

# HIRING: BUILDING THE TEAM YOU WANT

## CREATING YOUR TIMELINE: SAMPLE HIRING WORK FLOW AND BROAD TASK LIST

### **Form a hiring committee.**

Questions you may want to answer before moving forward include:

- What are the expectations of committee members?
- How are people chosen to be on the committee?
- How long are the committee terms?
- What is the description of the committee's work? What responsibilities does the committee have?
- What authority does the committee have? What decisions can the committee make, and which decisions are to be made by a larger group?
- To whom is the committee accountable?
- What is the committee's budget? Include in your considerations:
  - the hours worked by the committee
  - money for training the committee or consulting with a hiring lawyer or consultant
  - potential money for covering travel and/or food costs for last-round interviewees (this will depend on the position you are hiring for, your sector, and the breadth of your search)
  - potential money for hiring ads, outreach

### **Train the committee.**

Before entering a hiring process, all members of the hiring committee should be intimately familiar with the legal responsibilities of conducting a hiring process, and be able to guide and support the co-op as a whole in conducting a fair and legal hiring process. This could mean asking a hiring lawyer or trainer to do a quick run-through with you, or depending on the experience of the committee members, this could also be an internal training. Be sure everyone has on hand the list of lawful and unlawful pre-employment questions for reference throughout the hiring process.

### **Draft an initial hiring timeline.**

This list is a helpful start. Yours will likely include dates by which each stage is completed. In drafting your timeline, create as much spaciousness as possible, so that you have time to address unexpected situations as they arise. Often, the stress of time crunch is what escalates tension in a hiring process or leads to groups deciding to cut corners in terms of outreach and promotion, interviewing, etc. It is preferable to go a short while without adequate staffing if it gives you the time to conduct a solid hiring process that will ultimately get you the best fit for your co-op.

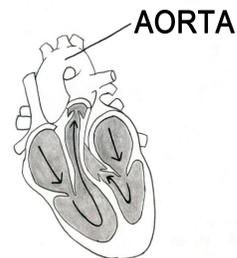
Additionally, putting down dates helps to keep you on track. However, you may find that you need to shift your timeline a bit as the process unfolds. For example, you may not feel you have enough information after your first round of interviews to make the decision on who to hire, and may want to add in an additional interview round. It is ok to prioritize emergent organizational needs over strict adherence to your timeline. Just stay in good communication with your applicants, so they know what to expect.

### **Develop hiring criteria and job description.**

What does the job entail? What skills and experience are you hiring for? Of those, which are the priorities? See the sample candidate criteria and sample job announcement, later in this packet. For some groups, it may be helpful to list these criteria out both thematically, and then again in a prioritized format.

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The better you communicate what you are looking for, the easier your job becomes, because people will self-select, prior to even applying. Go ahead and list out your dreams; you might find they come true.

Be very intentional about what skills and experiences you identify as priorities. Again, people will self select, and you may miss out on an applicant that would have been a great fit. If a bachelor's degree isn't actually a NEED for your position, for example, don't list it as a priority! Also keep an eye to which skills can be trained more easily; those can drop to the "desired" list. Often, co-ops prioritize previous experience in co-ops, which can filter out who applies to begin with to those who have had that privilege. For many co-op positions, however, it is very possible to train the co-op skills you need people to have to succeed in the job.

### **Decide how you want people to apply.**

Questions to consider:

- Do we want people to submit and cover letter and resume?
- Do we want to include an application, in addition to or in lieu of either cover letter or resume?
- Do we want to ask people to answer a few essay questions? (If so, be sure to give people direction on how long you expect the answers to be.)
- In what methods are we accepting application materials? (On paper, in-person drop-off, electronically)
- Are we planning on hosting an open house or other informal in-person piece of the hiring process?
- Are in-person tryouts going to be part of our hiring process?

### **Create your job announcement.**

See the sample included in this packet. Things often included:

- A little bit about your organization. This is especially true for co-ops; it can be helpful to include information about what a co-op is (in short), and how ownership and decision making happen at your co-op. Be sure people are aware of the additional responsibilities of eventually being both an owner, and a worker.
- Job description.
- Assessment criteria or the prioritized skills and experience you are looking for.
- How to apply, and by when.
- Pay and benefits. For co-ops, this section may also include length of candidacy, member buy-in amount, etc.

