



**This document intends to give you an inside look at Noble’s process.**

**It’s not necessary to review this in order to apply to or get an opportunity at Noble. However, we know that many people want as much information as possible to aid them in trying to get an opportunity at Noble.**

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## **Applying To Noble – Basics**

If you've ever visited a Noble campus, you've probably heard a student, parent, teacher or administrator say, in one form or another, "It's hard work, but it's worth it." The process to join Noble's team reflects this statement.

### **The Application**

Noble's application is short and straight-forward. In preparation for the application we recommend:

- Preparing your short-answer questions in a separate document for saving/editing purposes
- Checking our current openings to understand what is currently available
- Having 3-5 references and contact information available

### **Short-Answer Questions**

You'll be asked two short-answer questions in Noble's application:

- What are the top three reasons you want to work at Noble? (150 word limit)
- In your current (or most recent) professional role, what is your number one goal and why? Describe your progress towards meeting this goal.

For both questions we recommend preparing an answer in a separate document that you can edit and save more freely within. You may answer either question in any format you prefer (list, paragraph, etc.).

### **Next Steps**

After submitting an application there are many possible next steps. A member of Noble's Team Talent will review your application and be in touch with personalized next steps. Less than 8% of people who apply to Noble ultimately receive an opportunity to work at Noble. Although competitive, know that every application will get a personal review and we genuinely appreciate your interest in Noble.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to reach out. We ask that you do not reach out to individual campuses before receiving an interview from a campus; student learning time is sacred and we prefer you reach out directly to Team Talent at [careers@noblenetwork.org](mailto:careers@noblenetwork.org) than campus principals.

## Noble Quality: What We Look For

### "Noble Quality"

If you ask students or adults at Noble for the best thing about Noble you will likely either hear about our mission or about the people working at Noble. Our two biggest obsessions are: serving our students and finding the nation's best talent to serve our students. During the hiring process we are looking for people who we believe are, as we term it, "Noble Quality."

### What Is Noble Quality?

Every hiring manager within our organization is looking for different character traits, skills, and mindsets that fit their respective teams. However, there are a few non-negotiable common denominators shared by all people serving students at Noble:

1. **Mission Aligned.** Every person working at Noble must believe deeply in our mission to serve the students we serve and in the role education can play in transforming the lives of students.
2. **Noble Fit.** We look for people who have clear and compelling reasons to work at Noble and have a demonstrated belief in Noble's approach to closing the achievement gap.
3. **Academic Achievement.** We care about the achievement-orientation and intellectual horsepower (speed, power, and stamina) of a candidate. This is most clearly evidence in college selectivity and GPA but in some cases the resourcefulness and resilience of one's academic career.
4. **Leadership & Results.** We like to think of Noble's staff as an all-star team in education reform. And, like any all-star team, this means that people made it on the team because of the accomplishments achieved to earn a spot. Every person serving a Noble student has a history of impressive results. The leadership and results demonstrated are highly varied in background (sports, military, service, corporate, classroom, etc.) but in every case the person has demonstrated an ability to lead others to achieve impressive (often best-in-class) results.

\*\*\*A Unique-to-Noble Note: You'll note that not on our non-negotiable list are any formal degrees, "years experience", or any traditional pre-qualifications. And, although you will find people of all degrees, years experience, and professional qualifications across our organization we think that what matters most is not what you have on paper but what you have in your heart, in your mind, and what is your ability to get results. In fact, you'll notice that no one at Noble puts their degrees within their title or email signature despite our college-focused mission. In the end character and results matter most.

## **Diversity Matters**

The students Noble serves are 98% minority, 89% come from low-income households, and almost all of our students are coming to us behind academically compared to peers in selective schools or wealthier-household school districts. Despite this, we expect our students to compete academically with these peers at any college and in life. To achieve this ambitious goal, in just four short years, is highly complex.

Among the most important factors for Noble to achieve ambitious and complex results is having a diverse staff leading our students, bringing new ideas to the table, and collaborating together.

