

# STAFFING MANAGEMENT

## INSTRUCTOR'S MANUAL

The logo for the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) features the letters 'S', 'H', and 'M' in a white serif font, each contained within a dark blue square. The squares are arranged horizontally and slightly overlap.

SOCIETY FOR HUMAN  
RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

## Southwood School: A Case Study in Recruitment and Selection

*By Fiona L. Robson*

## PROJECT TEAM

Author: Fiona L. Robson

SHRM project contributor: Bill Schaefer, SPHR  
Nancy A. Woolever, SPHR

External contributor: Sharon H. Leonard

Editor: Courtney J. Cornelius, copy editor

Design: Terry Biddle, graphic designer

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For more information, please contact:  
SHRM Academic Initiatives  
1800 Duke Street, Alexandria, VA 22314, USA  
Phone: (800) 283-7476 Fax: (703) 535-6432  
Web: [www.shrm.org/hreducation](http://www.shrm.org/hreducation)

# Southwood School: A Case Study in Recruitment and Selection

## RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION CASE STUDY

### Teaching Notes

This case study has been developed to provide resources to promote learning and understanding in the area of recruitment and selection.

### Purpose

This case will help students understand the complexities involved in effective recruitment and selection.

This fictionalized case study is based on a real organization. Although based in an educational institution, many of the issues are the same across different countries and sectors. The author of this case study was the HR Manager in the organization.

### Setting

**Industry:** UK public sector, education (a mixed comprehensive secondary school).

**Size:** The annual revenue of the organization is more than £1 million, but it is a government-funded, nonprofit organization.

**Staff Size:** 120 employees (80 teaching and 40 non-teaching).

**Student Body:** More than 800 students aged 13-18.

### Learning Objectives

By the end of this case, students will learn to:

- Articulate why recruitment and selection is important to organizations.
- Explain the importance of equal opportunity and how this should be emphasized throughout training for employees involved in recruitment and selection.
- Appreciate the need for appropriate selection activities and how to design programs accordingly.
- Recognize the importance of reviewing recruitment and selection processes.

### How Should You Use These Resources?

It is recommended that the class start by having students read the case study. The resources for this case allow the instructor to then choose a combination of the provided activities, depending on the session's learning objectives and student learning styles. For your convenience, sample answers are included for all student tasks, highlighting the key areas that students should identify through their work.

### Recommended Time Schedule

The case study should take approximately 15-20 minutes to read. There is enough material to span at least two 50-minute sessions, but instructors may choose to use more or fewer of the provided activities. As a guide, the following timeline is provided for each activity:

<b>Discussion Questions</b>	Each question should take about 20 minutes to discuss. The instructor can divide the class into groups and ask each group to respond to different questions, or have them all respond to the same one. The instructor can also have students work individually first.
<b>Group Tasks</b>	These activities are more advanced and will require students to work in teams. Each activity takes 30-45 minutes to complete. More time should be allocated if group results are to be presented to the entire class.
<b>Extension Tasks</b>	These tasks encourage students to think about the issues in more depth. They can be used as homework or independent study and take between 20-30 minutes to complete.

For your convenience, sample answers are provided for all student tasks, highlighting key areas that students should identify through their work.

### Accompanying Resources

<b>Case study narrative:</b>	This section provides background about the case. Students must read it before they attempt any of the activities.
<b>Teaching notes on student activities:</b>	The teaching notes provide details of more than 20 activities that can be assigned to students. The activities are separated into three types: discussion questions, group tasks and extension tasks. The instructor can choose which combination of activities to use.
<b>Possible answers to questions:</b>	This section provides some possible answers to the activities. The instructor can use this as basis for feedback to students on their answers.
<b>Recruitment advertisement:</b>	This is an example of a job advertisement that ran in a national UK newspaper. This version was used before the review by the HR manager. Students are asked to evaluate this version and suggest improvements.
<b>Information sent to potential candidates:</b>	This information is a real example of a selection activity that was used when the school was recruiting a new teacher with management responsibilities. This should provide an interesting example for students and possibly introduce a method with which they are not familiar.
<b>Selection day timetable:</b>	The timetable gives students a practical example of how the selection days are structured.
<b>Interview questions:</b>	This section shows some of the questions that are asked during formal interviews from a range of different stakeholders. Students are asked to critique these questions and suggest options.
<b>Reference request letter:</b>	This standard request for a reference letter is intentionally not very detailed; students are asked to write an improved version.

## Recommended Resources

SHRM has an excellent guide to selection assessment methods available online at: [http://www.shrm.org/foundation/assessment\\_methods.pdf](http://www.shrm.org/foundation/assessment_methods.pdf).

## Books

Dessler, G. (2005). *Human Resource Management*. 10th edition. Prentice Hall.

Ivancevich, J.M. (2006). *Human Resource Management*. 10th edition. McGraw-Hill.

## Journal articles

Barclay, J.N. (2001). Improving selection interviews with structure: organizations use of “behavioural” interviews. *Personnel Review*, 30(1), pp.81-101.

Bartram, D. (2000). Internet Recruitment and Selection: Kissing Frogs to find Princes. *International Journal of Selection and Assessment*, 8(4), pp.261-274.

