

## Procedure for Request and Approval the Starting Pay Rate

This procedure is to be used as a guideline for determining a fair and competitive starting rate of pay for new employees, while maintaining fiscal responsibility and to the extent possible assuring internal equity.

- 1) New employees should be stated at the entry rate of the pay grade, unless extraordinary qualifications, experience or labor market demands warrant a higher rate.
- 2) It is recognized that to be competitive and to ensure we are hiring the best qualified candidates, in some cases an appointment above the entry rate may be necessary.
- 3) If the candidate exceeds the minimum experience and education requirements for the position, a rate above Step 1 may be considered.
- 4) In evaluating a combination of training and experience, 2 additional years of related education may be substituted for a year of experience.
  - a. For example, if a Bachelor's degree and 3 years of experience and the candidate has a Master's and 2 years, they will be deemed qualified as long as all other criteria are met.
  - b. Education may not always be a beneficial substitute for work experience, i.e. if the candidate has a Ph.D. and the position only requires a high school diploma, the education most like will not enhance the applicant's ability to perform the job and should not be counted as work experience.
  - c. Education must be related to the work; i.e. a degree in chemistry may not be a positive substitute for education or work experience in Information Technology.
- 5) Directly related experience may be substituted for education as long as the minimum education requirements are met.
  - a. If the requirements are "MUST have a Bachelor's degree", then experience cannot be substituted, unless the posting specifically states that experience may be substituted in lieu of the degree.
  - b. At the same time, experience should not be substituted for all the education experience, if the position indicates 2 years of college and five years of experience, 7 years of experience may not be a sufficient substitute.
  - c. The work experience must be related to the type of degree necessary, i.e. substituting experience as a laborer cannot be counted towards education in Accounting.
- 6) The same follows for supervisory experience, if the posting requires that 5 years' experience, 2 of which must be in a supervisory capacity, there is no substitution for the supervisory requirement.
- 7) When determining an offer above the entry rate, additional **directly related** experience may be counted on a year for year basis up to the midpoint.
  - a. For example, if a position has a minimum requirement of 4 years' experience and the selected candidate has 8 years' experience, the hiring manager may recommend the new candidate be started at step 5 (where the employee would be with 4 years of experience).

- b. It is important to consider the not only the years of experience, but the quality of the experience.
- 8) The hiring manager must also consider internal equity when making an offer to an outside candidate to correct some of the inequity that has occurred over the past years.
  - a. The department must review the current grade, step and tenure of all incumbents similarly situated. Unless the experience and education substantially exceeds those of the incumbent, a salary offer should not be higher than the current employee(s).
- 9) Except for rare occasions, new employees should not be offered a step rate that exceeds the rate of tenured employees.
  - a. A rare circumstance would be when the applicant has specialized skills, certification(s) or license(s) that exceeds the qualifications of tenured employees.
- 10) If the Hiring Manager wishes to make an offer exceeding Step 1, a memo must be prepared for approvals as follows:
  - a. Placement in Steps 2 – 5 requires:
    - Request from the Department Director
    - Concurrence of the Director Human Resources
    - Approval of the Assistant City Manager
  - b. Placement above Step 5 requires:
    - Request from the Department Director
    - Concurrence of the Director of Human Resources
    - Concurrence of the Assistant City Manager
    - Approval of the City Manager
- 11) If HR does not concur with the recommendation, the reason(s) why the request is denied will be provided and an alternative offer will be suggested.
- 12) If at any point in the approval process the department disagrees with HR, the request can be taken to the Assistant City Manager and/or City Manager for further consideration and approval.

Other things to consider when determining a hiring offer:

- 13) A salary offer should be negotiated, and the hiring manager should not assume the candidate is leaving a current employer for more money.
- 14) If the applicant is currently unemployed, it may not be necessary to offer them a salary comparable to what they were earning with their last employer.
- 15) The hiring manager should “sell” other advantages of working for the City of Corpus Christi; i.e. good employee benefits equal to an additional 30% of total compensation; annual step increases; challenging work; stability, opportunity for growth; and a great City.