



## Avoiding the Jekyll Interview and the Hyde Hire

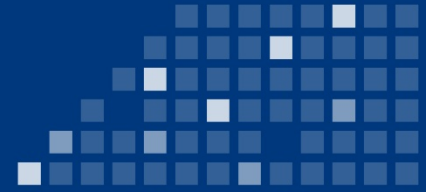
Heidi J. Voorhees, President, Voorhees Associates

MLGMA Winter Institute, February 2010

**ICMA**

*Leaders at the Core of Better Communities*

# Recruitment Issues in the New Economy



- Hiring freezes, lay offs, and delayed retirements make the rare opportunity to hire a new person an even more critical decision.
- With high unemployment, applications may be up, but recruitment for senior management positions in finance, engineering, technology, and other technical areas may still be difficult due to relocation issues.

# Recruitment Issues in the New Economy (cont'd)



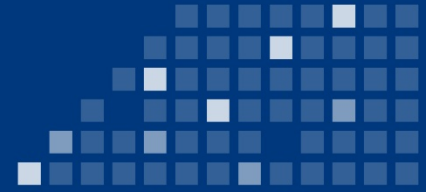
- Utilization of recruitment firms for more challenging positions may be curtailed due to budget cutbacks.
- Expectations of elected officials and citizens are higher than ever for local government employees to provide efficient, effective services.

# Strategies for Recruiting – Getting Ready



- Ensure that job descriptions are not overly specific, providing for flexibility in hiring decisions.
- Consider “green” and “family friendly” options such as telecommuting and job sharing.

# Strategies for Recruiting – Getting Ready



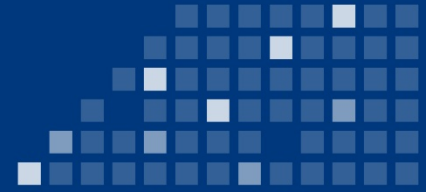
- Consider posting job announcements in unconventional places.
- Utilize an on line application process.
- Empower current employees to assist in recruitment process

# Strategies for Recruiting– Getting Ready



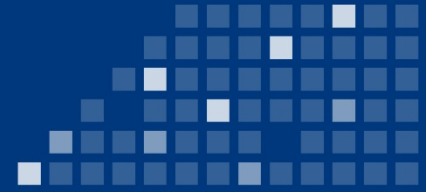
- Be aware of your organization's reputation as a workplace and as an employer.
- Conduct recruitments professionally, ensuring a responsive, timely process. Remember what it is like to be a candidate!

# Strategies for Recruitment – Candidate Selection



- Pay close attention to skill sets when screening candidates
- Look at combinations of experience – different skills developed at different jobs that add up to the advertised position

# Strategies for Recruitment – Candidate Selection



- Consider candidates with unconventional work history – international experience, state government experience, or other local agencies.
- Consider candidates in your own organization who want to change directions in their career.

# Strategies for Recruitment – Candidate Selection



Consider the following applicants:

- “Seasoned” applicants
- Applicants reentering the workforce
- Applicants with a strong volunteer background

# Interviewing Strategies



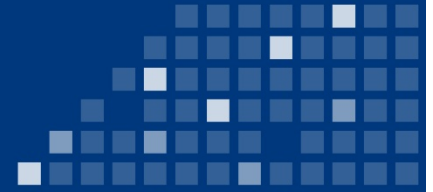
- Ask for specific examples when designing questions.
- Diversify your interview panel(s) to ensure different perspectives participate.
- Conduct more than one interview with final candidates.
- Conduct a tour with final candidates.
- Conduct an on site written exercise, if job related.

# Interviewing Strategies



- Conduct other job related assessments such as an oral presentation.
- Probe attitudinal issues whenever possible. Employees are hired for technical skills and most often fired for behavioral issues.

# Competence and Character



## KSAs

1. Result in few personnel/disciplinary problems.
2. Easier to teach/train
3. Mainly acquired post hire by successful candidates
4. By themselves lead to moderate performance at best
5. Over-emphasized in its value in the selection process of successful candidates.