Carroll, M., Marchington, M., Earnshaw, J., and Taylor, S. (1999). Recruitment in small firms: Processes, methods and problems. *Employee Relations*, 21(3), pp.236-250.

Fish, A., and Macklin, R. (2004). Perceptions of executive search and advertised recruitment attributes and service quality. *Personnel Review*, 33(1), pp.30-54.

Hallier, J. (2001). Greenfield recruitment and selection: Implications for the older worker. *Personnel Review*, 30(3), pp.331-351.

Lievens, F., van Dam, K., and Anderson, N. (2002). Recent trends and challenges in personnel selection. *Personnel Review*, 31(5), pp.580-601.

Macan, T.H., and Dipboye, R.L. (1990). The relationship of interviewers’ pre-interview impressions to selection and recruitment outcomes. *Personnel Psychology*, 43(4), pp.745-768.

Smither, J.W., Reilly, R.R., Millsap, R.E., Pearlman, K., and Stoffey, R.W. (1993). Applicant reactions to selection procedures. *Personnel Psychology*, 46(1), pp.49-76.

## For additional information about UK employment legislation, the following web sites may be useful:

- Acas (Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service): [www.acas.org.uk](http://www.acas.org.uk).
- CIPD (Chartered Institute for Personnel and Development): [www.cipd.co.uk](http://www.cipd.co.uk).

# Recruitment and Selection Case Study: Southwood School

## Purpose

This case helps students understand the complexities involved in effective recruitment and selection.

This fictionalized case study is based on a real organization. The case is set in a school, but many of the issues are the same across different countries and sectors. The author of this case was the HR manager in the organization.

## Setting

**Industry:** UK public sector, education (a mixed comprehensive secondary school).

**Size:** The annual revenue of the organization is more than £1 million, but it is a government-funded, nonprofit organization.

**Staff Size:** 120 employees (80 teaching and 40 non-teaching).

**Student Body:** More than 800 students aged 13-18.

## Learning Objectives

By the end of this case, students will learn to:

- Articulate why recruitment and selection is important to organizations.
- Explain the importance of equal opportunity and how this should be emphasized throughout training for employees involved in recruitment and selection.
- Appreciate the need for appropriate selection activities and how to design programs accordingly.
- Recognize the importance of reviewing recruitment and selection processes.

## Overview

Southwood School experienced increased employee turnover, and as a result, a higher level of recruitment activity. This case explores the recruitment and selection strategies used by the school. The first part of the case study introduces the system that was initially used and concludes by identifying some of the system's weaknesses. The second part of the case study discusses the improvements that were made following a system review by the HR manager.



## PART I

### Recruitment

For many years, Southwood relied on a single recruitment method: to advertise all teaching positions in a specialist newspaper publication called *TES (Times Educational Supplement)*. Basic advertisements were placed in this publication one time, and interested candidates were instructed to contact the school to request an application package.

The application package included the following information:

- A letter detailing how to apply for the job.
- A brochure about the school.
- An application form.

Additional information was sometimes enclosed, but this depended on the department head advertising the vacancy. Additional information could include:

- Information about the current staff in the department.
- Examples of departmental projects (e.g., the head of the French department included information about student exchanges and visits to France that students and faculty had taken).
- A copy of the school development plan for the next three years.

Other schools in the area also used *TES* for recruitment, but in addition, they placed advertisements in a local newspaper and on a web site for teaching vacancies. Some schools even launched a page on their school web site to enable candidates to download all of the application information.

### Selecting the Right Candidates

Candidates submitted an application form along with contact information for two people who could provide references, and returned the information to the appropriate department head. Once the closing date had passed, three staff members reviewed the applications independently and graded them A, B or C (where A is the highest mark and C is the lowest) based on the candidate's ability to meet the selection criteria. The panel would then convene to discuss the A-rated application forms and agree on a list of candidates who would be invited to attend a selection day. The staff members assessing the applications were usually teachers from the relevant subject area. Training was not offered to panel members to help them to select the best candidates.

Before selection day, references would be requested for all candidates (see the Reference Request Letter). Copies of the references would be provided to interview panel members; employment offers were contingent on the receipt of satisfactory references.

Selection days usually involved four to five candidates, depending on how many applications had been received. The days normally followed the following agenda:

<b>9:00</b>	Welcome from the principal.
<b>9:30</b>	Tour of the campus.
<b>10:00</b>	Informal interviews lasting approximately 20 minutes per candidate.
<b>11:30</b>	Lunch in the staff canteen.
<b>12:30</b>	Formal interviews lasting approximately 30 minutes per candidate.
<b>2:30</b>	Panel convenes to make decision.
<b>3:00</b>	Panel contacts the successful candidate and offers him or her the position.

The agenda shows that the organization relied on two selection methods for all of their teaching vacancies—an informal and formal interview. The first (informal) interview was led by the principal and an administrator; this was used to learn basic information about the candidate and to review the information on the application form. The second interview was more detailed and explored a wide range of issues with the candidates.

The panel consisted of the following staff members:

- Principal
- HR manager
- Department head
- Senior teacher

Due to time constraints, panel members were usually unable to meet in advance, so they developed their interview questions independently.

