

Help Wanted:

How to Hire Great Domestic
Violence Advocates, Course B

December 2016

WASHINGTON STATE COALITION
WSCADV
AGAINST DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

This online learning module is supported by funding from the Washington State Department of Social and Health Services, Children's Administration. The points of view presented in this module are those of WSCADV and do not necessarily represent the official position or policies of the Washington State Department of Social and Health Services.





**Lesson 2: Reference
Checks & Making
Your Decision**

Welcome to Hiring!

Elements of this module will provide you with tools and confidence to support you in your next hiring process. This is the 2nd course of a two-part series.

What this course will cover:

- 1) Reference checks
- 2) Making your hiring decision
- 3) Offering the job





Reference Checks

Now's the time to see if what you've learned about your top candidates is consistent. Your reference calls should fill in the gaps and address any remaining concerns.

Talk to at least 2 previous supervisors. (Personal references = Last Resort.)

Briefly google the reference, to help you engage this person.

Jot down how you will describe the job. This will help the reference connect the dots with their experience with the applicant to what you're hiring for.

Plan Your Reference Checks

Plan to ask a handful of questions that get to your top candidate's core qualities, work style, relatable skills, and any flags.

- “This position requires helping people with complicated life problems, and fully accepting them without judging. What strengths and experiences would they bring to that?”
- “What supervision style worked best for you when working with them?”
- “We offer training for professional development. Can you share what areas you think they could use some training in?”

More Reference Check Planning

It's very OK to tailor some questions to a candidate.

- “I see that the applicant created a curriculum at your program. Can you share how this developed? What impressed you the most?”

Be sure to directly ask for their insights.

- “Would you hire this person again? Why or why not?”
- “Is there anything else you think I should know?”

Making Your Hiring Decision



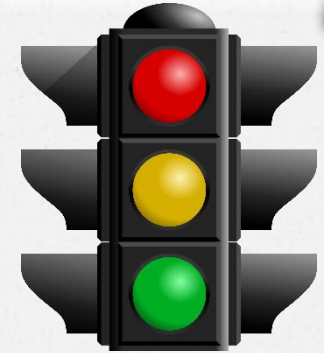
Let's Review:

Core Qualities of Great Candidates

Based on the application, interview, and reference calls, you should be able to identify each applicant's:

- Creative energy about the job
- Ability to identify obstacles that survivors face
- Demonstrated ability to think through a crisis
- Ability to treat all people with respect and non-judgmentally support survivors to make their own decisions
- Comfort level with survivors who present with many issues/obstacles (such as addiction or mental illness)
- Commitment to supporting diversity
- Ability to round out (and not just replicate) your staff

Weighing Your Candidates



Green Light

- Peer coaching attitude
- Problem-solving
- Non-judgmental
- Aware of reality of injustice, while still hopeful
- Real-life experience navigating systems
- Healthy emotional distance from their experience

Yellow Light

- Haven't been exposed to a lot of diversity or survivors, but open to learning
- Great insights, but need more practice and permission to take the lead

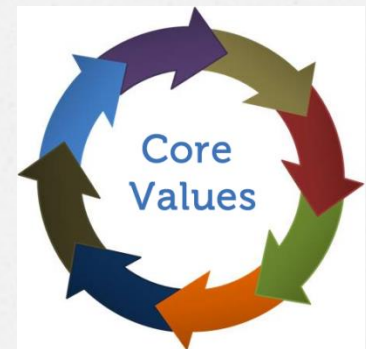
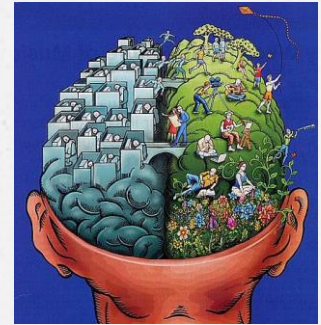
Red Light

- Rescuing, fixing others
- Needs hand-holding. exact instructions
- "If she just would do X..." belief about survivors
- No experience with how systems really work for people in trouble
- Can't support without over-sharing own feelings or abuse experience

You Can't Train for Values or Personality

There is no such thing as the perfect applicant. You get to decide what skills the applicant needs to have already, versus what skills you can train for.

- You can train someone on DV dynamics, data collection, legal advocacy, etc.
- You cannot train someone to have a different personality, a different mindset, or basic openness to the complexities of DV and diverse communities.



Everyone has a twin in the world, but it doesn't mean you should hire them.

- It's human nature to unconsciously favor people who are just like ourselves (we're so great at our jobs!).
- This is a well-known pitfall in hiring.
- Get help from your team to ensure applicants with different personalities and backgrounds shine through at each stage of hiring.



Getting Ready to Make a Decision

- It is helpful to rank your first 3 choices and the reasons why.
- Bring in your supervisor (or a trusted supervisor colleague) to talk through why you've selected these top 3, and to check if there is anything important you didn't notice or that fell through the cracks.

Pro-Tip: The neutral person provides a clear listening ear and is not persuaded by the fluff that can be generated during an interview. Often times this person can uncover what you might have missed.

Offering the Job

- Call the applicant to have this conversation. Thank them for interviewing.

Reach out to the applicant.



- “The team and I were impressed with your interview(s) and I’d like to offer you the position, are you interested?”

Offer the position (as advertised).



- Always be prepared for salary negotiations and limits. Know what you can offer before they ask.

Be prepared to negotiate.



- “We’re excited to have you on board.” Know how flexible you can be before you have this conversation.

Set a start date



Contacting Candidates You Didn't Hire

- Thank you calls should go out to all applicants you interviewed.
- Thank them personally for their time and effort.
- Avoid discussing in detail why you didn't hire them.
- It's important to follow up with those who weren't hired, because:
 - Your 1st choice could change their mind!
 - They could be the perfect fit for a future job opening!
 - You are all in the same community – let them come away supporting your organization!

You made it!

Remember...

- Know what you're looking for, what your organization needs at this time, and what will make an awesome DV advocate.
- Avoid common pitfalls, such as hiring quickly to fill a gap.
- Craft the hiring process to uncover your best candidates and let their strengths shine through.

You are now ready to hire! Good job!





End of slides

Please return to the course
and check out the links.