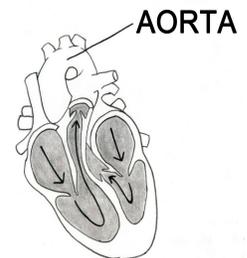
### **Distribute your job announcement.**

In addition to the information you provide in your job announcement, where you distribute that announcement will greatly impact who applies. Take the time to intentionally craft a list of locations (physical and digital), people, list serves, organizations, and job posting boards you want to reach out to. You may find you have a list of people you *wish* would apply, but likely won't (they already have jobs they love, or are unwilling to move locations). Those people are great people to send your job announcement, with the request that, even if they are not going to apply, they send it along to other who may be a good fit. This is great time to ask favors of your community; most people are very happy to help pass along the word.

### **Create your assessment tools and decide upon your assessment process.**

This will likely be started earlier, but should be done before all applications are in. Create a score sheet or other criteria-based tool to guide your assessment conversations. All your assessments should be criteria-based. This helps interrupt unconscious bias and prejudice in hiring decisions.

Further, decide upon your process for determining which applicants will move to the next phase of hiring. For consistency, you want the same people to assess all applicants in a given stage. For example, you may decide to have just the hiring committee of 5 people assess the applications and decide who will move forward to the



next step. Then, after the interviews, you may decide that the hiring committee plus additional people will be involved in the next stage of assessment.

**Collect all applications. Extend the application period if needed.**

Once all applications are in, assess the group at large. Is the applicant pool sufficiently diverse? Did enough people apply? Does the applicant pool include people with the needed skills and experience? If the answer to any of these questions is no, extend the application period for an additional couple weeks, and put great efforts into reaching out to people to apply, or casting a broader net than you initially did.

**Assess applications.**

More information on this below, in reading resumes, cover letters, and applications.

**Create interview questions.**

It can be helpful to wait until after you have read the applications to create interview questions, because then your questions can be in conversation with what you already know about the applicants moving forward. For example, if you noticed that in general you did not get the information you need about why applicants are interested in working with a co-op, you will want to include a question that covers that topic in your interviews. More on interviews below.

**Interviews, Round 1.**

**Decide who moves onto next stage.**

Note that this process comes after all the interviews have happened. It can be very helpful to assess each applicant directly following their interview, by filling out an assessment sheet. However, it is best to wait until the end to get together as a group and make your final decisions about who moves forward.

**Interviews, Round 2.**

(Not everyone does two rounds, and some groups do 3 or more!)

**Decide who to hire.**

Often this decision is made by a group larger than the hiring committee, sometimes the entire co-op. This will depend on your organization's structure. Be sure whoever is participating in hiring decisions has been trained on hiring legalities and how to evaluate.

**Notify the applicants.**

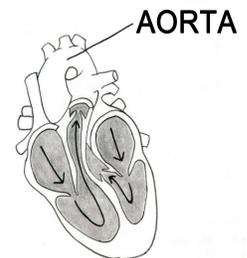
It is common to notify the “yes” applicants first, and wait for a response, before notifying the “no” applicants. This way, if your “yes” people do not say yes, you can regroup and decide if you would like to offer the position to the next best qualified applicant. You may choose to notify some of the “no” applicants after previous rounds, if you are sure you do not want to move them to the next stage of the hiring process.

**Prepare the training and orientation process for your new hire(s).**

This will definitely have been started earlier, and should be ready to go before the candidate's first day. The hiring process does not end with the notification of the applicants; it ends when all training and orientation has been planned, and executed. Often this work is done by a separate group or committee. However, part of the hiring committee's job is to ensure that this incredibly important stage of work is passed off to the appropriate body within the co-op and is getting done.

**First day! Training begins!**

Similar to a hiring process, the goal of your training process is to set your candidates up to succeed. Be sure to develop a training and orientation process that supports candidates, and trains them in what they need to be the worker-owners you want for your co-op.



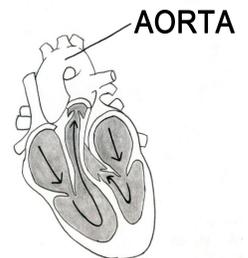
Before hiring, document your answers to the following questions (if you don't have them already) and share them with the candidates when they begin.

- How long is our candidacy period?
- How is a person voted from candidate to worker-owner?
- What are the criteria we are using to evaluate a candidate?
- How frequently are candidates going to be evaluated? By whom?
- What are our training and orientation goals during candidacy?
- What support structures will we have in place for candidates so we ensure they are given all the support they need to successfully move from candidate to owner?
- What is the candidate buy-in?

