

# Recruitment and Selection



## A guide to help you review your existing approach to recruitment and selection

In seeking to get the most from your employees a key factor is to ensure that you are recruiting those who have the potential to make the greatest contribution. This may sound like such as obvious requirement but, even today, so many companies continue to adopt unstructured approaches to recruitment with the result that the challenge to get the most from employees is immediately magnified.

# Recruitment and Selection

To assist you with reviewing your existing approach to recruitment and selection, this guide addresses the following content:

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The information here is designed to provide you with a general overview of the key issues under these headings and further details and additional tools and resources can be found on the Online Business Tools website.



# 1. Recruitment and Selection – General Principles

When focusing on the recruitment and selection of employees for your business, there are some general considerations you should always keep in mind:

- ❑ The first point to recognise about recruitment is that it is a process with a number of key stages, all of which combine to enhance your chances of finding the best candidates available for any advertised position.
- ❑ It is also worth pointing out that in terms of leading and managing employees if you are not recruiting the best people available, then it is always going to be an uphill struggle to manage them day-to-day.
- ❑ Another general rule is that when seeking to fill any vacancy you should always consider the internal candidates that could be promoted to the available post and then recruit externally for the more junior position.
- ❑ Too often senior managers pay scant attention to the recruitment process and only become actively involved when a senior post is being filled, or at the end of the process for a quick 'final' interview. This is a mistake and you should be concerned with the quality and suitability of every employee who joins your business.
- ❑ It is often assumed that interviewing is something that any experienced manager can do. Again, this is a mistake: yes, anybody can conduct an interview, but few can do it well unless they are appropriately trained. Nobody in your business should conduct interviews without adequate training.
- ❑ There are many legal issues associated with the recruitment process and you should familiarise yourself with all relevant legislation.

The principle objective of the recruitment process should be to recruit, select and appoint employees appropriate to the present and future needs of your business.

## Recruitment and Selection Policy

In seeking to define and communicate your company's approach to recruitment and selection, if you don't already have one in place, it is useful to prepare an overall policy to set the parameters for how you manage this vital area.

Such a policy provides for both internal and external communication of your commitments in this area but also ensures that fairness and transparency apply. A sample policy is shown at the end of this guide.

# 2. Recruitment and Selection Process

Each element of recruitment and selection has a contribution to make in helping to find the most suitable candidates for any given post and you should view recruitment and retention as entailing the following eight stages:



Each element of recruitment and selection has a contribution to make in helping to find the most suitable candidates for any given post and you should view recruitment and retention as entailing the eight stages that follow.

## Stage 1 - Job Vacancy

Naturally, the first step in the process is when a vacancy arises in your business.

However, before rushing to fill a position, consider the following points:

- ❑ Do you know why the vacancy has arisen? Perhaps the previous employee left due to problems in the business and unless these are resolved, the new candidate will likely be unhappy too.
- ❑ In these times, every cent counts so when a vacancy arises it is useful to consider whether you could manage effectively (not just scrape by) without that post being filled, or whether through job

redesign, or part-time work, savings could be generated.

- ❑ As mentioned above, is there potential to appoint/promote an internal candidate to the vacant position and then recruit externally for the lower post? By promoting from within, where possible, you reduce the risks associated with recruitment but you also let your existing employees see that there is a potential 'career path' in your company which might encourage them to stay longer with you.

Once you have considered the above points, you can then reflect upon the second stage.

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## Stage 2 - Job Analysis

Employee recruitment is potentially a very subjective process and unless you take active steps to reduce the levels of subjectivity, you will find that more times than not you will make poor recruitment decisions based solely on gut feeling; and as a result you will be frequently caught out by people who 'do good interviews'.

Worse still, without objective criteria to evaluate candidates your propensity to subconsciously select employees who 'fit' with your world view will increase, so ultimately you will end up with a lot of like-minded people in the business. This might sound like a good thing, but it certainly is not as a healthy diversity is far better in terms of business effectiveness.

To begin the process of reducing

subjectivity, job analysis seeks to answer two questions:

### 2.1 What do you want employees to do?

Knowing what it is you want your employees to do is a fairly basic requirement and most businesses now have defined job descriptions in place for every position.

If you don't have them, you should address this weakness immediately; don't assume that your employees are on the same wavelength as you when it comes to what their job involves and what results are expected. If you already have them, make sure they remain current and reflective of what is required and adjust them where necessary.

When using job descriptions as part of recruitment, keep the following points in mind:

- ❑ The earlier that you give them to potential candidates during the process the better, because before you interview them, you want to at least be sure that they know what the job will entail and are comfortable with that.
- ❑ Use the job descriptions to screen applicants based on what you want the employee to do versus what each candidate can do based on their CV.
- ❑ You may also develop specific technical or job-specific questions to ask during the interview based on the job description.