Although the principal chaired the interviews, they were rarely carried out in the same manner and there was not a high level of consistency with the questions. No formal scoring system was used. At the end of the interviews, there was a panel vote to see which candidate should be offered the job. This often led to a heated debate about candidate strengths and weaknesses.

Candidates usually remained at the school until a decision was reached so they could be informed personally of the outcome. If they were unable to wait for the outcome, they were phoned later that day with the decision. Unsuccessful candidates received some brief verbal feedback, but were not asked for comments on their interview experience. Unsuccessful candidates would sometimes contact the school and ask for further written feedback; this was usually provided by the principal.

### **HR Manager's Review of the School's Recruitment and Selection Methods**

The HR manager reviewed the school's recruitment and selection methods because there was concern that best-practice methods were not being used. In addition, the principal thought that some inappropriate candidates had been hired which could have been avoided if better methods had been used. A number of areas for improvement were identified:



- Using one recruitment method was insufficient and was not making the most out of the available recruitment resources (in particular, the Internet). The existing method may have resulted in some unsuitable hires who left the organization after a short time. A wider candidate search might attract different types of people.
- Other schools in the area were using more varied recruitment methods, which may mean they are accessing a larger (and potentially better) pool of candidates.
- The materials in the recruitment package were basic and not professionally designed, which may have failed to impress potential applicants.
- The selection methods used were limited, and had not kept up with trends used in other organizations.
- Candidates were being hired on the basis of a good interview. Their teaching style and ability was unknown.
- Staff on the interview panels had not been trained, and in the past had asked potentially discriminatory questions.
- There was little chance of internal promotions because career progression was not a focus within the school or encouraged within the recruitment and selection policy.
- Lack of an objective scoring system resulted in complaints from unsuccessful candidates who did not understand why they did not get the job.

## PART II

### Improving the Recruitment Methods

The HR manager continued to advertise teaching jobs in *TES* in line with local and national competitors, but re-designed the standard layout and content of advertisements to be more engaging and informative. In the future, advertisements for all teaching jobs will also be placed in the local newspaper which has a weekly jobs supplement and high readership in the area.

The school had a strong IT team, and they were consulted about the best ways to use technology as a recruitment method. They designed a simple web site that could be accessed through the school's home page. It contained relevant information about the organization and the actual vacancy. Candidates could complete and submit the application form online, or print and mail the completed application form. The page was being monitored to gauge the success of this method.

The HR manager agreed with the principal that a greater emphasis should be placed on internal recruitment, particularly for positions with management responsibilities. This would encourage talented staff to remain with the school as part of an overall retention strategy.

The HR manager also reviewed the quality of the information provided to prospective employees, so that candidates would have a more realistic picture of what the job entailed and the character of the school (see "Information Provided to Candidates").

The changes to the recruitment approach were evaluated after six months. Positive outcomes were identified:

- More candidates were accessing the information provided on the vacancies from the school's web site and through e-mailed requests for application packages.
- Candidate diversity was higher than in previous recruitment campaigns.
- The number of people who applied for a job after requesting information had increased.
- There was positive feedback about the quality and quantity of the information provided to candidates.
- More than 75 percent of unsuccessful candidates said they would apply for another position at Southwood, indicating that the school had made a positive first impression. This also suggests that candidates thought that the selection methods were fair and transparent. Feedback also indicated that candidates enjoyed talking to both staff and students and that this, combined with the school's plan for future development, had left positive impressions.

### **Enhancing Selection Methods**

The school had relied on interviews as their sole selection method. The HR manager and principal did not think that this method was sufficient. It was decided that all candidates for teaching vacancies should deliver a brief teaching session while being observed by a senior teacher. Teaching observation sessions enabled the senior teacher to assess the following knowledge and skills:

- Relationship with students.
- Delivery style.
- Innovation in teaching methods.
- Communication skills.
- Subject knowledge.
- Ability to engage students.

Candidates were informed in advance to prepare a 20-minute teaching session. At the end of the sessions, the observer gave comments and ratings to the main interview panel. The ratings system involved the observer's ratings in the six areas shown (1 being the minimum and 10 being the maximum number of points). Observers were also asked to give examples (where possible) to justify their score.

Following discussions with stakeholders (including the student council) it was decided that students should have input into the selection process. To achieve this, student interview panels were added to the selection process.

Students on the interview panels were selected by the relevant department head. After training to ensure they did not ask inflammatory or discriminatory questions, they were asked to write their own questions to ask candidates. Student panel members provided feedback to the principal and main interview panel members.

These methods sent a message to candidates that the role and opinions of the students were valued by the school and that it was an important part of the school's culture. An overview of the newly revised selection day is in this case study.

Southwood continued the use of both formal and informal interview panels, but adopted a more structured approach. Panel members now meet in advance to organize questions and identify any key issues to be highlighted. Training is also provided on an annual basis for staff members who may be involved in selection activities, though attendance is not mandatory. The approach to scoring candidates objectively does not yet take place consistently, but the quality of feedback to candidates is much improved and provides them with some constructive information.

Southwood has not adopted any of the more innovative selection methods such as psychometric testing, but the principal has promised to consider them in the future if a strong argument could be presented.