**Assess the new candidate.**

In order for candidates to succeed in moving from candidacy to worker-ownership, and in order for them to strengthen areas where you see gaps or need for improvement, you need to communicate with them regularly. Set up a schedule for regular assessment of candidates.

In sharing assessments, be sure to communicate strengths, as well as give direction for where you want them to focus, and what changes you want to see. This can be hard in a co-op, as different worker-owners may have different opinions. Take the time to get on the same page before sharing with the candidate so that you are giving clear, direct feedback. Make sure worker-owners are clear on what direction is being given.



## READING RESUMES, COVER LETTERS, AND APPLICATIONS

The resume, cover letter, and application are your first formal introduction to the applicants. They are your tools for identifying if the applicant meets the minimum qualifications for the jobs. However, they are pretty limited in the information they offer you. They only give you a very limited amount of information, with no way (yet) to ask follow up questions, and they do so in through writing-- a form of communication that heavily favors class-privileged people and people who have gone through more years of institutional school.

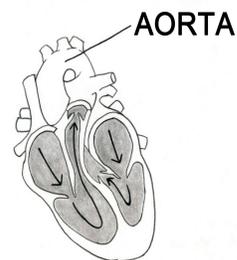
It is important that you use the applications to assess whether applicants meet the basic criteria for the job, but not throw aside an application because there is a spelling or grammar mistake, as this may not reflect upon the applicant's skills as a baker, their knowledge of cheese, or their experience with cooperatives, for example.

Similarly, there can be wide variation in how resumes look: some sleek shiny, and polished, others in a more humble document format. Remember that you are assessing a resume for its *contents*, not how nicely it is designed. (This may be different if you are prioritizing graphic design and layouts skills in your hiring process, in which case the design becomes relevant).

You *do* want to look to see if the applicant's responses are thoughtful, if they communicate to you that this applicant is taking the hiring process seriously, and that they are truly interested in *this* job, and *this* cooperative, and not just a job.

As with all aspects of a hiring process, your perspective is subjective, and vulnerable to bias and prejudice. In reading through cover letters, resumes, and applications, you are bringing with you your perspective and culture, and are filtering this information through your lens. Take care to make your assessments based on the criteria outlined by the cooperative and bring awareness to where personal judgement and bias may be influencing your assessments.

In addition to filling out a score sheet (see below for an example), you can also write notes, things you want to know more about, and questions you may want to ask the applicant at an interview.



## CONDUCTING INTERVIEWS

### **Why do we conduct interviews?**

Interviews help you get more information that you can get on paper from an applicant-- they bring the cover letters, resumes, and applications alive. They are a chance for you to follow up on things you have more questions about, and to get a more holistic sense of an applicant.

### **Set people up to succeed.**

You should not set your interviews up to “weed people out,” or to be a test. Rather, set them up so that it is as easy as possible for people to succeed in sharing with you all the ways they are qualified for the position (which is essentially what you want to hear from them). The easier you make it for them to do that, the easier it will be for you to really choose the people most qualified for the positions. (This can be generalized to all aspects of a hiring process).

### **Remember: Interviews are stressful! Welcome them and put them at ease.**

While in the middle of conducting multiple interviews, it can be easy to forget that each individual applicant's interview is new, unique, and important to them. Remember, interviewing can be stressful for the applicant! Most interviews involve an interview team, and one applicant. That can be intimidating. People often come in feeling nervous or anxious. Greet people warmly and help them feel both at ease and respected. The less nervous someone is, the more you are going to get what you are looking for-- information about whether this person is the best fit for the job.

### **State the process in advance.**

Once you have welcomed the applicant, be sure to state the interview process. Include things like how long the interview will be (remind them of this, even if you have already told them when scheduling with them), who will check in about time, and at what points, how you are going to share the task of asking questions, and at what point they will be able to ask you any questions they may have. This starts everyone off with the same information, helps them know what to expect, and also helps them manage their own time during the interview, so that you can get to all your questions.

### **Be sure you are looking for and assessing your criteria.**

Also, remember what you are hiring for. Some people are more at ease in interviews than others. However, you are not hiring for someone who “interviews well” (unless maybe you are hiring for a public speaking position), you are hiring someone who has kitchen experience, is excited to work in a cooperative, has experience working with youth, etc. Be sure you are assessing for your criteria, and not someone's skill in interviewing.

### **Don't forget there is a power dynamic.**

Do not shy away or try to ignore the very real power dynamic that is inherent in an interview. You are in a position of power over the person interviewing; you are interviewing them for a job they want, and you are the ones making the decision about whether or not they get it.