Forty-seven percent of Noble staff members identify as people of color. Although a high percentage relative to our counterparts in this work, we continue to work hard to increase the pool of Noble-Quality diverse applicants to join our team.

And, our diversity extends well beyond racial and ethnic background. From previous work experience, to age, to family status, to sexual orientation, to political views, to geographic origin, etc. we are continually striving to be a place where students have access to a diverse range of adults and our organization is strengthened because of our commitment to diversity of people and thought.

## Teaching at Noble

“Every member of the Noble family, from the Superintendent to the teachers at every campus, is here for the students. We have the freedom to innovate, yet we are held to the highest levels of accountability for our teaching and practices. We choose to work the hours we do because we are part of a greater cause. I'm thankful to be a part of this family.” - Jason, Noble Team Member

At Noble, we believe that given the right resources and learning environment, every student can succeed. The most key resource: excellent teachers.

As our network grows, Noble is constantly in search of more of the nation's best teachers to join our work.

### **What Noble Offers Our Teachers:**

- An entire school team aligned in approach to discipline and culture
- Flexibility over curriculum – we focus on results
- Autonomy to lead in the classroom - with regular non-bureaucratic feedback from campus leadership
- School-based and network-wide professional development
- A collaborative and supportive teaching environment among achievement-oriented and student-centered colleagues
- Opportunities for growth and leadership development
- A commitment to hiring a diverse team, reflective of our student body
- Competitive and performance-based compensation

### **What Noble Looks For In Teachers:**

- A history of personal achievement
- Belief that all students, regardless of background and current ability, can succeed.
- Belief in Noble's approach to high expectations
- Results-oriented

Note: Although the ideal teaching candidate has classroom experience with evidence of results, we are always looking for great people who may be new to high school, new to teaching, or new to education who have a history of achievement (regardless of field) who want to join a high-performing team and work with us to close Chicago's achievement gap.

## Spotlighting A Practice

### **Noble's Quarterly Professional Development**

Have you ever sat in professional development listening to someone talk at you for hours? Have you ever been in a teacher workshop on a buzzword topic that is trying to reach all teachers regardless of results or experience? Have you ever taken a class led by someone who isn't teaching and hasn't been in a similar classroom setting in years?

We have too, but not at Noble. At Noble, we believe that the best professional development is rooted in data, gives time for reflection, has space for collaboration, and is led by the practitioners achieving the results.

Five times per year, all Noble teachers come together for "Network PD" – four of the times are following quarterly student assessments. Every teacher in your respective grade-level and subject across our 16 high schools take the same interim assessment each quarter one week prior to Network PD. As a teacher, you receive the assessment data on the same day as the test and have a week to reflect on what students have learned. There will be standards you did well on, there will be groups of students you failed to reach as well as you had wanted, and there will be other teachers in the network with completely different results. With that data and your reflections on learning, all of the teachers come together, led by a teacher with a history of results, to share best practices and the different lessons learned.

As a result, the best practices are spread across campuses and less successful practices disappear. And, with each year, more best practices are built on top of the previous best practices. As a result, Noble's results continue to grow as our network grows. When we say that teachers are the key to our success, we mean it in more ways than most.

## Preparing For Success In Noble's Process

### **Increasing Your Chances**

As with any job application there are elements of timing and luck that factor into getting a specific job. That said, here are some ways to increase your chances of being hired at Noble:

1. Highlight your achievements, and, where possible, quantify your results. We prefer resumes are focused on results rather than job responsibilities.
  2. If you know someone who works at Noble, reach out to them and let them know of your interest. Given the volume of applicants, that one email or call might be what gets your application noticed.
  3. Engage with Noble. Getting to know our work on social media will probably get you more excited to work with Noble but will also help you if you're given an interview to speak more specifically about why you want to work at Noble.
  4. If you have external resources that highlight your work, such as videos, news stories, portfolios, unit plans, etc. please feel free to send these to Team Talent. This is not expected but if you have anything you think could be relevant please feel free to share it.
  5. Emailing, calling or showing up at campuses *will not* increase your chances of being interviewed. Given the volume of applicants we receive, your contact will generally be met with either no response or a generic response. For questions, please contact Team Talent.
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### **Preparing For An Interview**

If you are given a chance to interview with Noble, the first thing to know is that every interviewer at Noble is different.