Anecdotal feedback was gathered from successful candidates, who offered the following comments:

- “It was good to get to meet the students to find out what they really thought about the school.”
- “I found the day quite intensive as there were lots of things to do, but it gave me a good idea about how the school is run.”
- “The informal interview panel was a bit nerve-wracking, as I was not sure exactly what the aim of it was—it seemed quite personal.”
- “The chance to meet lots of different people was good and I knew that this was the type of school that I wanted to work in.”

A limitation of this feedback is that it was gained from only successful candidates. It would have been interesting to hear the views of those who did not get the job.

There has been a 10 percent increase in the number of internal candidates applying for promotions and a small decline in the number of staff leaving the organization.

# Teaching Notes on Student Activities

## PART I

1. Have students read the case study and underline any unfamiliar terms.
2. Review the unfamiliar terms they identified. These might include:
  - UK public sector.
  - Employee retention issues.
  - Application packages.
  - Scoring system.
  - Internal recruitment.
  - Discriminatory questions.
  - Internal promotions.
  - Psychometric testing.

## PART II

The following activities are provided. The instructor may select activities that are most appropriate for the class.

### 3. Discussion Questions

These questions could be answered individually, or would also be suitable for small groups or a class-wide debate.

- 3.1. What are the main reasons why a vacancy may occur in the organization?
- 3.2. What are the advantages of using the Internet for recruitment?
- 3.3. What alternative recruitment methods could Southwood use?
- 3.4. Why do you think Southwood felt that one panel interview was insufficient as a selection method?
- 3.5. What are the advantages of asking students to participate in the selection process?
- 3.6. Do you have any concerns about using students as part of the selection process? Explain your answer.
- 3.7. Looking at the existing reference request form, are there any additional areas where the principal should request additional details or information?

3.8. Consider this statement: ‘Recruitment and selection should be a two-way process.’ Explain.

3.9. What criteria would you use to choose the most appropriate selection method(s)?

3.10. Why is it important for employees who conduct interviews to receive training?

#### 4. Group tasks

These tasks work well with small groups. When asking students to complete these tasks, it may be appropriate to ask them to share their ideas in the form of a short presentation.

4.1. Review the advertisement that the organization used in the past. Outline the strengths and weaknesses and then design an improved version.

4.2. Design an advertisement for a mathematics teacher that could be placed in a national newspaper.

4.3. Compose an e-mail to candidates to inform them that they will be interviewed by a student panel. Some candidates might feel nervous about this, so sell the idea in your e-mail.

4.4. Review the selection day timetable and outline any changes you would make.

4.5. Complete the following table to show the advantages and disadvantages of the different selection methods.

	Advantages	Disadvantages
Application form:		
Psychometric tests:		
Résumé or curriculum vitae review:		
Formal (structured) interview:		
Informal interview:		
Teaching observation:		
Presentation by candidates to a panel of teachers:		
Online testing:		
References:		

4.6. Design an outline for a training program that could be offered to teachers who may be involved in the selection process for a new staff member.

## 5. Extension tasks

These tasks are suitable for undergraduate students who want to further develop their knowledge and skills in this area. They could also be used as independent learning or homework activities to be completed outside of the classroom.

- 5.1. Design a presentation that could be used to prepare students who are going to be on a student interview panel for the first time.
- 5.2. Review the reference request document and design an improved version.
- 5.3. Write interview questions which could be asked by the principal and HR manager when selecting a new employee for the organization.
- 5.4. What information would you send to candidates before they attend a selection day? Compare this with the current information given to candidates.

# Possible Answers to Questions

Please note that these are only possible answers, and are not intended to be exhaustive.

Question	Key areas to cover
<b>Part II Discussion Questions</b>	
<b>3.1 Suggested answer</b>	<p>What are the main reasons why a vacancy may occur in the organization?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Someone left and a direct replacement is required.</li> <li>■ Someone was promoted.</li> <li>■ A new job was created.</li> <li>■ Existing roles changed which led to the need for a new staff member to fill the gap.</li> <li>■ The organization is expanding.</li> <li>■ An existing employee is on temporary leave.</li> </ul>
<b>3.2 Suggested answer</b>	<p>What are the advantages of using the Internet for recruitment?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Shortens the recruitment cycle (not waiting for documents to be returned by mail).</li> <li>■ Reduces paperwork.</li> <li>■ Saves time in not having to send out application packages.</li> <li>■ Presents a professional and competent IT image.</li> <li>■ Information is available to candidates 24 hours a day.</li> <li>■ Most people have Internet access, so job postings may be viewed by a wider audience.</li> <li>■ Is a cost-effective recruitment method.</li> <li>■ Can be subcontracted easily.</li> </ul>
<b>3.3 Suggested answer</b>	<p>What alternative recruitment methods could Southwood use?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Use outside recruiters for management positions.</li> <li>■ More extensive use of professional websites.</li> <li>■ Radio advertisements.</li> <li>■ Internal advertisements (this may motivate staff and encourage them to remain with the organization).</li> <li>■ Contacting people who have previously applied for a job with the organization.</li> </ul>
<b>3.4 Suggested answer</b>	<p>Why do you think Southwood felt that one panel interview was insufficient as a selection method?</p> <p>Using a single selection method allows candidates only one chance to sell themselves. Further, interviews are not appropriate for every type of job. Interviews can be quite subjective and dependent on the skills and knowledge of the interviewer, making it possible that the best person for the job may not be hired. It can also be argued that it is possible to learn how to give a good interview and that this might not reflect the person's actual competence in dealing with people. The use of multiple approaches allows the organization to look at different areas and gain the views of a number of assessors using a structured rating system.</p>



