

RECRUITMENT BASICS

Having trouble finding and retaining the right employee? It's time to go back to basics and reconsider your recruitment strategy.

THE search for quality employees in the dwindling labour market has resulted in employers investing more money and time in the recruitment process. Wages are on the increase, advertisements are becoming bigger and brighter and workplace innovations such as commitment to staff wellbeing, lifestyle and family friendly and flexible policies are being extensively promoted.

As the market becomes increasingly competitive, it is time for employers to acknowledge a well-defined recruitment process as a central aspect of overall business success.

A recruitment process is the way in which an organisation is able to attract and hire suitably skilled, motivated and productive employees. Given the present shortage of quality applicants and the booming economy, businesses often make the mistake of taking short-cuts that result in less thorough decisions. Productivity demands also influence managers to grab what they can and hope for the best however, this expediency is often negated by the well-documented costs of bad recruitment.

Mistakes in the recruitment process leading to an early resignation or dismissal can cost an employer between half and two-thirds of the employee's annual salary. The direct cost of recruitment – advertising costs, agency fees and processing job applications is easily measured however, often it is the indirect costs of productivity losses and disruption that occur between the time an employee resigns and the new employee is hired, trained and reaches the required level of productivity, that truly impacts the financial capability of the business.

The recruitment process need not be

tedious and complex. Get the basics right and make the right decision the first time.

Assess the role

Before looking for suitable candidates, it is important to assess the requirements of the role.

Consider the future needs of the organisation, particularly in respect to strategic direction and new products or services. Think about the overall business goals and recruit someone with the skills, knowledge and experience to help achieve them.

Review your needs when a position becomes vacant, it may be that the tasks of the vacant position can now be absorbed by existing positions to both fulfil present employees and reduce costs.

Review and update the job description and remuneration arrangements. A job description must reflect the proposed position and what the business requires in the future. Remuneration arrangements should be mapped against both the responsibilities of the role and current industry and regional benchmarks.

Advertise

Don't just write an advertisement, spread the word! Word-of-mouth and head hunting are becoming increasingly popular methods, so too is developing relationships with recruitment agencies.

If placing an ad, it should be written carefully to ensure it adheres to the Anti Discrimination Act. The advertisement must be promoted internally and externally and contain the title of the job, a list of duties and responsibilities, a closing date for applications and an outline of what to send with the application.

TIP – Avoid the following in an ad:

- gender-specific terms like 'tradesman' or 'cleaning lady'
- irrelevant job specifications that implies one sex or particular appearance - eg 'attractive', for a personal assistant role
- words that denote specific race - eg 'Japanese man' or 'Australian born'

The job interview

While candidates with experience and qualifications necessary for the role will always be considered favourably, labour shortages have resulted in many employers thinking creatively rather than insisting on finding that 'perfect match'.

More recently, interviews are being used to assess the compatibility of a candidate with the values and methods of the organisation and to match competencies rather than experience. A willingness to learn and an ability to think and communicate are transferable skills across a wide range of industries and roles.

Interviews can commence after making a shortlist of the best applications. Prepared questions will compare candidates fairly and it is important to ensure they meet discrimination legislation and are specifically related to the requirements of the job.

Be sure not to ask leading questions. Training in effective interview techniques will enhance the probability of choosing the right candidate.

TIP - Steer clear of minefield questions including:

- If the candidate has ever made a WorkCover claim
- Whether the person is married
- Whether a person is pregnant or

