

***Employee Campus Climate Brown Bag Program:  
De-Mystifying the Hiring Practices at Emory  
October 6, 2005 at Winship Ballroom***

This event was co-sponsored by the Employee Council, President's Commission on Race and Ethnicity (PCORE), President's Commission on the Status of Women, and President's Commission on Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender Concerns, Human Resources, and the Office of Equal Opportunity Programs. Our panelists were: Mr. Tom Fitch, Director of Employment, Human Resources; Ms. Theresa Milazzo, Sr. Director, Human Resources; Ms. Amy Adelman, Associate General Counsel; Dr. Robert Ethridge, Vice President, Equal Opportunity Programs; and Ms. Bonita Swain, Campus Services, Director of Human Resources.

**Questions from the Program with Answers from the Panelists**

1. Open Recruitment for hires must be publicized through various venues to attract qualified candidates. Is there a timeframe that the recruitment remains publicized? For example, I've seen an opening one day and the next day it cannot be found. What is the criteria?

**Human Resources:** We generally advertise positions for at least one week. Hiring managers have the option to post those positions internally first and many do so. By the way, it is very important that employees apply through PeopleSoft self-service so that the recruiters can identify them as internal applicants. If one applies from home, for example, the system will recognize them as an external applicant.

2. I was told that a University employee cannot transfer to the Healthcare side without losing time in service. Is this true?

**Human Resources:** It is true that one would lose time in service when transferring to EHC from EU or vice versa. This mainly affects accumulated vacation time. Retirement contributions continue to be made with no break.

3. What is the limit for working as a temporary employee? What is the rationale behind the time limit?

**Human Resources:** Long term (LT) assignments may last up to a year and are processed directly through the hiring department. Short term (ST) assignments of up to 6 months in duration are handled through ETS (Emory Temporary Services). Temporary assignments are just that – temporary. They should be for projects of a limited time duration; otherwise, departments should be hiring employees through regular open recruitment. Most all organizations and corporations have policies limiting the amount of time one may be in a temporary role.

4. What is the criteria for jobs that are hired through **administrative decision**? Describe who approves of this and the general procedure? How many jobs each year are not posted and go through administrative decision hire? What is the policy on administrative appointments – positions that are filled by promotion without posting/searches?

**General Counsel:** Administrative decision is used on a very limited basis at Emory, and only in limited situations, such as an emergency need. Other situations when Administrative decision is used include a change in organizational structure, an interdepartmental promotion, a temporary employee being hired into a regular position, or a situation in which the position requires such unusual skills or training that open recruitment is unlikely to result in finding a qualified applicant. Another situation in which an administrative decision may be appropriate is when a faculty member or researcher is recruited and needs to bring along others who are crucial to the work. The majority of administrative decisions occur in the School of Medicine. EOP monitors the administrative decision process to ensure that the process is being used appropriately.

**Equal Opportunity Programs Office:** Jobs that are hired through Administrative Decision have special circumstances attached to them. These circumstances could include: a special emergency need; a change in the organizational structure; or the position requires unusual skills, training or education.

The person who approves these decisions and the general procedure is the Assistant Director, Equity or his designee. The approval process includes a review of the request form, insuring that all required items are completed. There is a critical review of the enclosed explanation for using the Administrative Decision process. There is a thorough review of the applicant's educational background and experience in comparison to what is required by the Human Resources position description.

**Policy statement:**

The use of administrative decision procedures is warranted only by special emergency need; change in organizational structure and/or position requirements; interdepartmental promotion; and in rare cases, when open recruitment is not reasonably expected to result in a person to match the unusual job requirements.

The Office of Equal Opportunity Programs audits the number of Administrative Decisions submitted by department and schools on an annual basis.

5. What goes into determining a pay rate when hiring employees? Why is some experience rated at a different value than other experience, when determining starting salaries of employees or how do you decide what value related or non-related experience "counts" toward a position that someone is applying to at the University?

**Human Resources:** Starting salaries are determined based on the years of related experience a candidate has relative to the minimum qualifications of the job for which he/she is applying. One to four percent of credit is given for each year of experience the candidate has that exceeds the minimum qualifications. For example, if an Accountant is being considered for an Accountant job at Emory, 4% credit would be given for each year of this experience since it is directly related and the same level of work. Previous experience as a Bookkeeper or Accounting Assistant would be given less credit (maybe 1 or 2%) since it is related but not the same level as an Accountant.

6. Why does it take so long from the time that a person applies for a job at the University, for the person to be called in for an interview or even be given any information on the status of their application?