<p><b>3.5</b> <b>Suggested answer</b></p>	<p>What are the advantages of asking students to participate in the selection process?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Students will spend most of their time with the teacher, so their views are important.</li> <li>■ Students can gain valuable skills.</li> <li>■ Sends a message to the candidates that students' opinions are highly valued.</li> <li>■ May act as an incentive for students to work hard so they are chosen for an interview panel.</li> <li>■ Students are familiar with the characteristics of a good teacher.</li> <li>■ Offers a different perspective to that of the principal and other teachers.</li> <li>■ They may ask a different range of questions because their priorities are likely to be different.</li> </ul>
<p><b>3.6</b> <b>Suggested answer</b></p>	<p>Do you have any concerns about using students as part of the selection process? Explain your answer.</p> <p>There may be a concern that students could abuse this position or find out confidential information about candidates. This should not be the case if the process is managed properly and students are provided training. Ideally, students should not be given copies of application forms and should base their judgments solely on the information discussed in the interviews. The HR manager should ensure that students are aware that this is a position of trust and that their conduct should be exemplary. Students should also be reminded that they must not discuss anything they learned about candidates with other students, particularly regarding the successful candidate. This should be covered in detail during training.</p>
<p><b>3.7</b> <b>Suggested answer</b></p>	<p>Looking at the existing reference request form, are there any additional areas where the principal should request additional details or information?</p> <p>Students may say that the rating areas are quite ambiguous and may be interpreted in different ways. They should suggest more specific areas related to teaching and consider the use of a form where the person who is providing the reference is asked to provide examples to support their ratings. Additional criteria may include management experience and details about any other responsibilities they have held in the past. Some organizations will also ask about information regarding any disciplinary procedures that the employee has been involved with in the past. Objective information could also be requested on attendance and punctuality as well as measurements such as exam results and student feedback data. Instructors may want to highlight the differences in practice between the UK and U.S. in relation to the use of references.</p>
<p><b>3.8</b> <b>Suggested answer</b></p>	<p>Consider this statement: 'Recruitment and selection should be a two-way process.' Explain.</p> <p>Candidates should use both the recruitment and selection stages to see if this is the type of organization they want to work in and that they have common aims and objectives. If the candidate has expertise in an area where there is a skills shortage, they can afford to turn down a job offer if it does not meet all of their needs. Accepting a job is a big commitment, and candidates should assess their potential working relationships within the organization. Candidates can always withdraw their application if they feel that it is not the right type of job for them, just as the organization can choose not to select them. If a large number of applicants fail to complete the full selection process, the organization should investigate the matter. From a more positive perspective, if the candidate feels that there will be a good fit between them and the organization, this may lead to a more motivated and committed employee.</p>

<p><b>3.9</b> <b>Suggested answer</b></p>	<p>What criteria would you use to choose the most appropriate selection method(s)?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The organization should look at the job description and choose tasks that will help candidates demonstrate their skills and knowledge in these areas. Activities should always be relevant and set at an appropriate level.</li> <li>■ Reviewing best practices for jobs in the specific area is important. The school can also reflect on the activities that were successful in the past.</li> <li>■ The organization must be realistic about the resources they have, including money and expertise; this should be considered on an individual basis, because recruiting a new member of the management team may use more resources. For example, it may be expensive to run psychometric tests, and there are time implications in training people to take part on interview panels.</li> <li>■ Selection activities can be complicated and time-consuming, both to design and to execute. They should be proportionate to the type and level of the job.</li> </ul>
<p><b>3.10</b> <b>Suggested answer</b></p>	<p>Why is it important for employees who conduct interviews to receive training?</p> <p>Participating in an interview panel is a responsible position; members are asked to make a decision that will affect the long-term success of the organization. It is important that interviewers are ambassadors for the organization so candidates want to work for them (and not withdraw their application). They must also be aware of the legal implications in terms of avoiding discrimination. Good training can be a positive experience for interviewers and will help them develop their own professional skills.</p>
<p><b>Group Tasks</b></p>	
<p><b>4.1</b> <b>Suggested answer</b></p>	<p>Review the advertisement that the organization used in the past. Outline the strengths and weaknesses and then design an improved version.</p> <p>Students should realize that there are more weaknesses than strengths and should address the following points:</p> <p>Strength:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The advertisement covers the most important basic contact information.</li> </ul> <p>Weaknesses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ There is no salary information provided for the position.</li> <li>■ Only very basic criteria are shown and it is not an accurate representation of the job.</li> <li>■ There is little information about the responsibilities that the successful candidate may have in addition to normal teaching duties.</li> <li>■ There is nothing to sell the school and make people want to work there.</li> <li>■ No graphics or images are used to make the advertisement stand out.</li> </ul>
<p><b>4.2</b> <b>Suggested answer</b></p>	<p>Design an advertisement for a mathematics teacher that could be placed in a national newspaper.</p> <p>The advertisement should contain the following information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Job title and salary.</li> <li>■ An accurate overview of the key responsibilities of the job.</li> <li>■ An indication of the key personal qualities required for the role.</li> <li>■ The name of someone candidates can call if they have questions about the job.</li> <li>■ Wording that will make the organization attractive to potential job candidates.</li> <li>■ Professional layout with no typographical errors.</li> <li>■ The organization's website address.</li> </ul>

