

FEEDBACK BASICS

- Hiring process includes informing applicants of the outcome of the competition and providing applicant specific applicant feedback (when requested)
- Hiring managers handle informing both successful and unsuccessful applicants of the outcome of the competition
- Providing feedback to unsuccessful applicants about their performance is a sound best practice
- Feedback provides applicants with the opportunity to improve and grow

WHY PROVIDE FEEDBACK

As a hiring manager, you are accountable for your hiring decisions and best practice involves providing effective feedback to applicants. Providing feedback to any applicant who requests it, including external applicants, is an opportunity for you to create a positive outcome for someone who could be a future employee, and can play a role in avoiding dissatisfaction with the assessment process. Often, the applicant just wants to understand how your decision was reached and how they could have improved.

Unsuccessful employee applicants shall be notified of the results of the hiring decision and can request feedback within five calendar days after receiving the final notification of the hiring decision. Requesting feedback is the first step in the review of a staffing decision.

Providing feedback to unsuccessful candidates can be difficult; nonetheless, hiring managers have a responsibility to ensure that employees are given a comprehensive account of their performance and assessment in the competition process.

While feedback provides applicants with an opportunity to address weakness and generally improve their performance, it is also the critical first step in the review of a staffing decision. Providing timely, accurate and complete feedback is necessary for applicants to understand the process used to reach a hiring decision. Effective feedback may satisfy unsuccessful applicants' concerns and demonstrate that the hiring process was merit-based.

WHEN TO PROVIDE FEEDBACK?

- Requests for feedback from employee applicants may delay your ability to fill the vacancy(ies) ; therefore it is important to provide feedback to employee applicants as soon as you are able
- Feedback can be provided at any stage (i.e. shortlisting, testing, interview)
- Respond to all requests for feedback as soon as you can



Providing Effective Applicant Feedback

Information for Managers

HOW TO PROVIDE FEEDBACK?

- Review your notes on the applicant. (i.e. shortlisting decisions, scoring rationales, answer guides, interpretive guides)
- Prepare feedback notes
- Best practice is a face-to-face meeting or phone discussion
- You may provide feedback in writing
- You are not required to provide feedback in writing even if an applicant requests it
- Feedback meeting should take no more than 15-30 minutes
- Describe the overall process
- Describe how the applicant's performance compared to the pre-established assessment standards.
- Be professional, sensitive and provide feedback with positive intent of helping
- Be open, honest, tactful, and focus on the applicant's performance in the hiring process and what they need to do to develop and improve
- Tell the applicant that your decision is final, that the hiring process was designed to appraise applicant knowledge, skills / abilities, competencies and past work performance and that the same hiring process was consistently and fairly applied to all applicants
- Listen to the applicant's concerns and answer their questions
- Confirm with the applicant that all his/ her questions were addressed
- Thank the applicant

WHAT INFORMATION CAN I SHARE?

- Information that pertains only to the applicant requesting feedback
- Information about applicant results during shortlisting, assessment and reference check process.
- Applicant scores
- Information about scoring guides, answer keys, recruitment levels

Under the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act an applicant can formally request access to any of their personal information gathered in the appointment process.

TIPS ON PROVIDING FEEDBACK

- Explain the overall process, including the selection criteria used and methods used to assess applicants against job-related requirements
- Review the applicant's areas of strength
- Discuss areas for improvement, with specific examples of where the applicant's responses and results could be improved. For example, compare their answer to the answer expected
- Discuss ways the applicant could improve their skills and abilities to become successful (for example, provide tips on focusing their resume to the job requirements, or identify training and development opportunities that may develop and enhance the required skills)



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- Summarize by letting the applicant know how they did overall and what you see as their strengths and potential for future employment

KEY POINTS STEP BY STEP

1. Prepare notes ahead of time by reviewing the applicant's hiring documentation (resume, results from questionnaires or tests, interview notes, etc.)
2. Make it an opportunity to share information
3. Provide feedback on the positive aspects of the applicant's performance as well as areas for improvement
4. Be approachable, open, honest, constructive, realistic and future-oriented as well as tactful
5. Stay focused on what is relevant to the discussion: the requirements of the position, the merit criteria, how you assessed the qualifications and results of the applicant's assessment
6. Stick to the facts and ensure that you can support your statements
7. Be specific rather than general. For example, review the applicant's answer with them rather than just saying they fell short on their response
8. Focus your comments on observable, job-related skills, abilities and competencies
9. Listen carefully to applicant questions and concerns and provide the opportunity for them to explain any concerns
10. Maintain a non-defensive and non-confrontational manner throughout the discussion
11. Offer encouragement and end the meeting.

WHEN FEEDBACK SESSIONS DON'T GO WELL

Not all feedback sessions will go smoothly. An applicant may disagree with your feedback or be visibly upset.

TIPS:

- Listen to applicants' concerns
- Remain calm and objective
- Remember, sometimes the applicant simply needs to express their feelings on the lack of success
- Arrange a follow-up session, if the feedback meeting is ineffective due to distress

DOCUMENTING YOUR FEEDBACK

Just as you document your competition, also document all your feedback discussions. You may need to refer to these notes as well as copies of correspondence if a staffing review is requested. This documentation will be used in conducting the Deputy Minister internal inquiry into the appointment and, if applicable, will be used by the Merit Commissioner in their review of the appointment decision.

Questions? Need more assistance?

Contact [AskMyHR](#)

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