- Watch for unexplained gaps in employment history, inconsistent information, vague or excessively brief descriptions of responsibilities, or typos. These may indicate a lack of attention to detail, or intent to deceive.

This exercise should help identify the candidates with the best match of technical knowledge and skills. These notes will help you distinguish among the candidates. Going through this analysis on paper will also help you document your decision if it is ever called into question.

The applicants' materials can:

- Indicate applicants' are detail-oriented, can spell-check and punctuate effectively and accurately. If the materials contain errors, it can tell you something about the applicants' proficiencies, or lack of proficiencies
- Explain gaps in employment
- Call attention to accomplishments
- Explain candidates' interest in your position
- Provide you with an idea of the candidates' career goals

The interviews will help confirm your preliminary assessment and provide valuable information regarding a candidate's interactive skills, work ethic, and values.

Writing Interview Questions (2 Pages)

Be Prepared

An interview is just like any meeting. If you're not prepared, it will fail and you will not achieve your purpose.

It is difficult to *magically* think of great interview questions during an interview. Also, some applicants have had lots of practice interviewing. They may be really good at anticipating or deflecting tough questions. They may also be able to figure out the "right" answer you are looking for.

So, make sure you come to the interview prepared with questions that will challenge the candidate and will provide you with all the information you need to make your best decision.

Ask the Same Core Set of Job-Related Questions

Be sure you are asking all candidates the **same** core set of thoughtful, **job-related questions** so you can accomplish several things:

- Each candidate is given an equal chance to succeed.
- You receive information on all candidates which you can compare.
- You reduce your legal risk if your hiring decision is challenged.

Good Questions

- Behavior-Based
    - Open-ended questions
        - "Tell me about a time when you" or "What makes you"
        - Use words like "how" "what" "why" and "when"
    - Hypothetical questions
        - Test problem-solving and reasoning skills
        - "What would you do if"

- Job-Related
    - Focus on the applicant's ability to do the job.
    - Avoid questions not directly related to the essential functions of the position or that may be construed as discriminatory.

Questions to Avoid

In general, it is risky to ask questions about an individual's **race**, **color**, **religion**, **sex**, or **national origin** (Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964), **age** (Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967), or **disability** (Rehabilitation Act of 1973 & Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990), as well as **marital status** or **parenting responsibilities**.

If a candidate volunteers personal information about one of these categories, it is best to stop them and tell them that the information is not relevant to the position. Courts have held that it is the employer's responsibility to control the interview, and that by allowing information to be discussed that is not relevant to the position, the reasons for doing so may be considered discriminatory.

For more information about employment laws that may affect you in the hiring process, visit the Employment Law Manual section of our website. It is an **excellent** idea to review these laws to protect yourself and the University!

In the interviewing process, avoid discussing:

- Salary
- Benefits
- Bonuses
- Other compensation (including yours)

Your function during the interviewing process is only to discuss the specific environment to which the candidate will be assigned, and to find out about the candidate's background, skills, and interests in light of that environment.

Interviewing (4 Pages)

Purpose
The purpose of an interview is to narrow down your group of applicants by learning as much as you possibly can about them in a relatively limited amount of time. Both you and the applicant are on a mission to seek out as much information as possible about whether or not this will be a good fit. So, make sure to take the time to follow these steps:

- Prepare your interview questions in advance.
- Decide on face-to-face or telephone interviews.
- Schedule the interviews.
- Conduct the interviews.
- Make your final selections.
- Check references.

NOTE: Please contact your HR Consultant if you would like an HR Representative to assist or participate in your search committee and/or face-to-face interviews.

Telephone Interviews
Once you have developed your core interview questions, you may consider telephone interviews.

These interviews are not designed to replace a face-to-face meeting. But telephone interviewing can be useful in situations where you would like to:

- Screen out inappropriate candidates, especially when you have a large pool
- Clarify what is stated on the resume or application
- Determine your interest before a candidate has to come from out of town
- Determine whether you can afford an applicant, or confirm salary expectations
- Check the availability of the applicant
- For in-depth telephone interviews
    - Schedule them in advance just like regular interviews, so candidates have adequate time to prepare.
    - Make sure you treat all those you are interviewing consistently.

- If the position requires interactive skills, phone interviews may not be the best option.

Scheduling the Interview

Set Aside Enough Time
- For most positions, it is almost impossible to conduct a comprehensive interview in less than an hour.

- If you decide to involve others in the interview process, make sure all interviewers ask all candidates the **same core, job-related questions**.