<p><b>4.3</b> <b>Suggested answer</b></p>	<p>Compose an e-mail to candidates to inform them that they will be interviewed by a student panel. Some candidates might feel nervous about this, so sell the idea in your e-mail.</p> <p>Key points that should be included in the e-mail:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The important role that students play in the school, to explain why they are involved in such an important process.</li> <li>■ This type of activity is indicative of the way the school is run and organized.</li> <li>■ Students will provide interesting insights into the school and candidates will be encouraged to ask the students questions.</li> <li>■ The fact that this is only one part of the selection process.</li> <li>■ The importance of good relationships between staff and students right from the beginning.</li> <li>■ The chance to provide students with a good development opportunity by taking part in such activities.</li> <li>■ The fact that students receive training so they know how to conduct themselves and how to compose appropriate questions.</li> <li>■ The fact that the importance of confidentiality is reinforced to students.</li> <li>■ Highlight feedback from previous candidates who found it a very useful process.</li> </ul>			
<p><b>4.4</b> <b>Suggested answer</b></p>	<p>Review the selection day timetable and outline any changes you would make.</p> <p>There are various changes that students may want to make. These changes may include (but are not limited to):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Making it a shorter day.</li> <li>■ Using fewer selection methods.</li> <li>■ Providing more free time for candidates to explore the school.</li> <li>■ Spending less time with the principal.</li> <li>■ Using more innovative selection methods.</li> </ul>			
<p><b>4.5</b> <b>Suggested answer</b></p>	<p>Complete the following table to show the advantages and disadvantages of the different selection methods.</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="440 1171 1490 1213"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="440 1171 964 1213">Advantages</th> <th data-bbox="964 1171 1490 1213">Disadvantages</th> </tr> </thead> </table>		Advantages	Disadvantages
Advantages	Disadvantages			
<p>Application form:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ This is a traditional method with which candidates will be familiar and comfortable.</li> <li>■ Facilitates comparisons between candidates.</li> <li>■ Makes it easier to judge whether candidates meet the job criteria.</li> <li>■ Allows a structured interview to take place following the flow of the application form.</li> <li>■ May force the applicant to focus specifically on the job that they are applying for, rather than using a standard résumé or curriculum vitae.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ May not be suitable for all types of jobs – for example, skills-based jobs such as a designer.</li> <li>■ May encourage candidates to use a standard response to application forms if they are very similar across organizations.</li> <li>■ Does not allow the candidate the opportunity to demonstrate creativity in structure or content.</li> <li>■ May be difficult for candidates to differentiate themselves.</li> <li>■ May be difficult to short-list if too many applications meet all of the criteria.</li> </ul>		

Psychometric tests:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The goal of psychometric tests is to measure psychological characteristics that could provide interesting information for the organization, which can then be linked to their future plans.</li> <li>■ May provide objectivity if the validity and reliability of the tests are high.</li> <li>■ A standardized method, where candidates are asked to complete the same activities, provides results that can be compared.</li> <li>■ There are a wide range of tests to choose from.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Failure to use the most appropriate test will affect the usefulness of the results.</li> <li>■ Candidates who have taken a test in the past will have an advantage over those with no experience of this method.</li> <li>■ They are useful only when someone with appropriate knowledge and experience can analyze the results.</li> <li>■ Not all tests have high levels of validity and reliability.</li> <li>■ It can be difficult to link competencies into the tests.</li> <li>■ Instructors may wish to highlight the differences in practices between the UK and U.S.</li> </ul>
Résumé or curriculum vitae (CV) review:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Allows candidates to structure the document.</li> <li>■ The content and level of detail can be decided by the candidate.</li> <li>■ Provides a good opportunity for candidates to sell themselves.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Makes it more difficult for the organization to make objective comparisons, as information is provided in different formats.</li> <li>■ Different types of information will be provided by the candidates.</li> <li>■ The candidate may omit valuable information or data, or include misleading or false information.</li> </ul>
Formal (structured) interview:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Allows interviewers to verify information on the application form, curriculum vitae or résumé.</li> <li>■ Allows interviewers to probe areas where they would like more information.</li> <li>■ Candidates can provide examples to demonstrate their skills and knowledge.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Relies heavily on the skills of the interviewer.</li> <li>■ May be considered a subjective process.</li> <li>■ Some candidates may be nervous in an interview situation (even though they would be very capable of doing the actual job).</li> <li>■ Some candidates may interview well, but this does not necessarily mean that they will be good at the job.</li> </ul>
Teaching observation:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ It is important that candidates are good teachers.</li> <li>■ Gives interviewers the opportunity to see how a candidate's teaching style would fit into the organization.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Requires skilled observers.</li> <li>■ There are factors that may be outside the control of the candidate, such as student behavior and the resources that are available to them.</li> </ul>
PowerPoint Presentation by candidates to a panel of teachers:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ This is an essential part of the job, so it is necessary to ensure they can deliver PowerPoint presentations effectively.</li> <li>■ Allows the assessment of a wide range of skills including preparation, communication, relationship with the audience and presentation skills.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Care must be taken when providing instructions on the task so that candidates understand what you are assessing (e.g., content, presentation skills, or both).</li> <li>■ Judgments may be subjective if clear criteria are not used.</li> </ul>