Apart from their use in recruitment, job descriptions also play an important role in managing employee performance because how can you ever measure an employee's contribution if you haven't clearly outlined to them what they are supposed to do? They can also be used in training and development to help identify individual training needs, so they are vital tools.

However, job descriptions only describe what you want a person to do; as part of recruitment, you also need to know what type of person you want for any given job.

As mentioned, you can generally find out what a candidate can do by analysing their CV or by looking at the past jobs they have held. When you

compare that to the job description you can get a fair idea as to whether they are right, in a competence sense, for a particular job in your business.

But when you seek to fill a vacant position, do you also have a defined picture in mind of what type of person you want, or is it a bit vague?

Unfortunately for a lot of managers, it's the latter and they only have a general idea of what they are looking for. Consequently, their approach to interviewing goes somewhat like this: the first person who comes for interview on the day sets the benchmark. The second is either better or worse than the first and so on down the line. The problem with this approach is that each candidate is compared against the previous one, so you can be easily swayed by those who put on a good show at interview.

You avoid this trap by devising a profile of the 'ideal candidate' which serves as the basis for how you select from the pool of interviewees available. You may not find the ideal but you measure all candidates against that profile and select the individual who most closely matches it. An employee profile (often called an employee specification) essentially identifies the characteristics of the person you want to fill a particular position. You do not need a different profile for every position as you do with Job Descriptions, but you can have one for key types of jobs – customer facing and non-customer facing. So it's not a major task.



Although it depends on the job you are recruiting for, in developing a profile of the ideal candidate, you could consider headings such as:

- |   |  |   |
|---|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ What education or training qualifications do you expect the ideal candidate to have to be able to do the job?</li> <li>▪ What level of work experience are you looking for?</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ What specific skills and knowledge must they already have to do the job to the standard you require?</li> <li>▪ What communication skills do they require?</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ What overall personality/disposition are you looking for in the person?</li> <li>▪ What personal attributes must they have? <i>Define them very clearly</i></li> </ul> |
|---|--|---|

It is only through answering these questions and then clearly mapping out what you are looking for that you will enhance your prospects of recruiting someone who is more likely to engage with your business.

After all, an interview is supposed to help you determine if a candidate is the 'right' person for the job, but you can never do so unless you clarify what 'right' actually means. Another similar approach to drawing up an employee profile is to use the seven headings below:

**Education Qualifications/**

**Training** - are there any specific educational or training requirements?

**Work experience** - does the candidate need to have any particular level of previous work experience?

**Skills and Knowledge** - are there any particular skills and/or knowledge which are required for the job?

**Physical Attributes** - does the work involve strenuous lifting etc.?

**Personality/Disposition** - what type of personality might be most appropriate for this position? Will they be required to work as part of a team?

**Communication Skills** - does the position require the candidate to communicate with the public?

**Personal Circumstances** - are there unsocial working hours? Does the position involve travel?

We do not live in a perfect world so it

is unlikely we will find a candidate that fits the required profile perfectly. So, to help assess each candidate these headings can be examined under *essential or desirable* characteristics. Finally, it is vital that your employee profiles/specifications do not contain any requirements that ignore or contravene relevant employment legislation.

By having employee profiles in place, you can then devise a series of interview questions to draw out whether the candidate matches the profile and use them as part of your interview plan. As an example, let's say you were looking for someone who was a team player. Of course you wouldn't devise a question such as, are you a team player? That's not going to tell you anything. Instead you might devise questions along the lines of:

- Give me some examples of where you felt you made a positive contribution to your team in the past?
- What do you think your previous team mates would say about working with you?
- What can you bring to our team that would set you apart from other candidates?

Developing and using well-structured questions, based on the employee profile, will help you get a better insight into a candidate's true personality.

## Stage 3 - Attracting Candidates

The purpose of analysing the vacancy is to have a clear picture in mind of the job requirements and the type of person you wish to recruit. Then you must set about trying to attract suitable applicants for this position.

Not only do you want to attract a good number of candidates for interview, but perhaps more importantly you wish to attract the right quality of candidates. In other words it is the quality of applicants and not the quantity that you attract which is most important.

In seeking to attract applicants it is important to consider two sources:

### Internal Recruitment

As mentioned, it is important to think about whether the position can be filled internally before looking externally. This is particularly relevant for supervisory or management positions. Internal recruitment has the

following advantages:

- Reduces recruitment costs.
- Internal candidates are already familiar with your organisation, its aims, objectives etc.
- Can act as a motivating factor for others in the business by showing them that it is possible to move 'up the ranks'.
- A candidate from outside the company will always be an 'unknown quantity' no matter how effective your selection process. On the other hand a person promoted from within is already known to you.

