

Tips for Redacting Applicant Materials

Overview

While many committees recognize the value of a blinded screening step and often show interest in conducting a blinded initial review of resumes, redaction can be a tricky area and depends greatly on the timeline and needs of the committee. Should your committee be interested in redacting information, some tips and guidelines are included below.

Personally Identifying Information

First and foremost, the individual redacting information should remove all candidate names, as well as any other personally identifying or protected information to the extent possible (email addresses, location, or other contact info; pictures; citizenship status; etc.). Please note: sometimes, it's not entirely possible to remove this entirely – for example, veteran status is protected, but we wouldn't want to redact someone's military career experience.

School Information

Beyond personal info, you'll also want to remove school name(s) and graduation date(s) – regardless of which level of education someone is addressing. This helps prevent any bias that may be associated with a given institution and also helps prevent age-based discrimination and assumptions about candidate age.

Additional Best Practices

A number of OHIO departments have, successfully, worked to remove other information that could bias the committee in an initial review such as professional organizations, names of conferences attended, employer names, and even presentation names. **It's critical to note that these would only be removed for an initial review and would become available for the committee's review should a candidate proceed.**

To illustrate how this can be helpful, you can imagine that there could easily be some different biases engaged if someone listed "United Christian Ministries" or "Church of Scientology of Central Ohio" on their CV, even if their work with either, maybe as an office administrator (the title and duties of which would remain unredacted) is equally applicable regardless of the employer.

Another example is that of professional organizations. If a candidate notes membership in Out OHIO, Women in Aviation International, and Latino Caucus on their CV, that could easily engage some bias because folks are going to assume identities based on those affiliations. And if only those professional organizations that have a tie to protected classes are redacted and others (like National Association of Realtors) are not, then that could lead to some speculation and inconsistency; better to redact all of the orgs for the preliminary review.

The same logic applies to conferences and names of presentations – the names of those conferences or the names of my presentations could easily spark bias. For a preliminary review where the committee is trying to determine my qualifications, it may not be necessary to have conference and presentation information readily available, so redacting all of that would be beneficial. Otherwise, if presentation experience is required for example, that may not be possible or helpful.