### **This is not a conversation. Listen.**

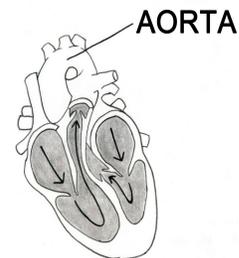
Your job in conducting an interview is to get as much information as you can from each applicant in a relatively short amount of time, to help you decide whether they are the best fit for the position. The interview is about them, not you. While it can feel awkward to primarily listen, rather than have a back and forth, refrain from commenting on their questions or engaging in conversation or banter. (We can often do this in an effort to make people feel at ease). Remember, every minute you spend talking about things not relevant to your questions is time taken away from that applicant, where they could be sharing with you all the things you want to know about them (like how awesomely qualified they are for this position.)

### **Ask everyone the same questions, and ask follow up questions if you need more information.**

You want to ask everyone the same questions, in the same order, and even have the same people ask each

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question. This provides as much consistency/control as is possible in between candidates, and can make it easier to assess their responses. That said, if you do not feel you got the information you were looking for from an applicant's response, be sure to ask a follow up question! You may also decide to include a question or two that is specific to an applicant and follows up on something from their application that you want more information about.

**Ask open-ended, direct, short questions.**

Yes or no questions give you little information, and often lead the applicant to give you the one-word answer they think you want to hear. Ask open-ended questions that draw people out, and ideally don't have a "right" answer.

Avoid asking long, multi-level questions (Have you ever worked in a co-op before, and if so, what was your role and what did you like most and least about it?). You're not going to get solid answers, because the person is going to be using so much of their brain power just trying to remember the question! Ask direct questions that are easy to remember and you're much more likely to get the information you are looking for.

You can also consider sending your questions out to all your applicants in advance, so they have a chance to think about them before they come into the interview.

**Say less, to avoid asking leading questions.**

In this case, less is actually more. You are trying to get to know this person, their skills, qualifications, and work habits. If you start each question with a lead in (We are a cooperative. This means there is no boss here. We end up taking a lot of initiative are responsible for ensuring the successful management of our business. What is your work style?) you are much more likely to get the answer the applicant *thinks* you want to hear. (I am a motivated worker, I take initiative, etc). Instead, just ask the question you want to know the answer to (What's your work style?). You will get to know more about the applicant that way.

**Allot time for thinking and quiet before and after questions.**

Allow time after you ask a question for the applicant to think over their response; you will often get a better response. Check your body language to make sure that you are not making them feel pressured or rushed. Additionally, allow for a few seconds of silence before you ask the next question. Often people will add in more information if you don't rush onward to the next question. (Our brains need time to think!)

**Avoid making decisions. Your job is to listen for and get the information you need.**

This means for the whole time. There is much research that points to our tendency to make judgements about applicants within the first 5 minutes of an interview. Work to avoid this. Stay engaged the whole time. In fact, since the only job of interviewing is to get information, you do not need to move your brain over into decision-making mode until *all* of the interviews are completed.

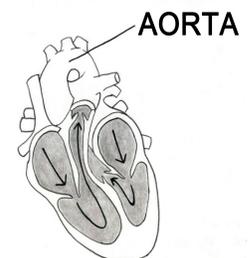
**Evaluate right after the interview.**

After a long day of interviewing, the interviews and applicants can start to blend together in your head. Take time right after the interview to assess applicants and fill out a scoring sheet while the interview is fresh in your mind. This will help you get the best assessments.

Assess each applicant in relationship to the candidate criteria; do not compare applicants to each other.

**Be aware of your body language.**

Your body language non-verbally communicates a lot to the applicant, and can put them at ease, encourage them to respond, or leave them feeling disrespected, ignored, or nervous. Avoid fidgeting, looking away, or other body language that communicates disinterest, dislike, etc. Stay open, face the person, and pay attention to them.



**Take notes.**

Jotting down short notes, questions, and thoughts during and right after an interview can help you remember each person distinctly. If you choose to do this, it can be helpful to let the applicant know you are going to do this at the start of the interview, so they don't interpret your writing as disinterest.

**Your judgements are subjective; investigate your biases and prejudices.**

You are being asked to judge applicants on behalf of the cooperative in order to assess who is the best qualified for a position. All of your judgements (how you judge things like reliability, commitment, interest, motivation, trustworthiness, etc) are subjective and vulnerable to the ways we are socialized to favor those with social power, in terms of race, class, gender, sexual orientation, religion, etc.