However, it will not always be an option to recruit or promote from within. The important message is not to overlook a potential applicant already working for you as it can have a detrimental effect on their morale and their commitment to the organisation.

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*there are many sources of external*

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*recruitment to use*

### External recruitment

There are many sources of external recruitment including:

- Websites.
- National/local newspapers/trade journals.
- Recruitment agencies/consultants.
- Employment fairs/seminars/open days.

The source(s) of recruitment you use will be dependent upon a number of factors such as:

- The type of position you are seeking to fill.
- The amount of money you wish to spend on filling the position.
- What has worked well in the past.
- The nature of the job market at the time you are recruiting.

## Advertising

As advertising is an expensive source of generating interest in available positions, it is important that the content of the advertisement achieves the following objectives:

- To reach the desired target audience.
- To attract the required number of suitable candidates.
- To send out the right image about your company.

The **AIDA** principle can guide you here, and your advertisements should:

- Gain the **A**ttention of the right people.
- Create **I**nterest in the minds of those people.
- Instil a **D**esire in them to apply for the position.
- Provide them with information on how **A**pply for the position.

The content of the advertisements you place should include some or all of the following information, depending upon the nature of the position being advertised;

- Brief promotional description of the company.
- Job title.
- Location.
- Description of the post.
- Qualifications and experience required.
- Conditions of employment including salary.
- Relocation expenses, if applicable.
- Promotional prospects, if any.
- Closing date.

The type of language used in your advertisement should always reflect the nature of the position you are seeking to fill.

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## Stage 4- Screening Candidates

“ *narrow down the field* ”

When you receive a large number of applications for an advertised position, the golden rule should be to interview less people for longer, so you need to screen the applications to select the most suitable candidates for interview. This can involve:

- Using the job description and employee specification to compare against the CV.
- Conducting short telephone interviews to gauge an individual's suitability. This can often be a useful exercise as the candidates

are frequently less 'prepared' so you get a better feel for their natural self; plus, if telephone techniques are important for the advertised position, then you can also assess their telephone manner.

The purpose of the screening process is to narrow down the field so that you can spend more time with each candidate for formal interview. It is important to note here too that you cannot contact a candidate's previous employer at this point for references without their explicit permission.

## Stage 5 - Interviewing Candidates

The old saying of '*failing to prepare is preparing to fail*' is particularly true in relation to interviewing. If you are going to have any real chance of finding the most suitable candidate then both you and the candidate must be adequately prepared for the interview.

### Preparing the Candidate

To help the candidate to be fully prepared for the interview you should:

- ☑ Ensure that adequate notice is given of the date and time for the interview.
- ☑ Ensure that the candidate is aware how to get to your premises.
- ☑ Ensure they are clear where to go and who to contact upon arrival.
- ☑ Ensure they are aware of any information, documents etc., you would like them to bring with them to the interview.

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*be prepared for the interview*

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### Preparation by the Interviewer

To ensure that you are fully prepared you must:

- ☑ Review all the relevant information beforehand - job descriptions, employee profiles, application forms etc. You should examine each CV or application form to identify areas to question during the interview.
- ☑ Prepare a plan of how you intend to conduct each interview - consistency is important. This should include an outline of similar questions to ask all candidates based on the job description, employee profile and CVs, so that you can compare like with like.
- ☑ Prepare a suitable venue for the interviews. The choice of location and the layout of the room will have an impact on the outcome.
- ☑ Make sure you are free from disruptions when you are interviewing and do not schedule too many interviews on the same day.
- ☑ Allow adequate intervals between each interview, giving yourself some time after each one to finalise your notes.
- ☑ Provide a list of candidates and their interview times to your receptionist. This will help to present a professional image to candidates on arrival.
- ☑ If two or more of you are conducting the interviews this obviously increases the preparation required so that each knows what role they will play during the interview.

## Conducting an Interview

There is a well-known and easy to apply structure for conducting interviews known as the WASP approach. It enables you to offer a similar format to each candidate, thereby ensuring consistency in the interviewing process and assisting your evaluation at the end.

### Welcome

During this initial phase of the interview you should:

- Establish Rapport - Break the Ice. A relaxed candidate will perform better.
- Explain the purpose of the interview.
- Outline the format for the interview with approximate timings.
- Inform the candidate that you will be taking notes.

### Acquire Information

In this phase of the interview you are seeking to gather as many relevant details from the candidate as possible so that you can make an informed decision about their suitability.

