

January 2025

Competency-Based Hiring: The Future of Recruitment in State Government

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Agenda

- Skills-Based Hiring
- SHB2216
- Executive Order
- Recruiter role

What Is Skills-Based Hiring?

- Skills-based hiring focuses on assessing and selecting candidates based on their ability to perform the job's essential functions through demonstrated skills, competencies, and experience rather than formal education or traditional job histories.
- **Key Characteristics:**
 - Competency-Driven
 - Inclusive Assessments
 - Flexible Qualification Pathways

Traditional Hiring

- Relies heavily on degrees, past job titles, or specific industry experience.
- Americans who have graduated from college, rose from just 8% in 1960 to 38% in 2022.
- Employers began adding degree requirements to jobs that hadn't previously demanded one.
- Degree-based approaches, came to define corporate recruitment strategies for decades.

Traditional Job Posting

TITLE: Recruiter

JOB SUMMARY:

The recruiter role provides support in all the processes and efforts to find and manage relationships with all candidates. They help in the preparation of the recruitment processes by scanning resumes and narrowing the selection to determining the most suitable candidates. They perform administrative tasks, prepare communications, and manage the relationship with candidates.

RESPONSIBILITIES AND ACTIVITIES:

This role will be responsible for recruiting functions including:

- ♦ Process, verify, and maintain candidate related documentation, including staffing needs, recruitment, choosing organizations to partner with for recruitment, candidate relations, interview coordination, and offer negotiations.
- ♦ Record data for each candidate.
- ♦ Explain company personnel policies, benefits, and procedures to job applicants.
- ♦ Answer questions regarding the interview process, assessments, eligibility, salaries, benefits, and other pertinent information.
- ♦ Prepare, coordinate, and conduct phone interviews.
- ♦ Coordinate with HR manager and hiring manager to understand open positions and talent needs.

QUALIFICATIONS:

- ♦ Requires a BA/BS in Related Field
- ♦ Minimum of 1 year of experience working in a recruiting environment
- ♦ Exceptional interpersonal and communication skills; friendly, tactful, good negotiator, ability to influence others
- ♦ Analytical skills
- ♦ Proficient using the Internet as a recruitment source
- ♦ Managing the entire hiring process (from sourcing to offer stage) in an efficient and effective manner
- ♦ Experience with Workday ATS (Applicant Tracking System) application
- ♦ Building dynamic relationships with hiring managers
- ♦ Sense of urgency is helpful
- ♦ Financially driven, energetic, confident go-getter who can maintain integrity
- ♦ General knowledge of various employment laws and practices

Skills-based Job Posting

TITLE: Recruiter

JOB SUMMARY:

The recruiter role provides support in all processes and efforts to find and maintain relationships with all candidates. They draft hiring materials, source candidates for open positions, conduct screening, and interview candidates. They track information on applicants, arrange interviews, and build working relationships with hiring managers, HR staff, and community partners.

RESPONSIBILITIES AND ACTIVITIES:

This role will be responsible for recruiting functions including:

- ♦ Process, verify, and maintain candidate documentation in our Applicant Tracking System.
- ♦ Source qualified candidates from various channels (e.g., online, job fairs, community partners).
- ♦ Draft and refine hiring documents including job postings, screening guides, and interview guides.
- ♦ Prepare, coordinate, and conduct reference checks, screening and phone and in-person interviews.
- ♦ Evaluate applicant eligibility and qualifications for employment.
- ♦ Engage and collaborate with HR manager and hiring manager to understand open positions and long-term talent needs.
- ♦ Evaluate and use new sourcing techniques to identify, cultivate, and attract qualified candidates.
- ♦ Answer questions regarding the interview process, assessments, eligibility, salaries, benefits, etc.

REQUIRED COMPETENCIES:

- ♦ **Interview and Assessment Techniques** - Develop structured interview guides and use assessments to evaluate skill sets of applicants.
- ♦ **Process Improvement** - Monitor and evaluate recruiting processes and update recruiting and sourcing methods to improve the quality of candidates and reduce time to hire.
- ♦ **Interpersonal Skills** - Guide conversations to assess applicants' eligibility and qualifications in person and over the phone; build relationships with community partners to hire their clients/students.
- ♦ **Judgment and Decision Making** - Assess eligibility and qualifications of applicants during recruitment, screening, and interviewing; partner with HR and hiring managers to decide on new hires.
- ♦ **Writing** - Communicate clearly in writing as appropriate in email, digital platforms, and hiring documents (e.g., job postings).

PREFERRED COMPETENCIES:

- ♦ **Employment Law** - Knowledge on legality for acceptable conduct and questions during interview and hiring process; understanding of employment eligibility.
- ♦ **Recruitment Software** - Use Application Tracking Systems to track applicants for multiple open positions.
- ♦ **Persuasion** - Persuade top candidates online and at job fairs to apply to our positions.

Why Skills-based Hiring?

- In an article by Stand Together Trust, ["72% of employers](#) do not see a college degree as a reliable signal of skills, yet 52% still hire people with college degrees because they see it as the less risky option."
- According to data collected by [Opportunity@Work](#), a grantee of Stand Together Trust," four-year degree requirements automatically screen out:
 - 76% of African Americans
 - 83% of Latinos, and
 - 81% of rural Americans



Why Should State Agencies Adopt Skills-based Hiring?