Online testing:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ If the tests can be re-used a number of times, they can be an inexpensive method.</li> <li>■ There is a large selection of tests available.</li> <li>■ Can provide very quick feedback, some of which can be shared with the candidate as part of their personal development.</li> <li>■ A range of different types of activities can be used, including multimedia.</li> <li>■ Computer skills are desirable for most organizations.</li> <li>■ May offer flexibility in terms of when and where the test can be completed.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ If standard tests are used, the candidates may have completed them before.</li> <li>■ They are a one-way process, so the candidate is unlikely to find out information about the organization.</li> <li>■ May penalize people with poor IT skills but who would be very good at doing the actual job.</li> <li>■ If testing is not done in a secure location, there is potential for cheating.</li> <li>■ Not all tests are customizable to the sector and industry that the organization operates in.</li> </ul>
References:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Allows the organization to verify factual information.</li> <li>■ Can provide valuable information on character and work experience to date.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ They are often used automatically by organizations regardless of whether they are appropriate.</li> <li>■ They are potentially unreliable because they depend on the skills and integrity of the person who provides the reference.</li> <li>■ Requests need to be carefully worded so that relevant information is gained.</li> </ul>
<b>4.6</b> <b>Suggested answer</b>	<p>Design an outline for a training program that could be offered to teachers who may be involved in the selection process for a new staff member.</p> <p>The training program should include the following content:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The legal framework relevant to recruitment and selection.</li> <li>■ The importance of objectivity and consistency.</li> <li>■ Communication skills.</li> <li>■ Making candidates feel at ease during the process.</li> <li>■ Presenting a positive image of the organization, its staff and students.</li> <li>■ Interviewing techniques.</li> <li>■ The strengths and weaknesses of the different selection techniques used by the organization.</li> <li>■ How to provide constructive feedback to unsuccessful candidates.</li> </ul>	

Extension Activities	
<p><b>5.1</b> <b>Suggested answer</b></p>	<p>Design a presentation that could be used to prepare a group of students who are going to be on a student interview panel for the first time.</p> <p>The following points should be covered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The reasons why they were selected.</li> <li>■ Reinforcing that it is a big responsibility which should be taken seriously.</li> <li>■ How they can use this experience on their résumés.</li> <li>■ Examples of benefits previous students experienced as a result of their participation, e.g., increased confidence and experience in an interview situation.</li> <li>■ Suggestions for the types of question they could ask.</li> <li>■ Examples of questions that should be avoided.</li> <li>■ How to score/rate an interview performance.</li> <li>■ The importance of confidentiality.</li> <li>■ Conduct after the interview.</li> </ul>
<p><b>5.2</b> <b>Suggested answer</b></p>	<p>Review the reference request document and design an improved version.</p> <p>Improvements may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Asking for objective data.</li> <li>■ Providing information about the job (a copy of the key roles and responsibilities).</li> <li>■ Reinforcing the importance of honesty in references.</li> <li>■ Allowing space for any additional information that the person completing the reference thinks might be useful.</li> <li>■ Providing personal contact details of the HR manager so they can be contacted directly to preserve confidentiality.</li> </ul>
<p><b>5.3</b> <b>Suggested answer</b></p>	<p>Write interview questions which could be asked by the principal and HR manager when selecting a new employee for the organization.</p> <p>Provide the students with a copy of the interview questions. This shows a range of questions that could be asked.</p>
<p><b>5.4</b> <b>Suggested answer</b></p>	<p>What information would you send to candidates before they attend a selection day? Compare this with the current information given to candidates.</p> <p>Students should identify:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Positive information about the school, including data such as inspection reports and exam results.</li> <li>■ Details about the area in which the school is located.</li> <li>■ Details about the job, including roles and responsibilities.</li> <li>■ Information about the prospective department (showing that they are friendly).</li> <li>■ Information about the future plans of the organization.</li> <li>■ Copies of any public relations materials.</li> <li>■ Contact details for the prospective manager.</li> <li>■ Website address for the organization.</li> <li>■ Information about the structure and content of the selection day.</li> </ul>

# Recruitment Advertisement

**Southwood School  
Eastwest Street  
London  
UK**

[Hr.manager@southwood.school.uk](mailto:Hr.manager@southwood.school.uk)

## **VACANCY FOR TEACHER OF FRENCH**

Southwood School is seeking a French teacher to join us in September. You should be a dedicated and enthusiastic teacher who has previous experience teaching students aged 11-18 years old. You will be joining our hardworking and committed team at this successful school.

