

Recruiting the right people



My business has now reached the point where I need to take on another key employee. This will be a large investment for us and it is vital I find the right person and make the right choice when recruiting. Since I am not experienced at interviewing how can I be sure to make the correct decision?

Maureen Phipps at Gemini HR Consultancy provides some advice.

Recruiting employees is a complex process. You have a limited amount of time in which to find the right person and make a judgment about their suitability. The keys to success are in making sure you know what you are looking for, to prepare well for the interviews, and to be thorough and objective throughout the process.

Carefully define the role

One of the first ways of being sure to find the right person for the job is to be clear about exactly what job you are offering. Once you have decided on the skills, experience and qualifications needed, write a job description and person specification. This will help you to identify the most suitable applicants to interview.

Remember that, throughout the recruitment process, you have to be aware of relevant employment law. You have a legal responsibility to ensure that no unlawful discrimination occurs in the recruitment and selection process on the grounds of sex, race, disability, sexual orientation, and religion or belief. From October 2006, this will also include discrimination on the grounds of age.

Select a method of advertising

There are numerous ways of attracting candidates such as job centres, recruitment agencies, the internet, local newspapers and word of mouth. When choosing the most appropriate medium, take into account the current vacancy, the



Candidates invited to interview should be given a sense of being treated fairly

available budget and the timescale. If you choose to place an advertisement, tailor it to the target audience and make sure it is easily understood. It must be non-discriminatory and should avoid any gender or culturally specific language.

The selection process

The use of telephone screening or an application form can help to sift potential candidates for face-to-face interviews. Under the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 it may be necessary to offer application forms in different formats.

Evaluate each applicant against the job description and person specification to help you shortlist the most suitable candidates for interview. Show professional courtesy by letting all applicants know if they will be given an interview or not.

Prepare for the interview

Most jobs are filled through face to face interviews. The interview itself

has two main purposes – to find out if the candidate is suitable for the job, and to give the candidate information about the job and the company.

All interviews whether formal or informal, need careful preparation if they are to be successful. Every candidate should leave with a sense of being treated well and fairly. Ideally all interviewers should receive recruitment training, including relevant employment legislation.

Prepare thoroughly for the interviews so that you feel confident of the questions you want to ask. It will help to have an interview form with the same questions and a scoring pro-forma for each candidate. Decide if the candidates will be required to do any preparation or make a presentation. If they do, tell them in advance.

Make the decision

Decide who to employ as soon as possible after the interviews. By writing up your notes immediately

after each interview, you will be able to reach a decision more easily and also provide feedback to the candidate if requested.

Inform all successful and unsuccessful candidates of the outcome as soon as possible.

Make the offer

Offer the position to the successful candidate in writing, clearly stating the relevant terms and conditions. Take up references on your new recruit before they start employment with you.

The offer letter should include the job title; any conditions that apply; the terms – including salary, hours, benefits, pension arrangements, holiday entitlement, place of employment, notice period; the date of starting and any probationary period; and what action the candidate needs to take, for example returning a signed letter of acceptance.

It is a criminal offence for an employer to employ anyone who does not have permission to live or to work in the UK. Further information can be obtained on the Home Office website.

For help with your people and employment issues, contact Business West's Advisory Services Team on 01275 373 373 or email advisory.services@businesswest.co.uk Gemini HR Consultancy can be contacted on 01225 428282 or at www.gemini-hr.co.uk

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