

ceived by the interviewer.

A professor can refine a structured interview to more accurately reflect the required skill set. Skills or qualities can be added and extra questions or hands-on tests can be incorporated into the interview as needed. Conversely, certain skills or qualities can be eliminated. In other words, the interview is based on a situational assessment of the *specific requirements for the job*. Not all supervisors (or departments) are created equal. Some may want a very independent, ambitious, and creative student, while others may want what amounts to a technically skilled, obedient, and dependable laboratory technician.

One challenging situation involves the implementation of a structured interview in the case of international students. A long-distance phone interview, or video conferencing, or similar technologies may provide a partial solution. It may also be possible to have an on-site trusted colleague perform all or part of the interview.

The interview procedure discussed here can be somewhat lengthy, but when one expects to work with the candidate for a period that can span two to six or more years, it makes sense to spend a reasonable amount of time on the selection process. This is particularly important given the time and effort required to supervise graduate students and the significant contributions that talented students can make. Thus, it appears worthwhile to invest energy in developing strategies for selection that incorporate the latest available expertise. This structured interview is currently being implemented and data are being collected regarding its success in predicting performance.

As mentors, it is important to model fairness and integrity. Use of a structured interview can convey these values and demonstrate to students that their evaluation is based on competencies and not on irrelevant personal traits.

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