Arrange the Physical Environment

- Prepare a private place for the interview, and make arrangements so that you are not interrupted. You will be more at ease; applicants will be more at ease. And, you will both be able to learn more about each other in a non-threatening environment.
- Information for the Candidate When Scheduling the Interview
- Directions/parking
- Date/time/expected duration of the interview
- Format: one-on-one, group, etc.
- Materials he or she should bring (portfolio, letters of recommendation, transcripts, etc.)
- Interview itinerary, especially if he or she will be meeting with more than one person

Just Before the Interview

- Review the application materials so they are fresh in your mind
- Review the job description

Conducting the Interview

The interview is your chance to really explore in depth the candidates' technical and interactive skills. It will help you *both* assess whether there is a good match.

Make candidates feel welcome and at ease, but keep control.

- Be warm and welcoming - offer coffee or water, take their coats.
- Establish a friendly positive tone, but make sure you stay in control of the interview.
- Don't let forceful applicants talk continuously or lead the interview. The time you have together is too valuable to waste on non-job-related small talk.

Give candidates an overview of the meeting.

- Briefly review the essential functions of the job and explain why this position is important to achieving your department's goals and objectives.
- Encourage them to ask questions to help them understand the job.

Take notes

- Explain that you will be using a set of **prepared questions as a basis for the interview** and that you will be ***taking notes***. Explain that your notes will be helpful later as you compare all the candidates.

By letting candidates know that you will be asking the same core questions and taking notes for each applicant, they know that you intend to be fair and objective.

- **As you take notes, be sensitive to your applicants.**
  - Make frequent eye-contact to let applicants know you are listening.
  - Take notes consistently. It can be misleading if you take notes on some responses and not on others.
  - Take comprehensive notes to document verbal and non-verbal responses.
  - If you prefer, you can also write your notes after the interview.

Ask the same core questions

- This ensures that you receive comparable information to make a defensible decision.
- Ask follow-up questions to clarify responses or to find out more about their specific work backgrounds.

Wait for good answers

- Even when it might be awkward, resist the temptation to fill the silence. You will distract candidates and might even inadvertently prompt them with clues to the answers you want to hear rather than their own answers.
- Allow them time to think about the response, even if they seem to struggle a bit trying to think of something. Once you break the silence or move to another question, you have excused them from demonstrating for you that they have the skills you need in your position.
- If candidates talk but get off track in answering a question, steer them back on course by saying, "While that's interesting, since we have a limited amount of time, I'd like to get back to ..."
- If the candidate feels pressured and gives a general response to a specific situation-type question, explain that you really want to hear about specific incidents and examples, and acknowledge that answering such a question takes longer and assure them that it's fine to take their time before answering. Then wait.

Avoid talking too much

- Provide general information about your department and its environment/culture, but keep your comments brief.

Handling awkward answers

Applicants may offer information you cannot legally consider in evaluating applicants such as "My spouse is disabled." or "I have three children."

- Do not follow up even though the applicant brought it up.
- You may acknowledge what was said in some neutral way (a nod, "ok").
- Say something like, "We want to keep the focus on you" and then continue with your next prepared question related to the position.

Ask the hard questions

- Review each previous job and ask why they left
    - It is fine to ask about aspects of previous positions they found difficult. If the same factors exist in your position, the candidate may not be a good match. Sometimes, however, the circumstances that caused problems are not present in your position or were personal and have been resolved. This is information you need to make a good hiring decision.
- Review employment dates and investigate any gaps
- Probe attitudes toward previous companies/organizations
- Probe attitudes toward previous supervisors
- Determine other interests, aims and goals
- Determine strengths and weaknesses
- Ask discipline/job-specific questions

Describe the job and UMSL

- Provide details about the position, the organization of your department, and how it fits into the University's structure
- Allow time for candidates' questions – these will tell you a lot about their interest

Keep your interview notes

- Provide important documentation that you conducted a defensible interview, why you did or did not select a candidate, that you asked comparable questions of each candidate, and that you asked only job-related questions.
- Maintain detailed documentation of all interviews for ONE year. An unsuccessful candidate may file a complaint with the EEOC (Equal Employment Opportunity Commission) for up to 180 days after they were turned down/after you hired someone else.
    - ***Be prepared to justify your selection to a third party, if necessary.***
- Refer to the How to Status Applications Manual for specific instructions on how to reject candidates through PeopleSoft.

Applicants' questions

- Be prepared to answer questions about yourself (i.e. your management style, why you work at UMSL, etc.), the department, the University, and other questions about the position. Be brief.
- Be prepared to "sell" the job to a good applicant! Remember you are choosing an employee and the candidate is choosing the University!

Closing the interview

- Thank applicants for their time; end on a high note.
- Provide a general idea of your timetable, i.e. when you expect to finish the interviewing process and make a hiring decision.
- Be careful not to make promises about future promotions, benefits, or perks.
- Escort them out to the entrance.

