



DOIA21/22030718

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Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for your email on 30 March 2022 requesting information on our recruitment policies and processes under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act). I have responded to your questions in turn.

Recognising the size of your organisation please consider the question as applied to leadership/management roles within the middle to senior management levels of your organisation.

1. *Would a candidate applying for a leadership/management type position in your organisation be required to do a task before the interview? (i.e. a phone screen, pre-test, etc) Or would the candidate have to complete a task after the interview such as - an aptitude test, numeracy/literacy or psychological profiling? Or are the interview and reference checking essentially the total recruitment process?*

Our recruitment approaches are tailored to each leadership role. Generally, after identifying a long-list of potential candidates we undertake phone screening, particularly where we need to understand any technical skills and experience that may be required in the leader's role.

When preferred candidates are identified, leaders undertake a minimum of two reference checks. We also require a criminal conviction check, and we participate in the public service 'serious misconduct' check process to understand the individual's employment history. Other relevant checks are undertaken where this is needed e.g. security clearance, work visa etc.

For senior leadership team roles, our process has sometimes included additional assessment activities including research on candidates, psychometric assessments, additional interviews, and more comprehensive reference checking including credit and qualifications checks.

2. *How are applicants chosen to be interviewed? (See the options below from a to c)*
 - (a) *A representative from Human Resources goes through the candidate pool of CV's received?*
 - (b) *A representative from HR and the hiring manager go through the candidates?*
 - (c) *The hiring manager acting alone selects who is to be interviewed?*

B, a representative from HR and the hiring manager go through the candidates.

3. *Does your organisation use 'BEI' type interviews for middle/senior leadership/management interviews?*
4. *If the answer to the above is 'no' how would you describe the type of interviews that are carried out?*

Yes, we do. We describe this as a 'STAR – Situation, Task, Action and Result' approach and candidates are made aware of this prior to attending the interview.

5. *Is a representative from HR on the interview panel? (Never/Always/Some times?)*

Sometimes, depending on the nature of the role and the panel members.

6. *For 'BEI' style interviews does each panel member score the candidate and then these scores are combined to tally up to a grand total score?*

Yes, this is a standard feature of our approach.

7. *Could a candidate who scores lower than the top scorer (e.g. came in second) still be considered the preferred candidate?*
8. *What are some of the factors or conditions that might give rise to the above in question #8 above? (I.e. – team fit, personality, how panel felt about them?) Other factors?*

Yes. This may happen in situations where scores are very close and the lower scoring candidate has experience that is more closely aligned to the role, or perhaps they are stronger in a capability area that is a priority for the Ministry eg Māori capability. In addition, a lower scoring candidate may have been stronger in pre-interview activities, reference checking, or other checks. We also apply a diversity and equity lens across our teams when selecting new employees.

9. *Are those in your organisation who do the interviewing trained in the BEI interview method?*

We do not hold records on this. However, we are aware that some panel members have received training in the STAR interviewing approach. Our interview guides for leaders include clear advice for leaders on how to lead a STAR-type interview, and our recruiters provide 1:1 support to leaders as they lead panels.

10. *Once a candidate has been selected and employed by your organisation do you keep a record of how long he/she stays with the organisation? (length of tenure)*

Yes, we hold employment records for all of our employees, including their start date, and their end date, once this is known. These records will be held for seven years in accordance with legislation.

11. *Or do you keep records of how that candidate is tracking regards their role? (good performance appraisals, improvements plans? Unsatisfactory performance?)*

Tuia Te Here Tangata (TUIA) is our team-based approach to performance and development. TUIA is designed to engage our people in fulfilling our purpose: thriving communities where everyone has a place to call home. Leaders are responsible for team and individual performance and development planning, and any records of these conversations are held within the team and with the individual employee.

12. Have you ever surveyed applicants who have been interviewed as to how they feel about the BEI interview process? If so, please share these results.

No, we have not.

13. Does your organisation ever use recruitment firms to source candidates? (I.e. this approach is sometimes use for specialist positions or senior management type roles)

Yes. Generally this has been for specialist and senior leadership team roles where a need for external expertise is identified.

14. The candidate pool since Covid – March, 2020. In your view has the pool of candidates changed or got smaller since March, 2020. Has it taken longer to recruit for roles or have some roles remained vacant? Have there been other flow on effects since Covid impacted in March 2020?

Over the past two years we have found it difficult to recruit for some roles with specialist capability and, as a result, some roles have remained vacant longer than expected. When this happens we reprioritise work, or reorganise work across our existing workforce.

With respect to other flow-on effects of COVID-19 in a recruitment context, we have increased our use of virtual meetings for interviews (eg via Microsoft Teams), and on occasion interviews have been rescheduled due to participants being unwell with Covid-19.

You have the right to seek an investigation and review of my response by the Ombudsman, in accordance with section 28(3) of the Act. The relevant details can be found on the Ombudsman's website www.ombudsman.parliament.nz.

As part of our ongoing commitment to openness and transparency, the Ministry proactively releases information and documents that may be of interest to the public. As such, this response, with your personal details removed, may be published on our website.

Yours sincerely



Emily Scarlett
General Manager People and Community