- Begin with general questions before moving to the more specific.
- Use your question technique to explore background, attitudes, suitability etc., relevant to the employee profile and job description.
- Probe to explore any 'gaps'- but do not interrogate them.
- Let the candidate speak, use your listening skills!!! They should speak for 80% of the time.
- Remember as you assess the candidate they are also assessing you and making some judgements about you and the company.

### Supply Information

Once you have obtained all the relevant information you need, then you should allow the candidate to ask you questions about the position. You should ensure that you:

- Outline the job description in greater detail giving an overview of their potential role in the company.
- Provide the candidate with details on the salary and conditions associated with the position.
- Answer any remaining interviewee questions.

### Plan and Part

The final part of the interview is designed to ensure that both parties leave the interview fully aware of the next steps in the selection process. You should:

- Ask to check references – you do need permission to do so.
- Discuss salary if not mentioned already
- Give timetable for your decision and how they will be notified
- Thank them

In some cases you may wish to provide the candidate with a tour of your facilities. This can be done at this stage but inform them at the outset.

## Question Technique

Question technique is a vital skill for the interviewer. You will use questions in an interview to:

- Relax the candidate.
- Encourage them to open up.
- Probe their background.
- Identify candidate's strengths/weaknesses.
- Gauge their overall suitability.

Questions should be:

- Open (in most cases).
- Clear.
- Relevant.
- Well worded - What, Why etc.
- Not leading.
- Asked throughout the interview.

The types of questions that are used in an interview can be classified as follows:

### Open Questions

Designed to get the candidate to open up and express themselves. They will generally begin with the words "Tell me" or "Who" "What" "Why" "When" "Where" "How".

### Probing Questions

These questions are designed to delve more deeply into something the candidate has done or said. For example the candidate might have included a training course that they had attended on their CV. You might want to find out more about the course or how it helped them at work. To do this you might say, "I see from your CV that you did a course in Health and Safety. What did you cover on the course and how did it help you in your last job...? How could it help you in this position...?"

In an interview situation, you should never take a statement made by the candidate for granted. Always probe to

find out more, particularly if you feel it is relevant to the job. For example a candidate may tell you that they are very good at working on their own initiative. You could just accept this statement. However it is better to explore what they have said by asking them something like "You mentioned earlier that you were good at working on your own initiative. Tell me about some situations where you used your own initiative in the past...?"

It is important to note that probing and interrogating are not the same thing!!! It's good to probe.

### Comparison Questions

These questions are designed to get participants to compare past experiences. They are designed to see if the candidate gives some thought to the work that they do and how this job fits in with their thinking. For example you might ask a candidate about two past jobs they held - "What was the hardest thing you found about moving from Job A to Job B...?" This could then be followed up with "How would that experience of changing positions help you if you were successful in getting a job with us...?"

### Behavioural Questions

These questions are designed to examine how a candidate reacts in a certain situation, or to explore their character in greater detail. They might take the form of "What do you think you contribute to a team...?" or "What would you do if you were faced with an angry client...?"

The purpose of the questions you ask is to find out as much relevant information as possible about the candidate. As mentioned, ideally the candidate should do most of the talking during the interview (80%). Using well worded questions will help you achieve that.

Questions should not be:

- ❑ 'Quick-fire' interrogation type questions.
- ❑ Critical or disparaging.
- ❑ Long winded
- ❑ Of an overly personal nature.
- ❑ Closed questions, for example: "Can you tell me...?" There may be some occasions where you want a Yes/No answer but most of your questions should be open.

It is also very important that you fully understand what questions you can and cannot ask during an interview and the legislation surrounding this area.

### Listening Skills

Listening is a skill designed to encourage the candidate to speak up more and to prevent you from doing all the talking. We often assume that as we have two ears and don't have any hearing defects then listening is not a problem for us. But most of us are poor listeners, and need to develop our skills. It is very easy to be distracted by noise or movement and our attention

spans can be quite short. Sometimes when we like someone we listen intently to what they say, whilst with others we mentally switch off. In an interview situation not listening can put the candidate off. In other words we need to actively listen and this can be done by using the following simple techniques:

**Eye contact** – shows you are listening and encourages the candidate.

**Nodding** – gives encouragement.

**'Mirroring'** – matching your body posture with that of the candidate subconsciously relaxes them.

**Encouraging** - 'Yes, go on' or 'Mm, yes' is another form of prompting them to continue.

**Paraphrasing** - 'So, what you are saying is...' shows you have the gist of what they said.

**Summarising** – may be useful when you want to be very clear what they said.

**Minimal Note-taking** – taking too many notes means you break eye contact and can be off-putting for the candidate in any case.



