



INTERNATIONAL SCHOOLS SERVICES

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Interview Suggestions

Several types of interviewing procedures can be used by committees when finalist candidates visit the school for final interviews. The following suggestions are presented to assist Search Committees, school boards, and constituent groups develop objective interview questions that will help to identify candidates who have the skills and abilities the school is seeking in the new Director.

While the qualities sought in a candidate may vary depending upon the size and needs of the school, we suggest assessing the following areas:

- A. Financial Management
- B. Personnel Selection, Retention, Evaluation
- C. Communication Skills
- D. Interpersonal Skills
- E. Academic Philosophy
- F. Community Involvement
- G. Style of Leadership
- H. Experience
- I. Knowledge of and Comfort with Technology

Within each of the above categories, many questions can be used to elicit responses that can help to determine a candidate's style and knowledge of various administrative and educational topics. Listed below is a series of sub-topics that committees can use to learn more about the relative strengths of each candidate.

- A. ***Financial Management***
 - 1. Knowledge of zero based budgeting format.
 - 2. Involvement of staff in budgeting process.
 - 3. Experience managing money in an inflationary situation.
 - 4. Justifications for over spending a line item.
 - 5. Role of the Board in the budgetary process.
 - 6. Recommended controls to ensure financial accountability.
 - 7. Issues related to fund raising.
- B. ***Personnel***
 - 1. Methods recommended for evaluation of teachers, administrators, and support staff.
Role of the Director, Principal, and department chairperson.
 - 2. Procedures for recruiting staff.
 - 3. Incentives or motivational techniques to encourage selected staff to extend their time at the school.

4. Circumstances under which a staff member should not be rehired or one should be fired. Procedures that would be followed in the event this becomes necessary.
- C. ***Communication Skills***
1. Assess candidates capacity to clearly communicate in writing to parents.
 2. Ability of the candidate to clearly articulate to the Board his/her vision for the school.
 3. Sense of humor, humility, and honesty.
 4. Demonstrated effective listening techniques.
- D. ***Interpersonal Skills***
1. Ability to relate naturally and genuinely with students, staff, and Board of Directors.
 2. Comfort level with a give-and-take interchange with members of the Board.
 3. Demonstrated belief in the concept of accessibility.
 4. Ability to make others feel appreciated.
- E. ***Academic Philosophy***
1. Awareness of variety of programs including AP and IB.
 2. Ability to articulate what is necessary to be considered an educated person.
 3. Generalist, elitist, or both.
 4. What is the role of technology, computers, in the education of students?
 5. Ideas related to curriculum development and the role of the Director in the process.
- F. ***Community Involvement***
1. Articulated beliefs in the rights of parents.
 2. In what ways will the person represent the school in and to the community?
 3. In what ways will the person increase community and/or parental involvement with the school?
 4. What aspects of community life are of most interest to the candidate?
- G. ***Leadership Style***
1. What is the candidate's vision for the future?
 2. Is the candidate a confident decision maker?
 3. What types of goals and objectives would the candidate articulate for the school?
 4. Is the candidate capable of leading in a collegial environment?
 5. Capacity to convey and inspire a sense of pride in the school.
 6. How will the candidate handle issues of stress?
 7. How does the candidate respond to criticism?
 8. How will the candidate balance needs and resources?
- H. ***Experience***
1. What of the person's past has prepared him/her well for this position?
 2. What are the reasons for the candidate leaving his/her current position?
 3. What role has the candidate played with respect to staff development?
 4. In what ways has the candidate handled success and failure in the past?
- I. ***Knowledge of and Comfort with Technology***
1. What type of technology does the candidate currently use on a daily basis?

2. Does the candidate remain in e-mail contact with his/her school while traveling?
3. What platform does the candidate currently use?
4. What programs is the candidate comfortable using?
5. Has the candidate been involved in the development of a technology plan?
6. How does the candidate see technology changing international education in the next 2-4 years?

Interview Techniques

Case Studies - Specific issues that have confronted the school in the past two years expressed in a non-leading manner followed by the candidate's response as to how he/she would react to such a situation. The case studies can be used to assess a particular aspect of the candidate's suitability for the position or used to obtain a general perception of how he/she articulates. We recommend limiting the number of case studies used to one or two.

Questions that the Search Committee Can Use - These questions are NOT in order of priority nor are all of them necessary.

1. What one accomplishment of your career do you feel was the most significant? Why?
2. What has been your greatest professional regret?
3. If students in grades 11 and 12 were only able to read two books per year, which books would you require?
4. In practice, what does the term "empowerment" mean for your style of leadership?
5. In terms of percentages, approximately how much of your time each month is spent on budget or financial matters, curriculum and classroom observations, community relations, fund raising, meeting with teachers or administrators, writing, attendance at school events?
6. What do you feel is the proper relationship between the head of school and the Board of Directors?
7. If you were to give a graduation address, what would be the theme of such a presentation?
8. What type of issues might cause you to tender your resignation if your decision was not supported?
9. What procedures and methods do you follow in developing a budget and insuring that expenditures are kept within the budget?
10. What is the most difficult situation you have faced as an administrator? What did you do? What was the result? Would you handle it differently if it arose again?
11. What does the term "international education" mean to you? What do you feel must be included in a school for it to be rightfully labeled an international school?

12. What biases do you have?
13. If a board member asked you to fire a teacher as he/she believed the teacher to be less than competent or negative for the school, what would you do?
14. What do you feel are your greatest assets as a school leader?
15. In what areas of school leadership would you like to improve?
16. About what professional issues are you particularly passionate?
17. What questions would you ask of the current head of school?
18. When was the last time you taught a course in a school? What would you be willing to teach here?
19. What events or people were critical in shaping your personal and professional life? Expand.
20. If we talked with people from your most recent headship, how would they describe your leadership?
21. If we told you that the school has a 7% deficit in the operating budget and we wish for you to come up with recommendations to eliminate it, how would you proceed?
22. Many administrators are faulted for their communication with faculty, parents, Board or all three. How well do you communicate with these groups?
23. How do you spend your non-working time?
24. What books and people have had the greatest impact upon you?
25. Are you currently reading a book? If so, what is it?
26. What do you do as an administrator that you think might be special?
27. If you are hired for this position, how would you like each of the following groups to describe the school three years from now; parents, Board, faculty, students?
28. If you wrote a handbook for Board members, what would be included?
29. What do you look for or value most when you are considering the hiring of a teacher?
30. What questions have we not asked that you wished we would have asked?
31. What questions do you have that we can answer for you?

Revised 6/05