You should possess the following skills:

- Excellent computer skills.
- Ability to encourage students to achieve well.
- Ability to work as part of a team.

The successful candidate will:

- Be a qualified teacher.
- Speak fluent French.

Application can be obtained through an e-mail request to the school e-mail address shown above.



# Information Provided to Candidates

## **Introduction to Southwood School**

- History of the school.
- Age range of students and the type of school (mixed comprehensive).
- Number of staff and students.
- Management structure.
- The range of courses that are offered (and could be offered in the future).
- Any awards or recognition that the school has earned.

## **Introduction to the Department**

- Organizational structure.
- Introduction to key staff with brief résumés.
- Departmental development plan for the next three years.
- Overview of the curriculum, including details of the key textbooks that are used.
- Exam results (and targets for future years).

## **Introduction to the Town of Southwood**

- Geographical location.
- Famous landmarks.
- Employment levels.
- Other schools.
- Transport infrastructure (local and national).

Additional information would be provided to international candidates.

# Selection Day Timetable

Time	Event	Location	Participants
<b>9:00 a.m.</b>	Welcome to the school	Principal's office	Principal, HR manager, department head
<b>9:30 a.m.</b>	Tour of the school		Students
<b>10:00 – 11:30 a.m.</b>	Teaching observations*	Classroom 101	Selected senior teachers
<b>11:30 – 11:45 a.m.</b>	Refreshments and opportunity to meet with potential colleagues	Staff room	All available staff
<b>11:45 a.m. – 12:45 p.m.</b>	Individual interviews with principal	Principal's office	Principal and HR manager
<b>12:45 – 1:30 p.m.</b>	Lunch	School cafeteria	
<b>1:30 – 3:00 p.m.</b>	Staff panel interviews	Office 201	Deputy principal, department head, teacher from department, and HR manager
<b>3:00 – 4:30 p.m.</b>	Student panel interviews	Classroom 104	Four students
<b>4:30 – 5:00 p.m.</b>	Q & A session	Principal's office	Principal and HR manager

\*Candidates are required to deliver a 20-minute teaching session. Full details are provided to the candidate including the following information:

- The age of students.
- The number of students who will be in the class.
- The topic areas covered in the previous teaching session.
- The topic of the session they will teach and the learning objectives that should be met.
- List of resources that are available (e.g., computers, projector).
- The names (and positions) of the staff that will be observing the session.
- Details of any students with special educational needs.

Candidates can e-mail any other questions in advance of the session so they have all of the necessary information.

# Interview Questions

This document provides examples of interview questions used in the past.

## **Questions asked by the principal and members of the management team:**

- Why did you apply for this job?
- What do you know about this school?
- Why did you decide to pursue a career in teaching?
- How do you think you can contribute to the school development plan?
- What are your strengths and weaknesses?
- How do you think your present colleagues and managers would describe you?

## **Questions asked by teachers on an interview panel:**

- What innovative teaching methods have you used successfully in the past?
- Which subjects do you enjoy teaching a) the most and b) the least?
- How would you deal with disruptive students in the classroom?
- Give an example of how you use technology to enhance your teaching.

## **Questions asked by the HR manager:**

- What contributions would you make to this school?
- What training and development opportunities have you taken part in to date?
- What are your career plans for the next a) five years and b) ten years?
- What support would you like Southwood to provide if your application is successful?

## **Questions asked by students:**

- What do you think the most important characteristics of an effective teacher are?
- How would you support students who find your subject difficult?
- How would you create a fun learning environment in the classroom?
- How would you build a good relationship with a new group of students?
- Do you have any ideas for afterschool activities or clubs? What are they?

# Reference Request Letter

Dear Sir/Madam:

**Re:**    *Name of job applicant*

The person named above has applied to join Southwood School as a French teacher and has provided your name as a reference. I would be grateful if you could complete the attached form and return it to me as soon as possible.

If you have any concerns about this person's suitability to be a teacher, I would be grateful if you would contact me directly to discuss this further.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "D. Hart".

Dr. David Hart  
Principal, Southwood School

# Reference Details

Name of candidate:

1. Please rate the candidate by checking the appropriate boxes and add a brief rationale for your rating.

	1	2	3	4	5	Reason for rating
Teaching ability						
Relationship with colleagues						
Relationship with students						
Ability to meet deadlines						
Use of IT						
Professionalism						
Examination results						
Attendance and punctuality						

2. Would you re-employ this person in your organization in the future?

Yes  No  (If no, please provide details on a separate sheet.)

3. Do you have any doubts about this person's suitability for the job?

Yes  No  (If yes, please provide details on a separate sheet.)

4. Please confirm your contact information and relationship with the candidate:

Your name:

Your position:

Your organization:

How do you know the candidate? \_\_\_\_\_

**Please return this completed form by e-mail to [hr.manager@southwood.school.uk](mailto:hr.manager@southwood.school.uk)**

SHRM members can download this case study and many others free of charge at [www.shrm.org/hrededucation/cases.asp](http://www.shrm.org/hrededucation/cases.asp).  
If you are not a SHRM member and would like to become one, please visit [www.shrm.org/join](http://www.shrm.org/join).



1800 Duke Street  
Alexandria, VA 22314-3499