Creating Minimum & Preferred Qualifications

Two of the most important components of a successful job posting are the minimum and preferred qualifications. Crafting clear and measurable qualifications allows the hiring committee to identify strong candidates who will have a higher likelihood of long-term success. The hiring committee should clearly identify required qualifications that individuals must possess in order to be considered “candidates” for the position. Below are some helpful tips to consider when creating a posting.

What is the Difference?

- Minimum Qualifications are those an applicant must possess in order to be considered a “candidate” for the position.
- Preferred Qualifications are those an applicant does not have to possess in order to be considered a “candidate” for the position; however, they are seen as “good to have” qualities that will lead to a higher level of success for the applicant.

Arizona Board of Regents (ABOR) Minimum Qualifications

- ABOR minimum qualifications are auto-assigned to all UACareers staff posting templates.
- Individuals who do not meet ABOR minimum qualifications cannot be considered candidates for the position.
- Some ABOR minimum qualifications are general in nature. Departments can work with HR to specify what type of degree or experience is required. For example:
  - Original ABOR Language:
    - Bachelor’s degree in a field appropriate to the area of assignment; OR,
    - Four years of progressively responsible instructional or subject work experience; OR,
    - Any equivalent combination of experience, training and/or education approved by Human Resources.
  - Modified ABOR Language (specified by department):
    - Bachelor’s degree in Journalism; OR,
    - Four years of progressively responsible instructional or journalistic work experience; OR,
    - Any equivalent combination of experience, training and/or education approved by Human Resources.

Departmental Minimum Qualifications

- The most effective minimum qualifications are measurable and objective. Effective minimum qualifications list degree type, years and type of experience required, or a combination of these. For example:
  - Bachelor’s degree and a minimum of three years of demonstrated academic affairs experience; or any equivalent combination of education and experience.
  - MS or PhD with training conducive to transmitting environmental sciences, environmental engineering, and environmental toxicology information to legislators, regulators, government agencies, and communities.
Creating Minimum & Preferred Qualifications (continued)

- Department minimum qualifications should not exceed ABOR requirements. For example, a department may not require a degree if the ABOR minimums allow years of experience to substitute for a degree.
- Department minimum qualifications should not diminish ABOR requirements. For example, a department’s minimum qualification may not be two years of experience if the ABOR requirement is four years.
- Individuals who do not meet the department’s supplemental minimum qualifications cannot be considered “candidates” for the position.

Preferred Qualifications

- The purpose of preferred qualifications is to help the hiring committee narrow the applicant pool by identifying which candidates have the additional “good to have” qualities that are not required, but will place an applicant amongst the top candidates.
- Hiring committees should use preferred qualifications to develop criteria to differentiate and compare candidates. (Some groups like to create evaluation matrices).
- Preferred qualifications should identify desired education, experience, and skills that are in addition to minimum qualifications. Some example are:
  - Knowledge of UA systems, policies, and procedures. (For departments who have opened posting to general public, but prefer UA experience).
  - Bilingual in English and Spanish. (For departments who have a large client base of Spanish speaking individuals, but do not have a business necessity to support this as a minimum qualification.)
  - Master’s degree. (For departments who prefer a master’s degree, but only require a bachelor’s degree).

Knowledge, Skills and Abilities (KSA)

- KSA’s are qualities that make candidates more successful within their position. While important to the incumbent’s long-term success, they are not easily gleaned during the applicant screening process.
- KSA’s should be listed separately under minimum qualifications
- Examples of KSA’s include
  - Ability to communicate effectively with different groups/individuals.
  - Ability to handle confidential and sensitive information.
  - Knowledge of OSHA regulations.
  - Knowledge of recent advancements in cyber security.
  - Skill in public speaking and presenting information to large groups.

Posting-Specific Questions

- The use of posting-specific questions to assess the applicant’s qualifications is strongly encouraged.
- At a minimum, HR will assign at least one disqualifying posting-specific question using either the ABOR or departmental minimum qualifications.
- Posting-specific questions can be used to screen and score candidates.
- Posting-specific questions can be created as open ended or closed ended questions.
- Open-ended questions can be used to assess comprehension, writing and communication skills.
- Posting-specific questions derived from preferred qualifications should not be used to disqualify candidates.