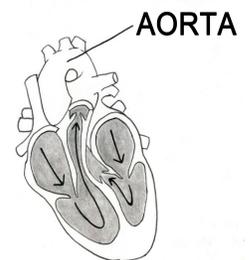
Bring awareness to who you feel most comfortable with, who you make eye contact with, who you address with respect. Investigate what makes you feel uncomfortable, what contributes to your judgements, and how unconscious biases inform your judgements. This is why we build hiring processes to be as criteria-based, and "objective" as possible. This helps to guard against the biases of individuals, and to avoid decisions made on assumptions, stereotypes, and prejudices that are most often unconscious and unintentional.

**Be mindful of the "they are like me" pitfall.**

We are more likely to favorably assess and judge applicants who we read as sharing identities and traits with ourselves ("in group favoring") and more likely to negatively assess and judge applicants who we read as being different from ourselves.

**Only ask legal questions.**

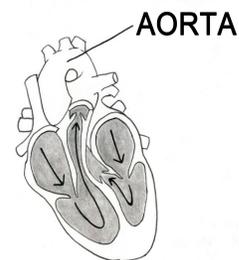
Sounds obvious, but can be harder than you expect. Maybe an applicant comes in and mentions something offhanded about their child. You follow up with, "Oh, how many kids do you have?" It's that easy to venture into the ground of unlawful pre-employment questions. See the Lawful and Unlawful Pre-Employment Questions piece of the handbook. Study it, and keep it in mind during the interview.



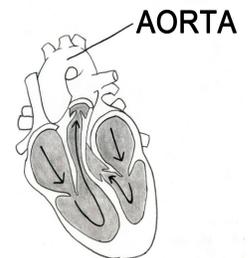
# LAWFUL AND UNLAWFUL PRE-EMPLOYMENT QUESTIONS

## FROM THE OLYMPIA FOOD COOPERATIVE HIRING HANDBOOK

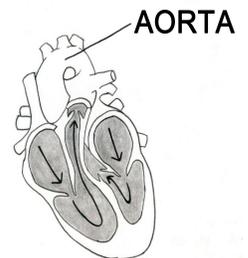
Subject	Lawful Pre-Employment Inquiries	Unlawful Pre-Employment Inquiries
<b>Name</b>	<p>Applicant's full name</p> <p>Have you ever worked for this company under a different name?</p> <p>Is there any additional information relative to a different name necessary to check work record? If yes, explain.</p>	<p>Original name of an applicant whose name has been changed by court order or otherwise.</p> <p>Is there any additional information relative to a different name necessary to check work record?</p> <p>Applicant's maiden name</p>
<b>Address or Duration of Residence</b>	<p>How long have you been a resident of this state or city?</p>	
<b>Birthplace</b>		<p>Birthplace of applicant.</p> <p>Birthplace of applicant's parents, spouse or other close relatives.</p> <p>Requirements that applicant submit birth certificate, naturalization or baptismal record.</p>
<b>Age</b>	<p>Are you 18 years old or older? This question may be asked only for the purpose of determining whether applicants are of legal age for employment.</p>	<p>How old are you? What is your date of birth?</p>
<b>Religion or Creed</b>		<p>Inquiry into an applicant's religious denomination, religious affiliations, church, parish, pastor, or religious holidays observed.</p>
<b>Race or Color</b>		<p>Complexion or color of skin.</p>
<b>Photograph</b>		<p>Any requirement for a photograph prior to hire.</p>
<b>Height</b>		<p>Inquiry regarding applicant's height.</p>
<b>Weight</b>		<p>Inquiry regarding applicant's weight.</p>
<b>Marital status</b>	<p>Is your spouse employed by this employer?</p>	<p>Requirements that an applicant provide any information regarding marital status or children. Are you single or married? Do you have any children? Is your spouse</p>