## Common Reasons for Interviews Failing

Finally in this section, it is useful to consider the common causes of failed interviews:

### Lack of preparation

If either party is unprepared then the interview is unlikely to be successful. If the interviewer is unprepared, then he or she cannot provide an environment that will enable the candidate to portray themselves in the best light.

### Judgement made too early

Too often the interviewer makes up his or her mind too early (often in the first few minutes). This is totally subjective and does not allow the candidate a fair chance.

### Unstructured interviews

If the interviewer has no set format to follow, then each interview will be conducted differently. This does not allow for a common assessment of candidates to take place. When this does happen the interviewer usually makes their judgement solely on what they liked or disliked about their candidate. In such circumstances, when asked why they rejected a candidate they often give vague reasons such as, "there was something about them I didn't like".

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*improve your interviewing skills*

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### Interview environment

If the interview is conducted in a location that is uncomfortable for one or both parties then this will affect the outcome of the interview.

### Too many interviews

If too many candidates are interviewed on the same day, then those arriving later in the afternoon will have to work harder to create a good impression. As interviewers become tired they are harder to impress.

### Poor interviewing skills

Many interviewers do not work to improve their skills. They make some or all of the mistakes identified above. In addition to these, other common problems are that they often:

- Ask badly worded questions which don't allow the candidate to open up.
- Do too much talking during the interview.
- Become confrontational with candidates.
- Allow prejudices to influence their decisions.

Keep these points in mind as you plan future interviews.

## Other Selection Methods

Many organisations further enhance the recruitment process to help ensure that they choose the best available candidate, often using additional tools such as assessment centres, presentations and psychometric tests to better evaluate the applicants. The tools that are available to you will naturally depend upon the current practices you adopt, but even if you don't have access to the sample tools/approaches described here, you can still take some of the principles on board to strengthen how you select your employees.

Assessment centres have grown in popularity, particularly for senior level recruitment, and they often consist of a ½ or full-day event where candidates are presented with a number of structured assessment activities which are designed to really test their motivation and suitability for the post. These events often take place at the latter stages of the recruitment process when the broad field of candidates has been narrowed down, so they can be quite intense and competitive; but that too is often part of the rationale for using them. By providing for a more detailed exploration of a candidate's suitability, assessment centres have been proven to be a more effective method of selection. These events may involve a combination of activities, including:

- Psychometric tests
- Individual/Group exercises
- Case study analysis
- Formal presentations
- Role Plays
- Behavioural interviews

Clearly, organising and managing an assessment centre takes time, money and expertise but if they result in better recruitment decisions then they

represent a good return on investment. Even if you are not in a position to devote the necessary resources towards running a full assessment centre, you might use some of the tools individually.

### Psychometric tests

Psychometric tests are designed to assess an individual's reasoning abilities or to gauge their likely behavioural responses to a variety of situations. By testing a candidate in these areas, you can compare their score to accepted norms and the results can then support the decision-making process during recruitment. Generally, you will come across two main types of tests:

Ability Tests

Personality Inventories

Ability tests seek to measure a candidate's skills in areas such as numeracy, verbal reasoning, analytical capabilities and so on. They are frequently conducted under time constraints, so they can also demonstrate how well an individual can cope under pressure. Personality questionnaires, on the other hand, can be used to evaluate a candidate's likely behaviour and attitudes according to a variety of situations such as their ability to interact with other team members or how they might deal with a range of work based scenarios.

### Role Plays/Presentations/Group Exercises

It is always possible for you to integrate role plays, presentations and exercises into your recruitment process and they can be particularly suitable when seeking to fill sales or customer-facing positions. For example, if you had a large number of applicants for a particular post, bringing them together

and setting them an exercise to work upon in groups, whilst monitoring their performance, could help in 'screening' candidates to ensure that you only interview those with the greatest potential. Equally, having a sales candidate make a short presentation as part of the interview process makes good sense as you want to see how they can communicate to potential clients.

### **Behavioural Interviewing**

At the very least, you should always ensure that the majority of your questions posed during the interview have a behavioural component to them, which are linked to the employee profile you are searching for.

This can be achieved by presenting candidates with scenarios related to the role and asking them to explain how they would deal with the situation.

A further addition that you could consider to enhance your recruitment efforts would be to ask potential candidates to work with your team for a short period, so that you can better judge how they actually perform on-site and whether they integrate well with your team.

In fact, in some organisations, the team members are also involved in making the final decision. This approach is becoming more popular and as candidates are paid for their time, they are not being treated unfairly.