**Human Resources:** Human Resources recruiters generally refer candidates for positions after the posting has been on the website for one week. There are many reasons why a hiring manager may not act quickly but HR has no control over that other than encouraging the manager to respond in a timely manner. The average time to fill a requisition is currently 63 days (about 2 months) and that has remained relatively constant over the last several years.

7. Regarding administrative support positions, with the renewed emphasis on minimum requirements that include a 4-year degree, what impact does HRD envision for employees who are currently in positions that include supervisory and managerial duties?

**Human Resources:** We are currently in the process of revising job descriptions to include an equivalency clause that will allow experience to be used in lieu of a degree requirement, particularly for internal applicants. Hiring managers may still prefer someone with a degree and it is perfectly appropriate for them to use those criteria in screening applicants, but we do not want to be in a position of tying our hands when it comes to an employee who has many years of relevant experience but lacks a degree. Having said that, we are an institution of higher education and do not in any way want to devalue the importance of obtaining a degree.

8. Will hiring officials still have the option of waiving educational requirements in lieu of experience and years of service?

**Human Resources:** Yes, but if certain certifications are required, such as an RN, that would not be waived.

9. Is the Employee Referral Program still in place and is it working for non-healthcare related referrals?

**Human Resources:** Yes, the Employee Referral Program is still in place and working well. The referral fee is \$250 and is paid by the hiring department. When referring someone you should make sure they put your name in the appropriate place on the on-line application. For fiscal year 2004/2005 there were 83 employee referrals hired.

10. What is the difference between a promotion and a reclassification?

**Human Resources:** A reclassification occurs when the duties and responsibilities of a position evolve into a different job over time and the original position is not backfilled. There are situations in which reorganization, changing business needs, or other pressing needs will cause the job to change from its original intent. It is a permanent change to the position.

A promotion occurs when duties and responsibilities of a position grow or become more complex. Promotions are handled through administrative decision or open recruitment. These typically involves two positions, the original position is left vacant or is refilled.

11. Has eRecruit increased the number of outside applicants who are actually given offers of employment?

**Human Resources:** No, there has been very little change in the total number of positions filled nor in the percentage filled by external candidates over the last three years. Roughly, the percentages have broken down as: 60% external, 30% internal, and 10% temp to regular.

12. If a staff member has the commensurate education and experience, are multi-grade level promotions or reclassifications permitted at Emory? If so, how are increases calculated?

**Human Resources:** Yes, employees may be reclassified or promoted to jobs more than one grade higher than their current classification as long as they meet the minimum qualifications. The recommended guideline for increases is 3 to 6 percent per grade. Increases are determined at the department level considering the employee's credentials for the new job, internal equity and the availability of funds.

13. What is the standard percentage increase for reclassification or promotions for one grade level? I have seen different percentages applied on staff promotions and reclassifications.

**Human Resources:** The recommended guideline is 3 to 6 percent per grade. The percentage of increase is controlled at the department level and is typically driven by available funding and internal equity issues.

14. When a request to reclassify an employee is denied, is it a standard requirement that the employee receive the reasons for denial in writing from HR/Compensation?

**Human Resources:** Due to the large number of employees we support, HR Compensation typically does not address individual employees about their classification, compensation or job status. We communicate these types of issues to the supervisor.

15. Often gaps in the resumes of women candidates are not carefully considered as time off to have children, but rather viewed as a negative in being out of the work force; what is being done to educate hiring managers that this time away from work should not be used against a candidate; what is being done to train hiring managers to identify these necessary gaps?

**Human Resources:** Awareness is the key here, of course. The recruiters encourage the hiring managers to not use the time off against a female candidate. Obviously, we cannot ask candidates about children but we can and do encourage asking candidates to explain significant gaps in employment. There is no specific training on the issue but this is certainly an area where we can advise hiring managers in positive fashion.

16. Does Emory institute affirmative action procedures in hiring practices? If not, how does recruitment happen? Is Emory influenced by race/ethnic/gender differences when hiring?

**General Counsel:** Emory follows applicable law in hiring its employees. Yes, Emory has affirmative action obligations and it fulfills those obligations by attracting a wide, diverse pool of applicants for its openings. We always strive to hire the most qualified candidate for any position, without regard to race, gender, etc.

**Human Resources:** Emory is absolutely an affirmative action employer. We make every effort to attract a diverse candidate pool and present a diverse slate of candidates to hiring managers. Two big initiatives this year will include reaching out to the Hispanic and Disabled communities in Atlanta from which to draw potential employees.

