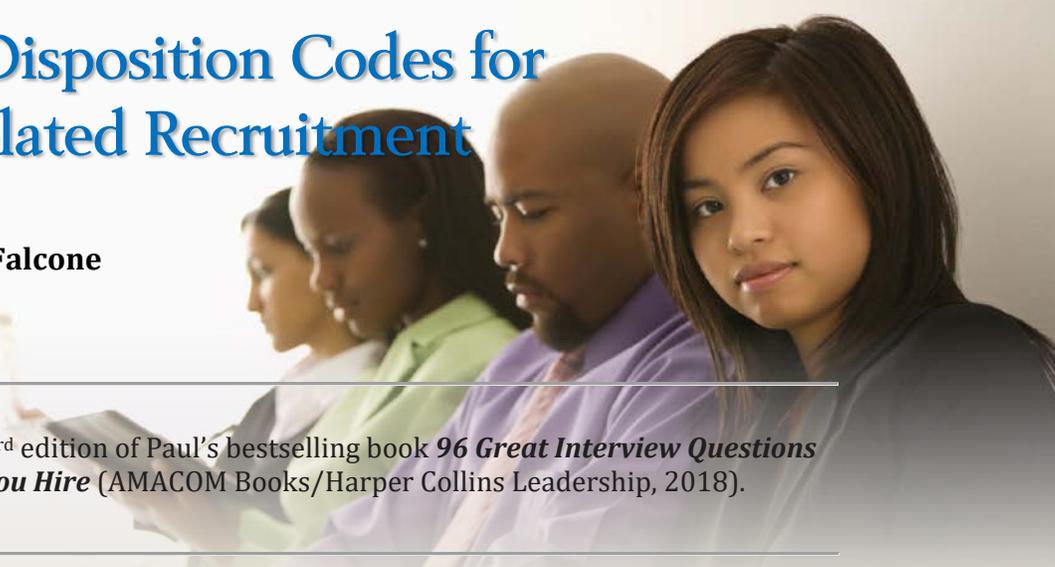# Applicant Disposition Codes for Internet-Related Recruitment

By Paul Falcone

From the new 3rd edition of Paul's bestselling book *96 Great Interview Questions to Ask Before You Hire* (AMACOM Books/Harper Collins Leadership, 2018).

Defining an **"applicant"** can be particularly challenging for employers that are federal contractors. When the OFCCP (Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs, a division of the Department of Labor) conducts compliance audits and asks for all "employment applications," what does that mean, especially in light of employers' ever-increasing use of the Internet? Does the person who responds by expressing interest qualify as an "applicant" for the purposes of OFCCP compliance? What about someone who submits a resume via LinkedIn when no opening is posted? These are tricky questions, no doubt, and well worth discussing and defining internally.

Keep in mind that failure to properly comply with federal regulations by keeping records of all "applicants" for adverse impact analysis can result in extensive liability via enforcement proceedings from the OFCCP, EEOC, and Department of Justice. Required records include applicant flow data and applicant rejection ratios. So, it's worth discussing this with your head of recruitment or outside counsel to ensure that you're up to speed on all fronts. "Defining an applicant" in today's Internet and social media age consequently takes on added importance.

The OFCCP is responsible for ensuring that employers doing business with the Federal government comply with the laws and regulations requiring nondiscrimination. The OFCCP uses the Uniform Guidelines on Employee Selection Procedures to define a "traditional applicant," an individual who applies in person using a paper application. Additionally, the OFCCP has adopted a definition for an "Internet applicant," which applies whenever an employer uses the Internet or related technologies, such as email or fax, to recruit for a position. Under this definition, an individual is considered an applicant when four specific criteria have been satisfied:

1. The individual submits an expression of interest in employment through the Internet or related electronic data technologies.

2. The contractor considers the individual for employment for a particular position.

3. The individual's expression of interest indicates the individual possesses the basic qualifications for the position.

4. The individual, at no point in the contractor's selection process prior to receiving an offer of employment from the contractor, removes themselves from further consideration or otherwise indicates they are no longer interested in the position.

Detailed disposition codes should be used to identify which applicants should be included in the required analyses of hiring activity. Disposition codes should identify the reason each candidate was not selected (i.e. did not meet basic qualifications, not considered, withdrew from process, etc.) as well as the step of the hiring process where this decision was made (i.e. phone screen, in-person interview, and the like). The checklist below provides a list of sample disposition codes that federal contractors may use for Internet-related recruitment.

Sample Applicant Disposition Codes

Special thanks to HR consulting and technology firm Berkshire Associates in Columbia, Maryland, for sharing this checklist of applicant tracking codes and discriminating in employment categories, Race/Gender/Vets/IWD (individuals with disabilities). Contact Cheryl Boyer, Carla Pittman, or Liz Balconi at Berkshire for additional information: (800) 882-8904 or www.berkshireassociates.com.

Selection Process Step	Disposition Code / Reason	Internet Applicant Solicit Race/Gender/Vets/IWD
Hired	1　Hired: external applicant	√
	2　Hired: internal applicant	√
Applicant Declined Offer	3　Offer Declined: no reason / other	√
	4　Offer Declined: compensation/benefits	√
	5　Offer Declined: working hours or location	√
	6　Offer Declined: accepted another offer	√
Offer Extended, Not Hired	7　Offer Extended, Not Hired: background check	
	8　Offer Extended, Not Hired: did not show for first day	√
	9　Offer Extended, Not Hired: unsatisfactory I-9 doc	√
	10　Offer Extended, Not Hired: medical screen or other test	√
Interview	11　Rejected after Interview: not best qualified education	√
	12　Rejected after Interview: not best qualified experience	√
	13　Rejected after Interview: not best qualified skills	√
	14　Rejected after Interview: poor interview	√
	15　Rejected after Interview: internal candidate selected	√
Hiring Manager Review	16　Rejected by Hiring Manager following HR Review: not best qualified (may want to include sub codes to specify education/experience/skills)	√

Phone Screen	17 Rejected after Screen: not best qualified education	√
	18 Rejected after Screen: not best qualified experience	√
	19 Rejected after Screen: not best qualified skills	√
	20 Rejected after Screen: poor interview	√
Does Not Meet Internet Applicant Definition / Exclude from AAP	21 Jobseeker Withdrew: no response after 2 contacts	
	22 Jobseeker Withdrew: accepted another position	
	23 Jobseeker Withdrew: did not show for interview, test, etc.	
	24 Jobseeker Withdrew: not interested in hours, location, salary/benefits	
	25 Jobseeker withdrew: other	
	26 Rejected: basic qualifications not met	
	27 Not Considered: incomplete application	
	28 Not Considered: resume/application not reviewed	
Position Not Filled / Exclude from AAP	29 Position Not Filled: filled next AAP year	
	30 Position Not Filled: requisition cancelled	
	31 Position Not Filled: requisition not filled	