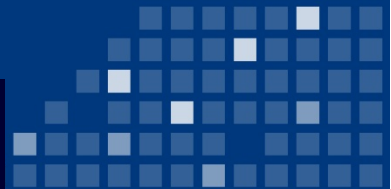
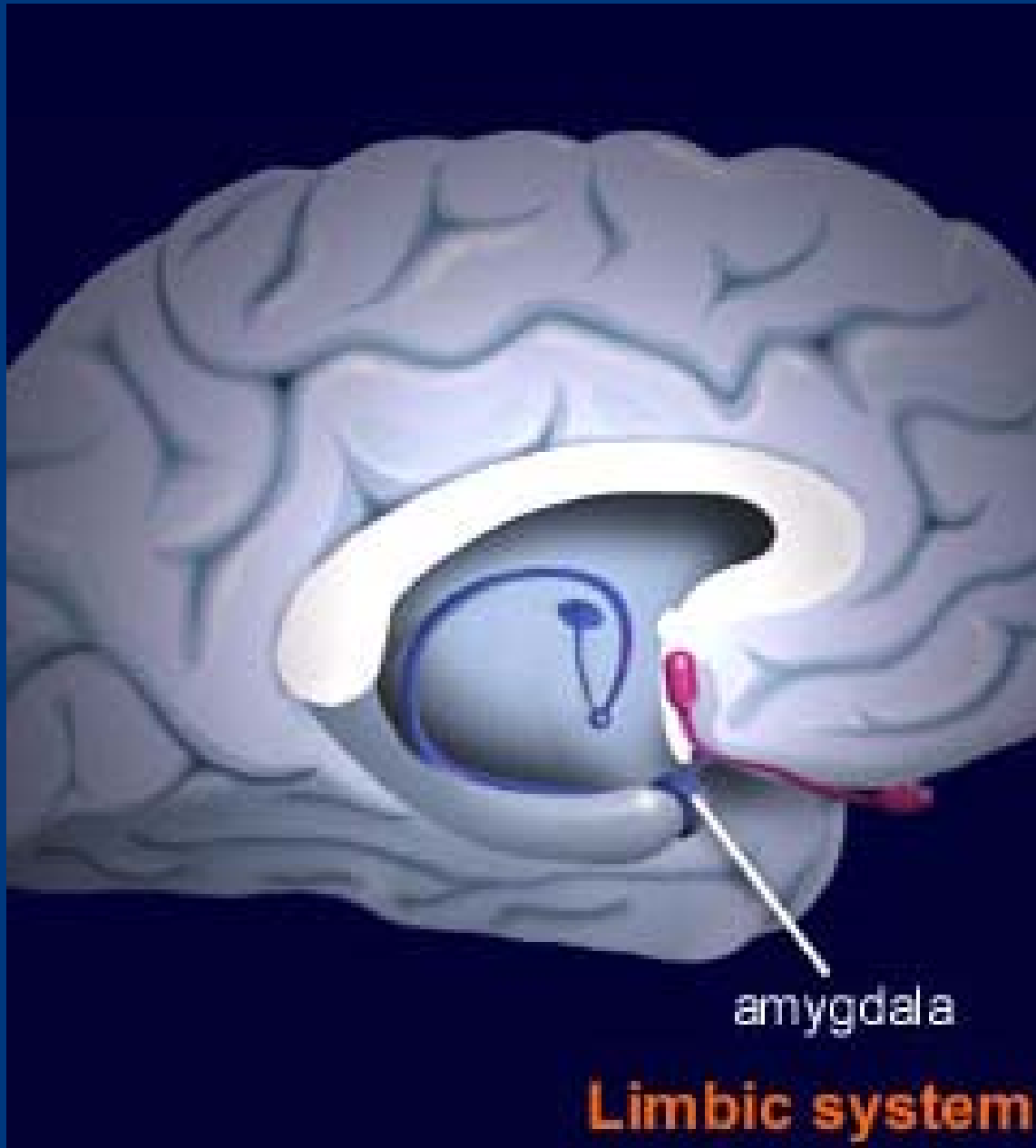
## Behavior & Traits

1. Result in the majority of personnel disciplinary problems
2. Difficult if not impossible to teach
3. Mainly acquired pre-hired by successful candidates
4. Plus KSAs take a candidate from moderate to excellent performance
5. Under-emphasized or ignored in its value in selection process



# Hiring Strategies or Hire Hard, Manage Easy!

- Obtain feedback from everyone who interacted with candidates.
- Do not ignore nagging feeling – probe this!

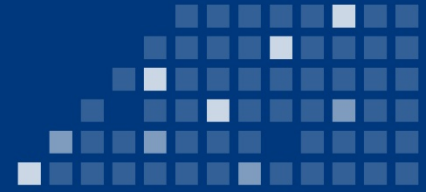


**ICMA**

*Leaders at the Core of Better Communities*

**Limbic system**

# Who Gets The Job?



- Candidates who exhibit energy, enthusiasm and a desire for the job.
- 27% of all CAO positions in the last year were filled by Assistants. Of that group, half were internal promotions and half were from outside the organization.