17. If you're an employee who would like to advance to another job level, what should the employee do to prepare for a job search?

**Human Resources:** The key to any job search, whether it is internal or external, is networking. One's career development is a shared responsibility between the individual and the university/manager. I would encourage folks to get involved in as many activities as possible that cross departmental lines and increase one's exposure across campus. Remember, too, that networking is not just something that is done when one is looking for a job – it's a way of life. Also, just having the appropriate attitude will get one noticed more than anything; in other words, going above and beyond in one's duties and not having that "it's not my job" mentality.

Of course, having a good resume and good interview skills are important as well. HR offers regular seminars (Make a Move Within) on these topics and I encourage employees to attend these.

18. What is the policy on exit interviews? For departments that conduct exit interviews, how is that information collected/evaluated?

**Human Resources:** The policy states that all employees who separate from Emory should have the opportunity to give formal feedback through exit interviews. The process is coordinated by HR but Management is responsible for ensuring that it occurs prior to the last day of work. There is a questionnaire that is completed and HR also mails a questionnaire along with the separation notice. Exit interview forms are generally forwarded to HR and the information is reviewed by the Divisional HR Manager. No information is included in the employee's file.

### **Questions and Answers from the Audience's Index Cards**

1. With regards to the ethnic breakdown presented today (on the power point slide), who is included? Faculty and staff? Staff only? Faculty only? It seems as though the ethnic mix of faculty breaks down very differently than the ethnic mix of staff.

**Human Resources:** Those numbers are for all new hires, both staff and faculty.

2. When employees transfer to another position, why are they then not eligible for an increase at their six-month review?

**Human Resources:** Per our policy, six-month increases are not generally granted in connection with promotions, reclassifications or lateral transfers.

The six-month increase procedure is designed to allow new hires the opportunity to receive an increase based on performance. In some cases, an employee may start late in the fiscal year and will not be eligible to receive an

increase until the next merit cycle. This procedure is designed to give managers the flexibility of rewarding newer employees. This practice is contingent upon individual department practice and available budget.

3. Who decides which candidate's CV (curriculum vitae) moves on to the proper hands (P.I.s for example) for further review? How does this process work?

**Human Resources:** *Human Resources recruiters do the initial review and forward to hiring managers. All internal candidates that meet the minimum requirements are forwarded.*

4. I thought Emory had a policy about not allowing nepotism, so why is it happening?

**Human Resources:** **Emory has a policy prohibiting a supervisory relationship between two relatives. Special exceptions may be made with appropriate Vice President approval. If you believe there is a violation of this policy, you may contact your Divisional Human Resources Manager to investigate.**

5. Once someone submits an online application, what process does the application go through? Does it get reviewed by HR and then go to the department or can a department specifically choose applicants from the total pool?

**Human Resources:** **Recruiters do the initial screening. As stated above, all internal applicants meeting the minimum requirement are forwarded to the hiring manager. The number of external applicants that are forwarded depends on the agreement between the recruiter and the manager. Some managers prefer to see all candidates and some just want to see the most highly qualified ones.**

6. A distinction was made between ST (short term) assignment and LT (long term). You said ST was up to 6 months and goes through ETS. Does Emory initiate the hiring process for LT assignments when the year is up?

**Human Resources:** **Temporary assignments should be reserved for projects of a limited duration. They should not be used for positions that should in fact be filled with a regular employee. In the event that a department wants to hire a temporary employee onto the regular payroll and an appropriate position is available, that is generally accomplished through Administrative Decision.**

7. Does Emory promote/support internal transfers between jobs? Why does Emory limit to 4% salary increase---what is the purpose?

**Human Resources: Emory does not have an established limit for promotional/reclassification increases. We recommend 3 to 6 percent per grade as a guideline. The Compensation department collaborates with divisional/departmental supervisors to determine an appropriate rate based on the scope of the position, available funds, and past practices.**

8. Please walk us through the hiring process once a candidate has been selected as the finalist for a position. Regarding the offer letter---who is responsible for sending that to the candidate; notification that the candidate is 'officially hired;' orientation schedule, and network ID.

**Human Resources: First a background check is done and a drug screen, if appropriate. If those are successfully passed, the department may send an offer letter and submit the appropriate paperwork to HR to get the person into PeopleSoft (the form is called a HRAF – Human Resources Action Form). The recruiter sends a welcome letter that includes the date for orientation and a packet of information about benefits. The network ID is automatically generated once the new hire is entered into PeopleSoft so the quicker the HRAF gets to HR, the quicker that will happen.**