However, you could only do this if you had a high performing team and indeed if your organisation was open to this approach. Regardless of your particular circumstances, you should now have some useful ideas to help you strengthen how you currently recruit your team members.

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## **Stage 6 - Selecting and Appointing Candidates**

It has already been established that interviews are a very subjective method of evaluating the suitability of a candidate and some guidance has been provided above on how you might reduce the subjective nature of your interviews. There are of course many other recruitment methods that can be used in conjunction with interviews to reduce subjectivity, such as psychometric testing or assessment centres but for many tourism businesses, interviews remain the primary tool used.

Whatever selection method you use, at the end of the process, you must still

make the decision as to who you feel is the most suitable candidate. The decision on the person or persons to be appointed should be made after all the interviews have taken place.

If you interview a candidate early in the process who you feel is suitable for the job, then the danger is that you have already made up your mind; subsequent candidates are then measured in comparison to them. This does not give everyone an equal opportunity. Maintaining objectivity is not easy - you are only human after all and you have to work extremely hard at it.

To maximise the potential for selecting the best candidate the following steps are worth noting:

- As stated, prepare a job description and employee profile at the outset of the recruitment process. These are then the criteria against which you will measure each candidate.
- Prepare a simple assessment form incorporating these criteria. This can be based on a numerical or descriptive scale and could follow the format below:

<b>Candidate Name :</b>				<b>Date:</b>			
			<b>Poor</b>		<b>Excellent</b>		
<b>Criteria</b>		<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>Comments</b>
(Perhaps list criteria from your Employee Profile here or devise summary evaluation criteria)							
<b>Total Score</b>							
<b>Salary Expectations</b>	€	<b>Notice period required in current Job</b>		<b>Candidate has own car?</b> (If relevant for post)		Y/N	<b>Full Clean Licence?</b> Y/N
<b>References</b>							
Candidate reference checks are positive - Y/N							
Describe:							
<b>Decision</b>							
Appoint		2 <sup>nd</sup> Interview		Decline		Other	

- During each interview take only brief notes on candidate responses.
- After each interview complete the assessment form for the candidate in question while the details are fresh in your mind.
- When you have completed all the interviews compare the assessment forms to identify the most suitable candidate.
- For more senior positions it is important to conduct a second interview, with more than one interviewer seeing the candidate.

## Appointing Candidates

Every company will have its own procedure for appointing successful candidates and clearly you will follow your own approach.

The procedure will generally entail these steps:

1. Candidate selected.
2. Verbal offer of appointment made.

3. Medical completed if appropriate.
4. Letter of appointment sent.
5. Contract signed.

This may vary slightly depending upon the urgency for filling the vacancy. Whatever procedure you follow it is important to remember that this is the beginning of your new employee's formal introduction to your company, so first impressions last.

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## Stage 7 - Induction & Training

Every employee remembers their first few days in a job and if that experience is below standard, you may quickly find that you will have a disgruntled or at least a less than happy employee on your hands.

Induction is the process of receiving and welcoming employees when they first join your business and giving them the basic information they need to settle down quickly.

Induction has three aims:

- ❑ To smooth the early stages when everything is likely to be strange and unfamiliar to the new employee.
- ❑ To establish quickly a favourable attitude to the company in the mind of the new employee so that he or she is more likely to stay.
- ❑ To obtain effective output from the new employee in the shortest possible time.



Usually the induction process has two components:

### **Company Induction**

The first stage of induction is when the employee receives a detailed introduction to the company and their job. An employee handbook is useful for this purpose, but there should also be a face-to-face induction given which covers things like:

- A brief description of the company – its history, products, organisation and management.
- Basic conditions of employment – hours of work, holidays, pension scheme, insurance.
- Pay – pay scales, when paid and how, deductions, queries.
- Sickness – notification of absence, certificates, pay.
- Leave of absence.
- Company rules.
- Disciplinary procedure.
- Grievance procedure.
- Promotion procedure.
- Union and joint consultation arrangements (if relevant).
- Education and training.
- Health and safety arrangements.
- Medical and first-aid facilities.
- Restaurant and canteen facilities.
- Social and welfare arrangements.
- Telephone calls and correspondence.
- Travelling and subsistence expenses (if relevant).

If your business is not large enough to justify a printed handbook, the least that should be done is to prepare a typed summary of this information. You may not personally deliver the full induction but you should spend time with all new starters so that they understand your philosophy and what is expected of them.

### **Departmental Induction**

When the initial briefing has been completed, new employees should be taken to their place of work and introduced to their manager or team leader for the departmental induction programme. This can involve working through a checklist of training and other information which might span their first month in the role.