		employed? What is your spouse's name?
<b>Gender</b>		Mr., Miss or Mrs. or an inquiry regarding gender. Inquiry as to the ability to reproduce or advocacy of any form of birth control. Requirement that women be given pelvic examinations.
<b>Disability</b>	Are you able to perform the essential functions of the job as described in the job description with or without reasonable accommodation?	Inquiry regarding an individual's physical or mental condition which are not directly related to the requirements of a specific job and which are used as a factor in making employment decisions in a way which is contrary to the provisions or purposes of the Civil Rights Act.
<b>Citizenship</b>	<p>Are you a citizen of the United States?</p> <p>If not a citizen of the United States, does applicant intend to become a citizen of the United States?</p> <p>If you are not a United States citizen, have you the legal right to remain permanently in the United States? Do you intend to remain permanently in the United States?</p> <p>To avoid discrimination based on national origin, the questions above should be asked after the individual has been hired even if it is related to the federal I-9 process.</p>	<p>Of what country are you a citizen?</p> <p>Whether an applicant is a naturalized or a native-born citizen; the date when the applicant acquired citizenship.</p> <p>Requirement that an applicant produce naturalization papers or first papers.</p> <p>Whether applicant's parents or spouse are naturalized or native born citizens of the United States; the date when such parent or spouse acquired citizenship.</p>
<b>National Origin</b>	Inquiry into language applicant speaks and writes fluently.	<p>Inquiry into applicant's lineage; ancestry; national origin; descent; parentage; or nationality</p> <p>Nationality of applicant's parent or spouse.</p> <p>Inquiry into how applicant acquired ability to read, write or speak a foreign language.</p>
<b>Education</b>	Inquiry into the academic, vocational or professional education of an applicant and public and	



	private schools attended.	
<b>Experience</b>	Inquiry into work experience.  Inquiry into countries applicant has visited.	
<b>Arrests</b>	Have you ever been convicted of a crime?  Are there any felony charges pending against you?	Inquiry regarding arrests which did not result in a conviction. (Except for law enforcement agencies.)
<b>Relatives</b>	Names of applicant's relatives already employed by this company.	Address of any relative of applicant, other than address (within the United States) of applicant's father and mother, husband or wife and minor dependent children.
<b>Notice in Case of Emergency</b>	Name and address of person to be notified in case of accident or emergency.	Name and address of nearest relative to be notified in case of accident or emergency.
<b>Politics</b>		Questions into political affiliations, beliefs on political matters unrelated to the job.
<b>Organizations</b>	Inquiry into the organizations of which an applicant is a member, excluding organizations the name or character of which indicates the race, color, religion, national origin or ancestry of its members.	List all clubs, societies and lodges to which you belong.



# SAMPLE HIRING POLICY

## AORTA HIRING VALUES POLICY

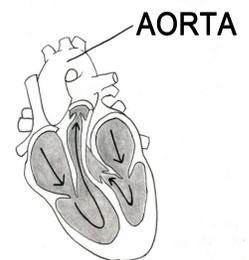
It can be useful to get agreement on what your values are in your hiring process, as this can help direct how you approach each piece of your hiring process, with intentionality and planning. Below is AORTA's hiring values policy, as a sample.

AORTA recognizes that in the US, legacies of oppression and genocide are perpetuated through, among other things, hiring practices. White people, men, straight people, and wealthy people are given access and preferentially hired into well paying, high-esteemed jobs over people of color, women, trans people, queer people, disabled people, displaced people, and poor and working class people.

Additionally, the dominant definition of “work” leaves out many things that have not been historically valued as labor, such as relationship–building, care giving, and communication skills like empathy and listening. Institutions such as media and schooling socialize us all to accept this by elevating some groups of people as more valuable and qualified than others.

One of the ways that AORTA participates in restoring justice is by implementing socially just hiring practices that counter these pressures. Through this practice we strive to maintain a cooperative make-up which values and centers the leadership of people from groups that are historically and currently identified as targets of genocide and oppression.

AORTA makes an extraordinary effort to encourage and recruit a diverse applicant pool with regard to race, ethnicity, sex, gender, religion, age, ability, size, sexual orientation, marital status, familial status, economic status, class background, language, nation of origin, and documentation history.



## SAMPLE CANDIDATE CRITERIA

The purpose of our hiring process is to select the best possible candidates to fulfill the duties of members of our cooperative. AORTA will assess qualification based on an individual's skills and ability, rather than credentials, degrees, or access to social power and resources. Our assessment criteria considers the skills and qualities outlined below.

### Communication Skills

These skills may include the following:

- Promptness in response to communication from clients and coworkers (emails, phone calls, etc).
- Skill in giving, receiving, and integrating positive and constructive criticism
- Works towards building harmony and unity within group
- Approaches conflict directly and respectfully, and has skills in resolving conflict
- Values direct and honest communication
- Move up, move up: shares opinions freely while also making space to hear others' voices
- Is able to speak in multiple languages
- Has strong writing skills

### Client Work and Facilitation

These skills may include the following:

- Clearly and concisely explains ideas
- Can identify when it is most useful to share information with the group and when to solicit information from the group
- Is flexible with agenda/able to respond to participant needs
- Has an interest in and ability to create interactive and engaging workshops, meetings, and retreats: visuals and flip charts, games, physical activities, videos, readings and handouts, poetry and music, etc.
- Demonstrates a constant commitment to improve and innovate with curriculum development and political education
- Responds to challenging comments and behavior from participants with compassion and patience
- Stays on time
- Exhibits professionalism and respect towards our clients: prompt communication, follow through, caring and respectful in communications with clients
- Has a commitment to building and maintaining relationships and networks

### Values

We expect candidates to demonstrate accountability to and alignment with AORTA's points of unity, statement of purpose, and strategic plan. Additional values we expect a candidate to demonstrate are:

- Humility
- Enthusiasm and passion for the work
- A wish to link AORTA with community
- A team oriented approach to the work
- A positive and solution based approach to problem solving and change
- Respect and compassion
- Not strongly driven by a desire to get fame, attention, or social power and status

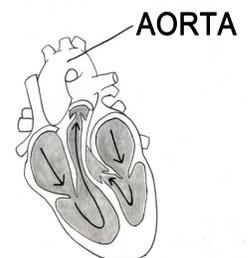
### Cooperative Commitment and Responsibility to the Group

In addition to the skills below, we ask each that candidate be able to envision a long-term commitment to the cooperative as a member. These skills may include the following:

- Has a deep interest and investment in being a worker owner of the co-op
- Flexibility with scheduling and time management to remain available to the group

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- Evidence of accountability and follow through
- Upholds group agreements and decisions
- Helps others with their work
- Volunteers for tasks
- Demonstrates active interest in co-running and co-managing the business
- Has a work ethic with the intent to lift up the entire group
- Takes initiative, but can also let others take the lead
- Meeting attendance and promptness
- Skill in consensus, collective, and democratic decision making
- Development of resources: internal policies, organizational structures and systems, handouts, curriculum, etc.

### **Skills and Experience**

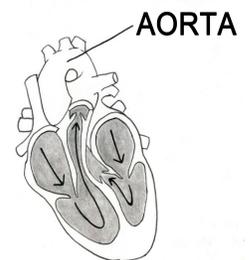
These skills may include the following:

- Grassroots organizing experience
- Experience with cooperatives
- Book keeping, finances, accounting skill
- Hiring and personnel skill
- Customer service
- Marketing and outreach
- Skills in education or teaching
- Ability to prioritize competing tasks and projects
- Efficiency, organization, and timeliness
- Can see the big picture through the day to day
- A positive and solution based approach to problem solving and change
- Can work remotely with a distributed team
- Brings vision and innovation to their work and the organization

### **Culture and Compatibility**

We expect candidates to have something to offer beyond hard work, and to contribute to building a positive and healthy work culture. This could include:

- Has an active interest in working in a multiracial, multicultural workplace that views this as an asset, even when it makes working together harder
- Comfortable with and celebratory of queer culture(s)
- Seeks a balance of getting work done with fun and enjoyment
- Displays kindness and warmth
- Can bring a sense of humor and playfulness to work
- Cares for co-workers and clients as whole people
- Is able to assert boundaries around work to ensure follow through and reliability, and to not become overextended
- Has a strong sense of curiosity; loves to learn
- Values, celebrates, and displays creativity
- Can navigate stressful days or moments with grace



# SAMPLE JOB ANNOUNCEMENT

## **Information about AORTA.**

AORTA is a worker-owned cooperative devoted to strengthening movements for social justice and a solidarity economy. We work as consultants and facilitators to expand the capacity of cooperative, collective, and community based projects through education, training, and planning.

Our work ranges from one-time trainings and workshops to long-term consulting processes focused on supporting our clients with everything from policy development to strategic planning to anti-oppressive organizational transformation.

AORTA is currently made up of 5 worker-owners, all of whom are also founders, and one part-time administrative employee. This is the first time we are hiring new worker-owners. We are young organization, founded 5 years ago and legally incorporated as a cooperative less than a year ago.

As members of a cooperative, we are not just workers or co-workers, but are committed to supporting each other and other cooperatives. AORTA is more than a job; it is a project that we are passionate about, a support system, and a space to enact and build our politics and our vision for the world and the movements we want to see.

## **We are hiring new worker owners.**

We are looking to hire up to three part-time or full-time worker-owners, ranging from 20-40 hours a week. We are only looking to hire people interested in being a worker-owner. We are looking for potential worker owners who are excited about committing to the cooperative for at least 5 years. We are strongly invested in our points of unity (which can be found on our website) as an organization, and would expect a new worker-owner to share those values.

