

Finding the Fit: Interview and Screening Tips

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LEARNING

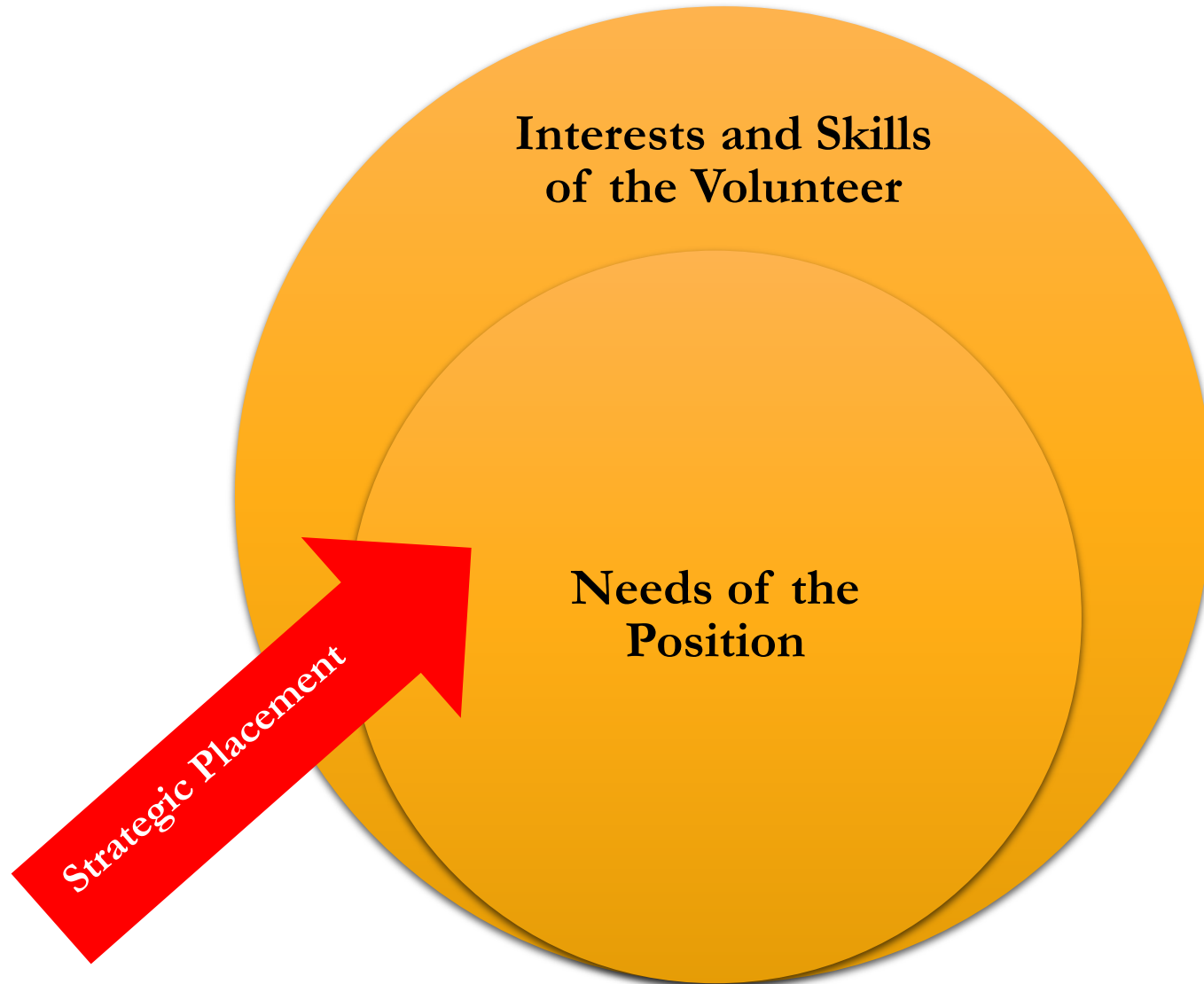
- Be able to articulate the elements that comprise a robust screening process and how your program's process fits within these best practices
- Be able to apply behavioral interviewing techniques to your already established screening process
- Have the language and messaging to implement and explain screening decisions, including when the fit isn't there



Screening and Placement



Finding the Fit



Elements of Screening

- Application
- Eligibility Requirements
- Background Checks
- Reference Checks
- Interview
- Training Completion/Certification
- Probationary Period



Barriers to Screening (beyond CASAs)

“I don’t have time to interview!”

“We can’t afford to pay for background checks.”