That said, there are some things that you should do to prepare:

1. Do your homework. Read about the network and specific campus. If you know someone at Noble, talk to them about their experience
  2. Know why you want to work at Noble.
  3. Have data that shows the quantifiable significance of your achievements.
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## Preparing For A Demo Lesson

If you are interviewing for a teacher or an instructional leader position you will be asked to do a demo lesson with our students. The principal scheduling the demo will give you specific guidance on what to prepare and will be your point of contact on expectations. Without getting into the specifics of strong instructional practice, here are some general tips:

1. Keep in mind that although short in length, the demo should be organized, rigorous, student-focused, objective-driven, based in a standard, and manageable in scope.
  2. Expect a full house of visitors observing your lesson. We share demo lesson times with all principals, and there's a chance you will have more visitors than expected.
  3. Have a clear and measurable assessment of student mastery built into the lesson.
  4. Be prepared to reflect deeply on what went well and poorly in the lesson. Principals will ask. It's OK if it doesn't go well but important that you are able clearly analyze why if that's the case.
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## Preparing Your References

You are expected to list three to five references. If you move past the first interview (and sometimes before that) you should expect that we *will* call all of your references. And it is not uncommon for principals to ask for more references on top of those provided.

If you have not spoken to your current manager about your application to Noble, you should not list them as a reference. However, if you get to a final stage, we will expect the opportunity to speak to direct managers.

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## Interview Process at Noble - Detailed

There are multiple pathways that your application could take at Noble. And, depending on the number of hiring managers within our organization who are interested in your application, the number of pathways will only grow.

- **Stage #1 - Completing an Application:** The first step in Noble's process is an online application. We anticipate the application taking less than 30 minutes to complete.
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- **Stage #2 - Screening:** After completing the application, you will be assigned to a member of Noble's Team Talent who will screen your application and if advanced in the process will be your "agent" to give you the best chance at Noble. We are proud to say that every person who completes our application will get at least one touch and no resumes go into a traditional "black hole" of resumes at many organizations. The screening will look at your entire portfolio, evaluate your resume and short-answer questions, and depending on the competitiveness of your application will choose the next best step for you.
  - Important Note: It's important that you apply to as many positions as you are interested as your screening will be done against all positions to which you've applied and it's better for you if we know of all of your legitimate interest at this stage.
- **Stage #3 - Video Interview (or Application "Push" or Rejection):** Based on the competitiveness of your application and competitiveness of the jobs to which you've applied, you will go down one of three routes. A small percentage of applicants will have their portfolio pushed immediately to hiring managers (see step #4), some applicants will not be competitive enough for the jobs to which they've applied and will be given notice of this, and some applicants will be asked to complete a video interview.

The video interview may just seem to be an extension of an already lengthy application process but is very much an advance forward in our hiring process. Applicants will be asked to complete a video interview so that we may learn more about you, to allow a few dozen hiring managers in the organization have efficient access to you (and you to them), and so that if you are pushed to hiring managers you have a better application. It also ensures, if you move forward, that your process can dive into deeper questions rather than redundantly answering the same questions many times over.