*training should be regular*

### **On-going Training & Development**

Of course, training should not stop at induction and all employees should receive appropriate on- and off-the-job training on a regular basis which balances the needs of the business and the individual.

## Stage 8 - Employee Evaluation

Monitoring employee performance is of course an on-going activity, but for new employees, evaluation should have the following defined phases:

**End of first day/week** – a quick 'how are you getting on' chat should take place at the end of the first day, and week, to ensure they are settling in well.

**End of first month** – a more detailed job chat should take place where the employee's early performance is reviewed in detail and positives highlighted. Where difficulties are identified, the employee should be made aware of any issues, offered remedial coaching and support, and then this should be followed up again at weekly intervals. It is important that problems are addressed early so that before an employee's probation period (usually 3-6 months) has elapsed you are confident that they are the right person for the longer term.

**End of probation period** – given that you will have addressed any problems by this point, this stage should

represent the employee's first formal appraisal at the company where his or her strengths are identified and praised and future goals are established. You may at this point revise their pay upwards if that was part of the employment contract.

By reviewing the new employee's early performance in a staged fashion, you ensure that they are delivering for the business in the manner expected but you also show them that you are interested in them as individuals and eager to help them grow and develop.

The evaluation process can of course also tell you whether your recruitment process is working effectively.

By viewing 'recruitment' as an eight stage process, you attach greater importance to it and by taking the necessary action within each of those stages you ensure that you are maximising the quality of employees you bring into the business. As you well know, it is far easier to keep a 'bad egg' out than to get rid of one later.



## Activity: Review your current approach to recruitment and selection

Consider the following questions:

- ✓ Have you completed a job analysis whereby job descriptions and person specification (employee profiles) have been drafted for key positions?
- ✓ Are there defined procedures in place for notifying the HR Department of vacancies?
- ✓ Are there appropriate controls in place to devise and agree all job adverts?
- ✓ Is internal recruitment appropriately considered for all positions and are there set procedures for facilitating this?
- ✓ Are there set procedures in place for screening applications and CVs?
- ✓ How are interviews structured? Do you use panels or single interviewers?
- ✓ Are set interview plans/structured questions used?
- ✓ What other assessment methods/psychometric testing tools do you use?
- ✓ Are there effective procedures in place for notifying candidates (both successful and unsuccessful) and calling the successful candidates for interview?
- ✓ Does the way that interviews are managed create a positive impression for the company?
- ✓ Do all those involved in interviewing candidates have appropriate training to do it professionally?
- ✓ How are recruitment decisions made? Do you use structured evaluation sheets?
- ✓ What are the procedures for notifying candidates (both successful and unsuccessful)? Are there defined procedures for appointing new employees?

These questions should provide you with some food for thought as to where you might need to focus your attention in terms of improving your recruitment and selection process.

Further guidance and additional tools are available on the Online Business Tools site

# 3. Conclusion

The information provided in this guide is designed to help you find the right people in the first instance then to lead and manage them in a way that maximises their levels of engagement. Further guidance and additional tools are available on the Online Business Tools website.



# XYZ COMPANY

## Recruitment and Selection Policy

### 1. Introduction

This document outlines the procedures and overall policy for recruitment and selection at the XYZ COMPANY. The purpose of this policy is to inform managers and staff of the processes required to find the best candidate for a vacant post. It incorporates best practice and follows equal opportunity guidelines. Applicants must not receive more or less favourable treatment on the grounds of gender, race, disability, sexual orientation, marital status, family responsibility, ethnic origin, trade union membership and political and religious beliefs.

The 5 commitments which the XYZ COMPANY must follow are:

1. To interview all applicants with a disability who meet the minimum criteria for a job vacancy and consider them on their abilities.
2. To ensure that there is a mechanism in place to discuss at any time, but at least once a year, with disabled employees what you and they can do to develop and use their abilities.
3. To make every effort when employees become disabled to make sure they stay in employment.
4. To take action to ensure that all employees develop the appropriate level of disability awareness needed to make the commitments work.
5. Each year, to review the 5 commitments and what has been achieved, to plan ways to improve on them and let employees know about progress and future development plans.

### 2. Establishing a vacancy

Once a vacancy has been established either through a member of staff leaving or a new post that has been created, a budget control/establishment form must be filled in by the Department Manager and sent to Human Resources. A copy must also be sent to Management Accounts.

With an established post it gives managers the opportunity to review the post and carry out a thorough analysis before automatically proceeding to recruitment.

When analysing a post it is useful to talk to the outgoing post-holder and colleagues within the department as to whether the post could be changed or the way that the team works could be re-organised.