“How can we ask these experts to sit through an interview? That’s insulting!”

“We should accept every offer of assistance!”

What barriers keep your organization from screening?

Screening and Placement

Recruitment, Vetting, Placement

- What is your role in each?
- Do you know how decisions are made about placement?



Applications

•Basic Information

- Contact information, including an email address
- Over 21?
- Emergency contact, the relationship of the contact, address, and phone number

Experience and Skills

- Previous work or volunteer experience
- Education level
- Language(s) spoken
- Relevant training, certifications, or experience
- Skills checklist

References

- Current employer or other organizations where the applicant has volunteered
- One or more personal references with contact information; and one or more professional or work-related references with the supervisor's name and contact information

Motivations

- Reason for volunteering
- How did you hear about us?

Relevant disclaimers

- Fair and equal opportunity statement
- photo waivers

Signature and date

Background Checks

- Follow National CASA/GAL guidelines
- Determine procedures for other volunteer roles and apply consistently





Interview Goals

Organization

- Motivation
- Skills
- Expectations
- Culture enriching

Candidate

- Growth areas
- Areas to avoid
- Availability
- Fit

Interviewing Steps



Align the
position with
organizational
need

Plan for the
interview

Involve the
right people –
including
volunteers

Set the tone



Interviews



Interviews are
dynamic,
structured
conversations

During the Interview...



•Set the stage

- Welcome the volunteer
- Introduce yourself
- Set a positive tone

Introduce the organization or program

Ask questions and **take notes**

Give the **candidate** a chance to **ask questions**

Behavioral Interviewing



Premise

Past performance is a strong predictor of future performance

Technique

Ask open-ended questions

Objective

Reveal how a candidate may handle scenarios likely to encounter as a volunteer

Behavioral Interviewing



- Tell me about a time when something didn't go as planned. What did you do? How did you handle it? What was the outcome?
- Tell me about a time your supervisor or lead provided feedback on your performance. What was the issue? How did you respond and what changes, if any, did you make?
- Tell me about a problem you encountered that you did not solve on the first try.
- Tell me about a time you took the initiative to create something new or to learn something new. What did you do to learn or create it? What was the outcome?

High Impact Interview Questions



- What are your three greatest achievements?
- Which do you prefer and why?
- Problem solving questions
- Situational questions
- Experiential questions
- Skills questions

High Impact Interview Questions



- Ask unexpected questions
- Use the interview to communicate organizational culture
- Select based on the match between the organization and volunteer needs
- Give the candidate time to think it over
- Consider skill proficiency and motivational style

Interview Questions



Problem-Solving

- Please take a look at this brochure about our programs and tell us how you would improve it?
- Describe a difficult situation you experienced at work or school. How did you handle the situation? Is there anything you would have done differently?

Interview Questions



Situational

- Your volunteer assignment is to develop a new curriculum for our outreach education programs. Whom would you engage to help you and why?
- A client who is very upset approaches you, complaining about ... What would you say or do? How would you diffuse the situation?

Interview Questions



Experiential

- Describe a paid or volunteer experience in which you were the leader of other people. What went well? What would you do differently next time?

Interview Questions



Skills

- What are the skills at which you are proficient that you would gladly share with us, if we could make it possible for you to do so?

Window of Work

Wise Whys

What are you
passionate about?

Glad Gifts

What talents are
you happy to give?

No-No's

What is outside
your comfort
level?

Quests

What do you yearn
to learn?



Tips for “Special Characters”