While we prefer the person or persons we hire to be located in the San Francisco Bay Area, Austin area, or the Northeast, we are willing to consider applicants from anywhere in the US. Due to the nature of our work, all members must have the ability and flexibility to work occasional odd hours, long hours, and weekend days.

Because we are a small business, we all share the work involved in running our business. However, we envision hiring people who would primarily be plugging into our client work. You would join us in working with other cooperatives (worker, housing, and food), student groups, community organizations, and social and economic justice nonprofits as facilitators of workshops, meetings, retreats, and conflict resolution processes and consultants on organizational capacity, transformation, and development.

We are looking to build up an internship/leadership development pipeline in our organization, as well as our capacity to coordinate volunteers and are interested in hiring people who can support that development.

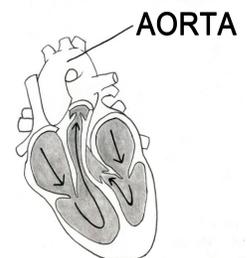
## **This is who we are looking for.**

We are looking for people who have an unwavering commitment to social justice. We want people who are excited about the prospect of working with organizations to help them transform and grow, who feel passionately about building leader-full movements, and who feel energized and confident facilitating large groups of people in meetings, workshops, and retreats. We want people who have a solid foundational understanding of cooperatives and solidarity economics, and energy to build up this area of expertise.

We all currently are engaged in political work outside of our business that helps to inform, grow, and challenge AORTA as an organization. We want to bring on people who are similarly engaged in their communities and

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movements.

Please see our general candidate criteria document for more information about what we are looking for.

### **Priority Skills and Experience**

- A high level of competency facilitating workshops, trainings, meetings, retreats, and other collective processes. Must be able to discuss race, class, gender, and other issues of power and identity with ease and comfort.
- Experience working in or with worker (or other) cooperatives
- Experience doing popular education/radical pedagogy
- Experience developing and designing innovative and engaging curriculum
- Organization skills, in particular time management and project management
- Experience and competency working with communities of color
- Experience with volunteer and intern management/coordination

### **Desired Skills and Experience**

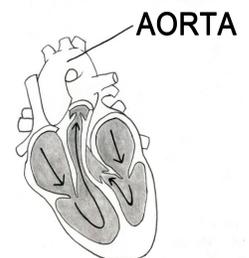
- Experience working remotely and/or with a distributed team
- Fluency in one or more languages other than English (especially Spanish)
- Community organizing experience
- Strong communication skills, including:
  - written communication skills (ability to communicate complex points concisely and clearly; ability to create thorough and engaging reports and resources; ability to respond fully, clearly, and reliably to email), and
  - verbal communication skills (ability to speak confidently and clearly with clients about our work, ability to communicate respectfully and directly with co-workers and clients, ability to navigate tense or challenging interpersonal dynamics in a way that aims for resolution and de-escalation)
- Democratic decision-making experience
- Experience working with poor and working-class communities
- Creative problem-solving skills
- Capacity for travel
- Business management skills (finance, marketing, etc)
- Digital communications and social media skills
- Networking and relationship building skills
- Consulting experience
- Attention to detail, complemented by the ability to see the big picture

### **All about the benefits, logistics, and compensation.**

There is a one year candidacy period, during which you will be an “employee.” After passing the one year candidacy period, you become a worker-owner. Owners are required to contribute a \$2000 buy-in, which can be paid in installments or deducted from your paycheck over a chosen period of time. We prioritize longevity over ability to work full time; we are looking for potential worker-owners who are excited about committing to the cooperative for at least 5 years.

Worker-owners become eligible for profit sharing after they have passed their one-year candidacy period. We offer about four weeks of paid time off a year, and have policies in place for short paid sabbaticals every other

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year as well as a longer paid sabbaticals every 5 years. We are not currently able to offer health benefits. We are a young organization, and are budgeting and planning to be able to do so in the near future.

We pay ourselves based on a needs-based model of payment. The starting wage is \$15/hour. It may be adjusted upwards from there based on cost of living in your city, number of dependents, and disability/health care needs. Wage adjustments are decided upon at the beginning of the fiscal year.

Our worker-owners are distributed across the country. Most of us work from home; we do not currently budget to compensate workers for office rental, cell phone service, or internet service.

**Here is how you apply.**

**To apply, please send a resume and cover letter to [hire@aorta.coop](mailto:hire@aorta.coop) by June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2015.**

People of Color, trans and gender nonconforming people, people from poor and working class backgrounds, and women are encouraged to apply.

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