

## 4. THE CERTIFICATE

a. The DEU certificate is composed of several sections, each providing you with valuable information.

**COVER LETTER:** Identifies the position for which the certificate is issued, the certificate number used for tracking purposes within the WCPOC, and the RPA number of the recruit action. It also includes a suspense date by which you should complete your selection process. If you are unable to make your selection by this suspense date, contact your servicing CPAC and provide them with the circumstances that have caused the delay so an extension may be requested through the DEU. Please read this letter carefully as it provides guidance on the selection sources, interview requirements, and selection documentation.

**MANAGEMENT FEEDBACK FORM:** Provides a tool for the WCPOC to receive feedback from management on the quality and availability of candidates, the timeliness of the certificate, and the responsiveness of WCPOC. It should be completed by the selecting official and returned to the CPAC along with the completed certificate. This information will assist the WCPOC in evaluating our recruitment processes and making any necessary changes for improvement.

**CERTIFICATE:** Identifies the candidates for consideration. The certificate will list all qualified candidates in score order. The selection must be made in accordance with veterans' preference rules and within the rule of three. These procedures are covered below.

**APPLICANT APPLICATIONS/RESUMES:** Provides all of the information submitted by the applicant to include their responses to the KSAs, or the task lists identifying their skill levels. You will receive resumes or applications for each applicant referred.

b. Upon receipt of the certificate, it is now time for you to perform the most difficult task of the recruiting process – make a selection. You may decide to conduct interviews. Because the referred candidates are from an external source, the guidelines on interviewing requirements outlined in your bargaining agreement do not apply. You may elect to interview one, any, or all candidates referred on a DEU certificate. If you choose to interview, some interviewing tips are provided on the following page.

### **INTERVIEWING DO's**

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Schedule the same amount of time for each interview. Allow yourself time between interviews to record ratings and complete notes.</li> <li>◆ Allow candidates time to read the position description before the interview. This saves time for you and avoids any appearance of administering a speed-reading test.</li> <li>◆ Welcome the candidate and explain the interview process.</li> <li>◆ Discuss any unusual working conditions; i.e., shift work, overtime, frequent travel, etc., with the candidate before the actual interview. State these up front as conditions of employment.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Compare all candidates on the same basis. Review the total picture after you have completed all interviews.</li> <li>◆ Avoid the “halo effect”. Don’t weigh your decision on a single accomplishment, association with a particular group, the college attended, etc. Avoid stereotyping candidates.</li> <li>◆ Keep your interview questions and selection notes.</li> </ul>
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- ◆ Ask all candidates the same set of questions. Document the results of the interview. The interview process, along with other evaluation factors, helps determine the best candidate for the position.

### **INTERVIEWING DON'Ts**

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Don't interview or promise to interview anyone who is not listed on the certificate.</li> <li>◆ Don't make promises to candidates, or to assumed potential candidates.</li> <li>◆ Don't use acronyms or local/unique terms.</li> <li>◆ Don't ask questions that do not distinguish between candidates, such as "Why do you want this job?"</li> <li>◆ Don't use multiple part questions.</li> <li>◆ Don't indicate you have already made a selection before all interviews are completed.</li> <li>◆ Don't ask personal questions, i.e., "Is your spouse in the military?" "Do you make coffee?" "How old are you?"</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Don't use terms such as "girl", "gal", "boy", "dear", etc.</li> <li>◆ Don't assume an accent to be a liability.</li> <li>◆ Don't assume men can, and women can't (lift, travel, etc.)</li> <li>◆ Don't inquire into views on politics, civil rights, religion, etc.</li> </ul> |
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<p>These are not job-related questions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◆ Don't ask test questions or give hypothetical situations, i.e., what would you do if . . . ?</li><li>◆ Don't ask questions with only yes or no answers.</li></ul>	
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c. After reviewing all of the available information on each candidate, you are now ready to make and document your selection. It is necessary to properly document the selection and your contacts with applicants to ensure that your selection meets all legal and regulatory requirements.

There are three important regulatory requirements that must be followed when making a selection from a DEU certificate.

1. The Rule of Three
2. Documenting declinations/failures to respond
3. Passover of Veterans Preference eligibles

***The Rule of Three:***

A selection from a DEU certificate must be made from among the top three available candidates. This is based on Title 5, United States Code 3318, which is in place to ensure that hiring is based upon merit factors. In the case of tied scores, candidates with veterans' preference are listed first and other tied scores are determined by a random number applied by the DEU. Name requests identified by the selecting official prior to issuing the certificate will also break any ties in scores that occur.