- Align with legislative and policy directives.
- Expand talent pools and address workforce gaps.
- Stay Ahead of Workforce Trends.
- Boost Public Trust and Economic Opportunity.



SHB 2216

The first step to considering at alternate paths that meet job requirements.

“Not require a two-year or four-year college degree **as the only way to demonstrate qualifications** for the role unless that degree is required by law for an employee to perform the essential functions of a classification.”

Executive Order 24-04

- Effective December 2, 2024
- Increasing employment opportunities in Washington State Government.
- Achieve equity, dismantle discrimination and institutional and systemic barriers.
- To achieve equity and diversity within our state agency workforce is part of a comprehensive approach to recruitment and hiring that identifies and eliminates barriers to employment and institutional discrimination.
- Every employee should understand how our processes create burdens for some in our community. Understanding systems barriers is a lifelong journey we are each responsible for.

Executive Order 24-04 Section 2

- State agencies will move towards a competency-based hiring process as a proven best-practice to create objective skills-based hiring. Increasing employment opportunities in Washington State Government.
- Remove degrees as the **only way** to meet a required qualification unless the degree is required by law to perform the essential functions of the job. (SHB2216).
- By July 1, 2025, remove certifications, specific years of required experience, and other biased qualifications (e.g. required English proficiency, driver's licenses, lifting 50lbs., etc.) unless there is an established standard for it by OFM SHR or their agency HR.
- By December 31, 2025, agencies will replace degree and year requirements (unless required by law or as an industry or profession standard) with the skills, abilities, and knowledge (competencies) necessary for performing the role.

Occupational Competencies

- **Occupational competencies** – Job or industry-specific skills, knowledge, and abilities required to perform technical or specialized tasks unique to a particular role or field.

Examples:

- **Data Analyst Role:** Proficiency in data visualization tools (e.g., Tableau, Power BI), statistical analysis methods, and programming languages like Python or Ruby.
- **Electrician Role:** Ability to interpret blueprints, install electrical systems, and comply with safety standards.

Foundational Competencies

- **Foundational competencies** – General skills, behaviors, and personal attributes that apply across many jobs and industries.

Examples:

- **Problem-Solving:** Analyzing issues, identifying solutions, and implementing effective fixes.
- **Communication:** Conveying ideas clearly in writing, speech, and visual formats.
- **Adaptability:** Responding flexibly to changing circumstances and new challenges.
- **Collaboration:** Working effectively in teams, both in-person and virtually.
- **Time Management:** Prioritizing tasks, meeting deadlines, and managing workload efficiently.

Alternative Routes to Gain Skills

- Alternate paths where qualifying experience is gained:

Experience	Examples
Certifications & Specialized Training	PHR/ Comptia/ PMP/ Self-study
Relevant Work Experience	Similar or same positions (no degree)
Military Experience	Active Duty / Reserve / MOS 10,000
Volunteer Experience	Peace Corp/ Charities / Other Nonprofits
Self-employment	Consulting/ Contracting/ Freelance/ Founder
Apprenticeships	Skilled trades/ Financial Services / Information Technology / Health Care
On the job learning	In-training/ Retraining / Professional Development

Recruiter role

- Recruiters are likely now assessing candidate differently since SHB2216.
- Review minimum requirements in positions descriptions before posting.
- Are there unnecessary certifications, specific years of required experience, and other biased qualifications that are not legally required?
- Audit screening methods to check if you're prioritizing degrees over skills and experience.
- Learn what other places an applicant gain qualifying competencies needed for this role.
- Visit and review the OFM EO toolkit online – Competency-based Hiring Templates & Training.

Competency-Based Templates

- Identifies essential functions for a position.
- Identifies competencies needed.
- Provides example of competency in use.
- Explains where a candidate might gain experience for that role through an alternate path.
- Offers suggested examples of interview questions to get information about a competency from the candidate.
- Other competency-based tools online like, [skillitizer](#), [skillsengine](#), [O-net](#), or AI, [Gender Decoder](#), and [OFM EO 24-04 Toolkit](#) for guidance on templates, job postings and skillsets.

Skills-based Hiring Templates

Based on the job description for an **Administrative Assistant 5**, the following are the essential functions of the role, the competencies needed to perform these functions, and examples of how these competencies are applied in the role. Additionally, there are alternative ways a candidate could qualify for the position without a degree by focusing on skills acquired through non-traditional paths.

Competency-Based Hiring Template

Essential Functions	Competencies Needed	Example of How an Employee Would Use Those Competencies
Prepares correspondence for supervisor; exercises signature authority on administrative matters.	Written Communication: Ability to clearly convey information in writing; attention to detail in drafting formal documents.	The Administrative Assistant drafts letters, memos, and emails, ensuring they are clear, professional, and reflect the supervisor's intentions accurately. They may also sign documents on behalf of the supervisor, showing trust and <u>competency</u> in administrative matters.
Supervises administrative, investigative, or research personnel.	Leadership & Supervision: Ability to manage teams, delegate tasks, and ensure work is completed efficiently.	Supervising a team of administrative staff or researchers, the Assistant sets priorities, provides guidance, and conducts performance reviews to ensure high standards of productivity and quality.
Conducts or supervises the	Project Management & Analytical Thinking: Ability to	They lead or assist in planning and executing large-scale studies, from



Questions?

For more information

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