Making Your Final Selections

Now that you have conducted your interviews, you can further narrow down your pool. Review your candidates and analyze them in the following areas to make your final selection:

- Do the applicants have the background and skills to successfully perform the duties of the job?
- Do the candidates truly want the job?
- Are the applicants the best "fit" for the job? Will they fit in with the others in the department?

Once you've narrowed down your pool, move on to checking references.

Checking References (2 Pages)

It is critical that you make your hiring decision ***only*** after you verify all the information provided by job applicants. As a hiring manager, you need complete information about the candidate or it could lead to costly mistakes and may subject the University to liability for its hiring decision.

We strongly recommend that you talk with the candidates' previous supervisors and professional colleagues. Check personal references in addition to work references. You will find the candidates' references in their applications.

Failure to conduct background and reference checks may have even greater consequences than hiring someone without the degree or experience needed to perform the job. Employers have been found liable for "negligent hiring" when they did not make a diligent effort to verify a candidate's background.

Reference Checking Tips

- Ask the same basic questions to assure consistency.
- Document, in writing, all references contacted and the information received.
- Maintain documentation with your interview notes and reasons for non-selection for at least one (1) year for applicants; three (3) years for employees.
- If a candidate who wasn't selected challenges your decision to hire someone else, you must be able to prove that you made your decision based on verifiable information.

Reference Checking Process

Inform applicants in the initial interviews

- Tell applicants that all finalists for University positions are subject to a thorough reference checking process which includes contacting previous supervisors and personal references about their work experience and performance, as well as character traits.

Check at least three reference sources

- Try for a combination of references - supervisors, peers, subordinates, and friends.

Checking Employment, Personal and Academic References

Employment References

- Start by asking straightforward employment facts – dates of employment, title, etc. Then move on to more open-ended questions.
- Ask questions directly related to the job.
- Use behavior-based questions to focus on the candidates' past behaviors in specific situations such as, "Tell me about a time when…"
- Make the person comfortable with friendly conversation.
- Be attentive to a person's style, tone of voice, pauses, etc.
- If you receive negative information, don't immediately rule out the candidate. Attempt to obtain information regarding the exact circumstances that caused the problems. If it appears that the negative information is supported by facts and/or you receive similar information from several references contacted, you might choose not to consider the candidate further.
- Be persistent.

Personal Reference Checks

- Start by asking straightforward questions about the context of their relationship.
- Ask questions which will tell you whether the candidate is a good fit for your position, rather than a good person.

Academic References

- College records offices will generally verify dates of attendance and graduation, degree(s) awarded, and major, upon request.
- Information for any college, university, school, etc. is available on the internet, but you can ask the candidate to have official transcripts sent directly to you.

Criminal Background Checks

All faculty and staff new hires (full-time, part-time and temporaries) are subject to a Criminal Background Check. No person may begin employment as a staff member with UMSL until Human Resources is in receipt of a completed CBC. For faculty positions, contact Academic Affairs.

This overview describes how the CBC is incorporated into the hiring process:

1. The hiring manager sends the contingent offer letter to the candidate which provides the candidate with instructions on how to complete the CBC.
2. The recruiter will initiate the CBC process through PeopleSoft once the offer is accepted.
3. The candidate will receive an email from HireRight with their login information. The CBC will run automatically once they submit their authorization online.
4. If there is a questionable report, the candidate receives a “Pre-Adverse Action Letter.” The Provost (for faculty) or the Associate Vice Chancellor for HR (for staff) makes the decision as to whether or not the candidate’s background will prevent him or her from working for the University.
5. If the candidate is turned down (i.e., the offer is rescinded) based on the CBC, the candidate receives an “Adverse Action Letter” notifying him or her of the right to appeal the report.
6. Recruiter adjudicates the candidate in HireRight to either Meets Company Standards or Does Not Meet Company Standards.
7. If they meet standards, HR creates an employee ID and releases the ePAF to the initiator.

Pre-Employment Skills Testing

The Human Resource Department provides pre-employment testing to help assess the clerical and software skills of ***final*** candidates. These assessment tests have been designed and validated by the professionals at Kenexa Prove It, Inc.

We can administer the following tests to your final candidates:

Advanced Spelling
Basic Office Skills
Basic Office Skills - no math
Basic Office Skills - no verbal
Bookkeeping
Customer Service Mindset
Data Entry
Internet Basics
Macintosh Basics
Microsoft Internet Explorer
Microsoft Access
Microsoft Excel
Microsoft FrontPage
Microsoft Office Integration
Microsoft Outlook
Microsoft PowerPoint
Microsoft Project
Microsoft Publisher
Microsoft Windows
Microsoft Word
Office Filing Skills
Office Grammar & Spelling
Office Math Skills
Payroll
Proofreading
Reading Comprehension
Skills Test for Punctuation
Typing Test

To schedule testing, please contact your HR Consultant.