Issues to consider before advertising a new post are:

1. Allocating duties to other team members (although consideration would have to be given to up-grading staff who's responsibilities are changed).
2. Is there any reason why the role cannot be considered for a job-share and is there any scope for other flexible working practices?
3. Training other members of the team to create a multi-skilled workforce.
4. Taking on a part-time employee if the post doesn't warrant a full time employee.

Another factor to consider is job evaluation to make sure that the job description is recent and up to date. The purpose of job evaluation is to ensure that consistent decisions are made about grading and rates of pay. It is also helpful to compare with other existing, similar posts within the

organisation with regards to equal pay between comparable jobs so that equal pay is provided for work of equal value.

### **3. Advertising**

Human Resources will then write the advert and send the current job description for that post to the Department Manager for approval. When the advert and job description are approved by the Department Manager the advertisement will be publicised to all internal staff for one week in order to allow permanent staff to apply for posts before they are advertised externally to the public.

The post will be sent to all staff via email, it will also be available on the Intranet and also on the vacancies notice board.

If there are no internal applicants then the post will be advertised externally. If there are internal applicants then they will be shortlisted and interviewed before the post is advertised externally.

If managers require a temporary member of staff to cover until the post is filled they must fill out a 'Request for agency staff' form held in Human Resources. HR will then arrange a temp for that department.

### **4. Shortlisting**

Managers must only shortlist against the criteria from the person specification and job description and not from personal opinion.

The person specification should contain the essential criteria required to carry out the post, if an applicant does not have all of the essential criteria then they must not be shortlisted. The person specification should also contain desirable criteria that would be of benefit to the post if the applicant has those skills, but are not essential to carry out the post.

Human Resources will send copies of the application forms and the shortlisting criteria to all members of the shortlisting panel. Managers must shortlist against these criteria only and not from personal opinion.

Shortlisting must be returned to Human Resources within two weeks of the closing date of the post. HR will then organise a convenient interview date and will be responsible for booking the venue and inviting the candidates. HR will also send out regret letters to unsuccessful candidates who have not been shortlisted.

It is imperative to remain objective throughout the recruitment and selection process, therefore anyone who knows that someone they are related to or know personally, is considering applying or has applied must declare this.

No one is permitted to shortlist or interview a member of their family or a close personal friend and must withdraw from the selection process.

### **5. Interviewing**

Panel members must treat all information on application forms and information from the interview as strictly confidential.

A pre meeting should be held before the interviews to discuss which areas of questioning will be delegated for each panel member.

Best practice requires the person asking the questions to maintain eye contact and encourage the interviewee whilst the other panel members make notes.

Interviewers must be aware that the candidates must all be asked the same questions.

Explain to the candidate at the beginning of the interview the format and process e.g. who will be asking questions and in what order and that they will have the opportunity to ask questions throughout the interview and at the end.

Remember to be clear before questioning what answer you will expect applicants to give in order to meet the criteria. If you aren't clear about a 'correct' answer to your question then subjectivity is likely to result. Therefore you could be swayed by the candidate's conviction in their answer rather than them answering correctly.

Remember to check each application form for gaps and ambiguity in employment history.

All panel members should be aware of equality procedures regarding recruitment and selection and be familiar with these.

No one should interview alone and each panel member must take notes during the interview to assess the candidate's responses and as a reminder when deliberating with the panel.

In case of complaints, the notes taken during interview will be used to justify the decision reached by the panel.

When each panel member has completed their assessment of each candidate, they should discuss with the other panel members and compare their conclusions.

The appointed candidate will meet all the essential criteria on the person specification and the panel should agree that they are the best person for the role.

Assessment forms and interview notes should be handed back to Human Resources where they will be stored confidentially.

## **6. Offer of Employment**

Once a suitable applicant has been decided upon, Human Resources will telephone the candidate to offer the position, subject to satisfactory references.

The Department Manager must fill in an Appointment Form before HR can offer the post, detailing salary and hours for the post.

Once the candidate has accepted the post, Human Resources will contact the candidates' references and send out the occupational health questionnaire.

At least one reference must be an employment reference, preferably from the present or most recent employer. One personal reference can be accepted but the referee must NOT be a relative or friend.

Panel members should not be referees, other than when they are the current line manager of an existing employee.

Human Resources will write to unsuccessful candidates informing them of the decision. They will be given a contact name and telephone number for detailed feedback should they request it.

## **7. Appointment**

Once Human Resources have received satisfactory references (copies to line managers for verification) and health clearance then a start date will be arranged with the new employee.

The Contract of Employment will be issued to the new employee prior to starting with the XYZ COMPANY or where this is not possible within eight weeks of taking up the appointment.

If any areas of this policy are unclear please contact the Human Resources Department for verification.



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