All DEU certificates include numerical scores and two-digit designation codes annotated beside each candidate's name. These codes identify veterans' preference and are defined on the certificate (i.e., NV = non-veteran, TP = tentative 5-point veteran, etc.). These codes provide you with information on which candidates are preference eligibles and which are not. Based on OPM requirements, there are two basic rules to follow when making a selection from a DEU certificate:

(1) Your selection must be made using the "rule of three"; and (2) You cannot select a non-veteran candidate as long as there is an available veteran listed above him/her on the certificate.

The "rule of three" means that you must consider the top three candidates before you can consider any additional candidates on the certificate. You cannot consider any other candidate (i.e., candidate #4, 5, 6, etc.) unless:

- ◆ one of the top three candidates has declined your position, OR
- ◆ one of the top three candidates has failed to respond to a written inquiry of interest and availability, OR
- ◆ one of the top three candidates has been selected.

When considering candidates, remember that you cannot select a non-veteran if there is a veteran listed above him/her.

Example:

Candidate #1 - veteran

Candidate #2 - non-veteran

Candidate #3 - veteran

You may select either candidate #1 or candidate #3. Candidate #2 is "blocked" by candidate #1 who is a veteran.

Example:

Candidate #1 - non-veteran

Candidate #2 - veteran

Candidate #3 -veteran

For this second example, you may select any of the three candidates as there is no veteran listed above the non-veteran. If you have any questions, your CPAC representative is available to advise you on the proper order of selection.

***Documenting declinations/failures to respond:***

**Declinations:**

A written statement from an applicant who has declined consideration for your vacancy is the preferred method of documentation by OPM. However, this is not always possible or reasonable. If you contact an applicant by telephone and they decline consideration for your vacancy, a written summary of the applicant's verbal declination is sufficient. Be sure to include the date, time, position, and reason for declination. You may provide this documentation to the CPAC via email.

**Failures to respond:**

When you are not able to reach an applicant by telephone, after continuous attempts to leave a message(s), a simple letter can be sent requiring them to contact you by a specified date (allowing reasonable time for applicant to receive) to indicate their continued interest in consideration. This will meet OPM requirements. In this letter, you may also schedule them for an interview (include place, time, etc.) and indicate that failure to report for the interview will be considered a declination. A copy of the properly addressed letter sent by regular mail is sufficient documentation to show that reasonable efforts were made to contact the applicant.

***Passover of Veterans' Preference Eligibles:***

Regulations do not allow a non-preference eligible to be selected when a preference eligible with a higher score is available for appointment. However, there may be rare occasions when it is necessary to request a Passover of a Veterans' Preference eligible. Procedural guidance is available in SOP #E-99-02, which can be found on our web site at: [www.wcpoc.army.mil](http://www.wcpoc.army.mil) under "Standard Operating Procedures".

d. Each certificate contains "Action Codes" for your use in documenting the results of your contacts with applicants. Simply annotate the appropriate code beside the name of the candidate; for example, code "A" should be placed beside the name of the selectee. If any applicants have declined consideration, enter code "D" beside that name. For those who have failed to respond to your written correspondence, enter code "FR" beside that name. Follow the instructions above to document any declinations or failures to respond.

e. Follow your installation's guidelines for obtaining approvals for selections made. If applicable, the certificate should have already been approved by a reviewing official(s) before it is returned to the CPAC for processing.

f. Should you choose not to make a selection from a certificate, you should contact your servicing CPAC to discuss your options. Reasons for not making a selection should be included on the certificate, and the certificate returned to the CPAC. The CPAC will work with the WCPOC on returned certificates and alternate options to fill your position.

g. A completed and approved certificate should be returned to your servicing CPAC. The CPAC will then contact the selectee, obtain any required documentation to verify veterans' preference, make a

tentative job offer pending receipt of required documentation, schedule any required pre-employment physicals or drug tests, initiate clearance requirements, etc. Only after all required actions are completed will the CPAC confirm and commit your selection.

h. Scheduled Entrance on Duty (EOD) dates will be negotiated between yourself, as the gaining official, the losing organization (if applicable), and the servicing CPAC.

i. The DEU will notify all non-selected applicants regarding the status of their application.