If you choose to administer your own skills testing, there can be a risk if the test has not been formally validated. Contact HR if you are considering administering any tests not administered by HR staff as part of your interview process.

In general, any skills being tested or demonstrated:

- Must be identified in the essential duties of the position
- Must be a fair representation of duties required on the job
- Must be administered to all final candidates
- Must have an objective means of scoring or evaluating

If a candidate requests an accommodation to enable them to perform the test, you may be required to provide it. In such cases, contact HR before proceeding.

Making the Job Offer (2 Pages)

Three steps in making the job offer are:

1. **Create a Job Offer in PeopleSoft: See the How to Create a Job Offer Manual**

2. **Contact the candidate with the approved offer**
   Take this opportunity to begin building rapport with your new employee. Let the candidate know how pleased you are that he or she will be joining your team.

   - If the candidate has questions about the University's benefits, let him or her know that a benefits specialist will be available on his or her first day. If additional information is needed sooner, contact HR Benefits at 516-5807 or go to https://www.umsystem.edu/totalrewards/benefits.

   - If a candidate needs time to consider your offer, agree on a specific date by which he or she will notify you.

   - Never quote a salary offer as an annual figure. This could inadvertently be construed as an offer of a guaranteed year of employment. Instead, quote the salary as a monthly amount for exempt (administrative and professional) staff members or as an hourly amount for non-exempt staff members.

   - Agree on a start date - usually one to three weeks from the date of offer. Let him or her know when to arrive, where to go, and in general, what to expect for the first day on the job. Any job-related dress requirements should be communicated at this time.

   - The new employee should come to HR on his or her first day to complete employment paperwork.

     - *New Employee Orientation:* Any new benefit-eligible staff member must attend a New Employee Orientation. These sessions are offered every other Monday morning. We must receive all offer information ***at least three full business days in advance*** in order to create an employee file and prepare the new hire paperwork for his/her first day.

       The orientation covers the history of the University, names of key staff members, policies and procedures, and University benefits.

     - *Identification for Eligibility to Work in the US:* (See the list of documents that will satisfy these requirements). The University is required by federal law to collect this documentation within three days of an employee's start date. Failure to do so may result in fines and penalties to your department.

3. **Confirm your offer in writing in the offer letter**

   - Immediately confirm your verbal offer in writing. Send a copy to HR. Sample offer letters are provided on the HR Managers SharePoint site. This letter provides proof of the offer made to the candidate and is the first piece of documentation in the new employee's personnel file.

- Include with your letter the Post Offer Pre-employment (POET) instructions, if appropriate. (Please note that no person may begin employment as a staff member with UMSL until HR is in receipt of a completed Criminal Background Check.)

- Send a copy of the signed offer letter to Human Resources.

Finalizing the Hiring Process

Documenting Reasons for Non-Selection

In selecting your top candidate, you have decided that the other candidates are not as ideally suited or qualified to do this job. Now it is critical that you note what led you to that decision.

For those you interviewed and did **NOT** hire, you should destroy your interview notes after one (1) year. For the applicant you DO hire, you may maintain your own *unofficial* department file. HR does not need copies of your detailed interview notes.

- Refer to the How to Status Applications Manual for specific instructions on how to reject candidates through PeopleSoft.

Preparing for a New Employee

The first week in a new job can be very challenging -- for you and for the new employee. Getting your new employee off to a great start can make him or her feel welcomed and effective.

- Schedule lots of time for meeting and talking

  Make sure to have many open and honest discussions with your new employee. Most people want to exceed their supervisors' expectations. The employee will be trying to figure out what is expected and begin to identify priorities. He or she will start to receive information from the informal grapevine which may or may not be what you want. So it is especially important that you both communicate.

  The new employee needs to understand your values and goals, as well as the overall mission of the organization and how his or her job fits into the big picture. It is equally important to be honest about the challenges you face and the roadblocks that need to be overcome.

- Let current employees know about the arrival of the new employee

  Give your current employees time to prepare for the arrival of their new team member. They should know what skills and experience the individual will bring to the team and how office operations will be affected. However, you should never share the new employee’s application with your current employees.

- Other arrangements
  - Prepare the workspace
  - Arrange for office and building keys as appropriate
  - Issue uniforms, tools, safety equipment, or other materials
  - Set up telephone and computer accounts
  - Have a “first day” schedule
  - Establish training that will be needed

Your goal should be that your new employee has a positive first impression. If you are organized and have direction, so too will your new employee.

Changing jobs is ranked as one of the top 10 most stressful experiences in life - - help your employee feel confident that he or she made a great choice!