Determining a Good Fit for Our Candidates

Introduction
This document provides hiring managers with guidelines to determine the culture of their unit, team and the larger organization in order to develop questions that will help them assess if there is a good fit between a candidate and a vacant position within the department.

Definition
In selection, it’s as important to assess the candidate’s fit as it is to determine their skills and abilities. By fit, we mean the candidate’s fit with the job, with the department, with the organization and even with the location. Your candidate may have all the skills necessary to do the job, but if they don’t feel comfortable in our organizational culture, they might not stay. We refer to this as *motivational fit*. Assessing motivational fit requires that you first understand your team and organizational culture and develop appropriate questions to help you determine how happy and successful the candidate will be in your unit.

In order to determine motivational fit, it is important to look at the unique factors of each job, workgroup, organization and setting. Similar jobs exist in many different organizations and in many different industries. A candidate may feel right at home in one organization or industry and very uncomfortable in another – even though the job tasks may be the same.

Determining Your Personal Fit
Let’s begin the process of determining motivational fit by identifying the factors that contribute to your own motivational fit. Your responses to the following questions will help you understand the link between your work preferences and the role you perform.

1. List two characteristics of your current job that motivate you.

2. List two characteristics of other jobs that you’re glad are not a part of your job.

3. List two characteristics of your current job that frustrate you.

4. List two missing characteristics of your job that you wish were part of your job.
Determining a Good Fit for Our Candidates

If you consider yourself a happy and engaged employee, the positive answers you provided above outweigh the negative. They reflect your unique satisfiers and dissatisfiers.

Assessing Cultural/Motivational Fit Factors for Your Team
Research on career satisfaction confirms that people who are satisfied with their work often have similar likes and dislikes to other satisfied people who do similar work. With that in mind, you can answer the following questions to begin to determine the motivational fit factors for the position for which you’re hiring.

1. What are some of the reasons people leave your department? (Potential dissatisfiers)

2. What are the aspects of the job, the team or the organization that lead to dissatisfaction for some employees in your department?

3. What frustrates employees in your department? (Potential dissatisfiers)

4. What are some of the reasons people stay in your department? (Potential satisfiers)

5. What are the aspects of the job, the team or the organization that contribute to employee satisfaction in your department?

Keep in mind that the factors that satisfy some people may not satisfy others and the aspects of a job that may cause one person to leave may not matter to another. The challenge is to identify aspects that commonly influence employee satisfaction and ask questions to determine if those aspects will be an issue for your candidate.
Determining a Good Fit for Our Candidates

Questions to Determine Motivational Fit
Questions about past action and behavior are also helpful to determine motivational fit. Once you determine that your candidate has experienced a situation that reflects some of the motivational fit dimensions you’ve identified in your work, you can ask the candidate how they liked or disliked that experience. For example, if people leave your department because they want more autonomy and if there isn’t a structure that allows for autonomy, you can ask the following set of questions to determine if this is a satisfier or dissatisfier for the candidate.

“Describe to me the amount of autonomy you’ve had in your previous position(s). Give me an example that illustrates that level of autonomy. How satisfied were you with that amount of autonomy.”

From this question, you might learn that the candidate has never had a great deal of autonomy and doesn’t miss it. You might also learn that he or she left their previous position specifically because they didn’t have enough autonomy. These kinds of questions and the resulting information you gain from the candidate will let you know if they’re likely to enjoy their work and stay; dislike their work and leave; or dislike their work and stay with a bad attitude.

Based on the motivational fit factors you identified earlier, create some interview questions that will enable you to discover a candidate’s motivational fit.

Motivational Fit Factor: ____________________________

Motivational Fit Question:

Motivational Fit Factor: ____________________________

Motivational Fit Question:

Vanderbilt Culture
When we consider our Vanderbilt culture, there are a number of issues that have the potential to be satisfiers or dissatisfiers. The following aspects of the organization are all possible motivational fit factors:

- Change
- Collaboration
- Diversity
Determining a Good Fit for Our Candidates

- Organizational process and decision-making
- Departmental process and decision making
- Complexity
- Credo
- Pillars
- Flexibility
- Team size/organizational size
- The hierarchy

With these factors in mind, the following are examples of the questions you might ask to determine how the candidate might feel about these factors.

1. Tell me about a time that you had to deal with change in your organization, how did that impact you?
2. Describe a time that you made efforts to promote diversity within your culture.
3. Tell me about a time you had a deadline but needed to wait on others to move forward.
4. Describe a successful work week, what would you be doing? With whom? Setting
5. What draws you to VUMC?
6. Tell me about a time when your pay wasn’t in line with your responsibilities, how satisfied or unsatisfied with this where you?