The rambler

- Interrupt, redirect, or end

The quiet one

- “Tell me more about that,” rephrase, move on

The off-topic responder

- Go back to the question

The inappropriate responder

- Interrupt, end early

Overcoming Bias



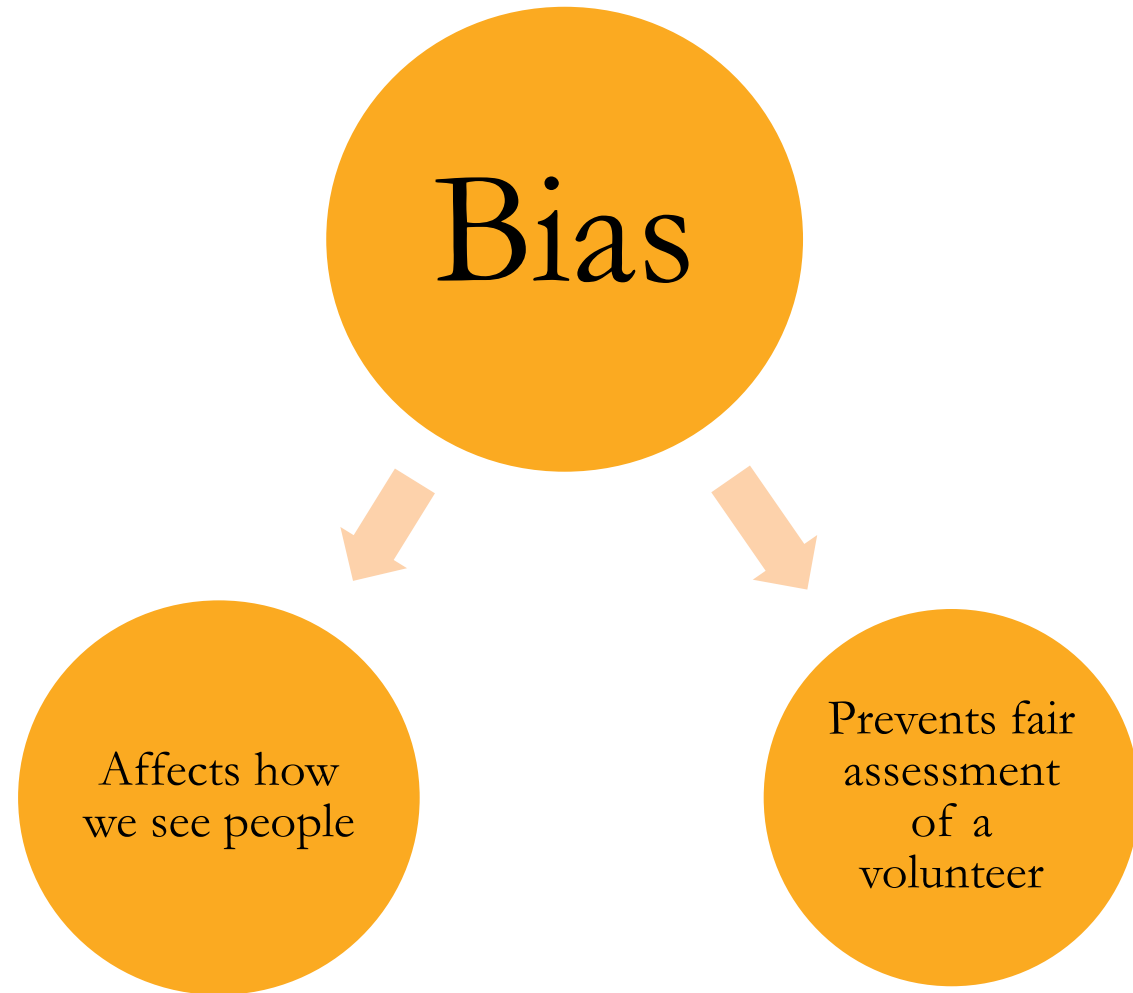
Bias

Prejudice in favor of or against one thing, person, or group compared with another, usually in a way considered to be unfair.

Cultural Competence

A set of behaviors, attitudes, and policies that together create a system for working effectively in cross-cultural situations.

Bias in Screening



Types of Bias



- The Halo Effect

The Horns Effect

The Similar-to-Me Effect

- First Impression Bias

Contrast Bias

Overcoming Bias



- Focus on facts
- Take notes
- Use neutral probes
(e.g., how, why, what?)
- Provide neutral feedback

Overcoming Bias



Avoid questions related directly or indirectly to:

- Age
- Gender
- Race
- National origin
- Religion
- Disabilities

Candidate Assessment



Strengths

Challenges

Red flags and
concerns

Style
assessment

Skill
assessment

Culture
enriching

Before the Offer



What questions have come up since we last spoke?

What were your “AHA” moments from our interview?

What else has occurred to you over the past few days? Great ideas? Concerns?

If the candidate opts out ask, “May I keep you on our list for future opportunities?”

Negotiation



What is negotiable?

How much training are we able and willing to provide?

Can you job share?

What to do when the fit is not there?



Find another assignment
that better aligns or
where there is less risk
and responsibility

Refer to another agency
or the local volunteer
center

Confirm in a letter

Saying No



- Implement a clear application process
- Create a comprehensive screening policy
- Communicate rejections clearly and promptly

Training as Screening



Encourage
webcams

Smaller groups

Breakouts and
Study/Homework
Groups

Homework
Assignments

Check-in Calls

Consider
probationary
period

Discussion



VQ Resources

VQStrategies.com



Downloadable tools and templates



Books and tool kits



Webinars



VQ Blog



VQ Impact e-Newsletter



Thank you.

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