- **Stage #4 - Application "Push" (or Rejection):** If you either have a highly competitive application immediately or successfully made it through the video interview stage you will have their application "pushed" to the hiring managers (mostly principals) for the respective jobs applied (or jobs for which you are competitive). The member of Team Talent that became your "agent" at the screening stage now takes ownership of making sure hiring managers know of your application. Every two weeks our hiring managers meet in-person to discuss top candidates and Team Talent does daily sharing directly to hiring managers to help you get noticed.
- **Stage #5 - Phone Interview(s) (or No Traction):** If a hiring manager is interested in your application, you will have an opportunity to do a phone interview. And, at this stage, depending on the number of jobs you've applied to and the number of hiring managers that are interested in your application, you could have a phone interview with each respective hiring manager. It's also possible that you've made it to the hiring managers and none have interest and will sit idly with "No Traction."
- **Stage #6 - Demo Lesson/In-Person Interview (or Rejection):** If you successfully make it through a phone interview(s) you will have an opportunity to visit our campuses (or network office) to do in-person interviews. If you've applied for an instructional position this will also likely be when you do a sample teaching lesson at one of our campuses.
  - **Two Important Notes About Campus Visits:** If you advance in the process for multiple positions, you will likely need to take a day off to spend a day traveling to see all of our campuses and meet the respective teams. Additionally, if you have not heard from a hiring manager by the time you're set to visit, you will no longer be considered for those respective positions. If you have questions about this or where your application stands with a hiring manager you have not heard from, please reach out to Team Talent.
- **Stage #7 - Final Decision:** If you've made it this far you will now get a final decision which could include an offer to join Noble's team or a rejection. If you are rejected at this final stage your "agent" on Team Talent will either try to get you traction with other opportunities (in or out of organization if you want). If you were lucky enough to get an offer for multiple jobs, you will receive a call from our Head of Schols and he will lay out all of your choices. We do not make decisions centrally about where to offer you a position, the choice is yours as we want you to be in the spot you are happiest.

Additional Stages: At any point a hiring manager may want to add stages to the interviews and meetings to get to know you better or have you get to know the job better. Additionally, at any point in your process your references will be called.

## **Noble's Philosophy on Hiring**

Noble's hiring process is rigorous and competitive. We believe that getting the best people to serve our students is the most important decision leaders within our organization regularly face. However, when we do hire someone, we believe they are joining the best team in education and will invest heavily in their professional and personal happiness.

### **Noble's Decentralized Approach**

Many organizations have a mostly-centralized screening and selection process for candidates. Noble does not. Our strong belief in principal autonomy, our encouragement for innovation in all processes, and our constant fight against bureaucracy in education all run in philosophical conflict with centralizing hiring.

You should apply for all positions that interest you. All of our campuses are first-class schools and we are encouraged to see people having an open mind about where they will work and what they will do. It's also fine if you prefer a very specific campus, location, demographic or job. Neither decision will impact our evaluation of you. And, ultimately, once you've applied for one position in our network, we make your portfolio available for all principals to see. Principals and hiring managers will often reach out to people who haven't applied to their campus to see if there is interest.

Although many people never receive an interview, there is a chance that you will receive an interview from many campuses. If this is the case, you should be prepared to talk to someone for every position that you've applied for. We will do our best to create efficiencies in our process (for example, your demo lesson will likely only happen once) but each campus will want to get to know you and have individual interviews. This can become rather daunting for candidates whom many campuses are interested in pursuing so please use Team Talent ([careers@noblenetwork.org](mailto:careers@noblenetwork.org)) as a resource if you are unsure how to navigate the process.

Ultimately our goal is to find the best people to serve our students. Sometimes this means a fast process, sometimes a slow process, sometimes a lot of interviews and sometimes fewer interviews. Our decentralized process has brought more than 1,000 of the nation's best people to our team. Will you be next?

### **The Choice Is Yours**

If you are lucky enough to get an offer for multiple positions within our organization (~7% of applicants) we will not determine your fate centrally. We want you to make the choice that makes you happiest. If you need more time or more information to make that decision please just ask. Some applicants even choose to do thorough reference checking on us and you're welcome to ask for the names of teachers, parents, or anyone you want to speak to about us at this stage just as we will have done in evaluating your candidacy.