

### Employing People for the First Time

#### Introduction

Deciding to employ a member of staff for the first time can be a daunting decision for a self-employed person to make. Recruitment is expensive and making a mistake can be costly. Alternatives, such as implementing efficiency improvements, need to be carefully considered before the decision to recruit is reached.

#### Recruitment Process

Implementing this process should help you ensure that the recruitment of your first employee is successful:

- 1) Conduct a gap analysis.** Look at the tasks that must be completed to ensure the smooth running of your company and identify any gaps. Decide which of these tasks must be incorporated into the newly created role.
- 2) Prepare a Job Description.** Define the tasks that the role holder will be responsible for completing.
- 3) Prepare a Person Specification.** Think about what your ideal candidate for this job would be like. What skills, experience, attitudes and qualifications should they have? You also need to identify which of these attributes are essential for the tasks to be completed effectively and which are 'nice to haves'.
- 4) Write and place the job advertisement.** Once the job description and person specification are prepared, you are then ready to prepare a job advertisement. The more defined you can make the advertisement the more likely it is that you will attract those who possess the identified prerequisite attributes.  
  
Think carefully about who you are trying to attract, when deciding where to place your job advert. If there is a trade journal for your industry this is a good place to advertise your vacant position because the readership is drawn from your target market. Alternatives to advertising in the press include the use of an employment agency or promoting the role through your local job centre.  
  
The advertisement should make clear the closing deadline for all applications and the form of response you would prefer to receive. For example, do you want to receive CVs, completed application forms or phone calls initially?
- 5) Shortlist Candidates.** All applications need to be reviewed to create a shortlist. You need to think about how well each candidate measures up to the person specification you have created.
- 6) Interview the shortlisted candidates.** Before you start interviewing, you should spend time deciding upon the structure and content of the interviews. Prepare a series of questions you will ask every candidate, to enable you to gather the same information to help you compare.

Try to use open-ended questions that encourage candidates to talk about their skills and experience and how this will help them to complete the role's tasks.



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Depending on the role you may also want to get the candidates to complete a test to assess their capability. An example of this would be a speed typing test when recruiting for a secretary.

**7) Select the best candidate.** Once you have interviewed all of the shortlisted applicants, you can then make your selection based on the information gathered.

**8) Notify Applicants of the outcome.** Inform the successful candidate of your decision as soon as possible, first by phone. If they accept, a written offer of employment should be made highlighting the main terms including their start date, salary, hours of work, probationary period, and their entitlement to a pension, sick pay and holiday.

When the applicant has accepted the written offer and you have checked their references, you can then inform the other applicants that they were successful.

**9) What next?** When your new employee starts work, you will need to provide induction training which should convey information about:

- The company
- Their role and reward package
- Practical issues such as health and safety procedures
- Where to obtain assistance if required
- HR policies and procedures

You will also need to add them to your payroll and sort out their National Insurance and PAYE (income tax). The Inland Revenue is a source of further information about these matters.

### **Points to be aware of during the recruitment and selection process:**

- Current employment legislation in relation to:

**Discrimination** - You must not discriminate against candidates on the basis of race, sex, disability, marital status, sexual orientation or religion. Any discrimination due to pregnancy or maternity is automatically unfair.

**Eligibility to work in the UK** - as an employer you are responsible for ensuring that employees are legally allowed to work in the UK.

**Working conditions** - Your contract of employment must comply with current legislation defining working terms and conditions.

It is therefore a good idea to seek advice from a professional employment law adviser when recruiting.

- Potential eligibility for financial assistance - If you have a suitable vacancy and sign up to become a New Deal employer, you will be eligible for financial support for a limited period of time. Contact your local Job Centre for information.

Your recruitment and selection process also acts as a marketing exercise. Candidates are potential customers too so treat them fairly and courteously throughout.



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### Key Action Points

- Before embarking on a recruitment programme consider alternative ways of increasing capacity.
- Adopt the recruitment process outlined or implement something similar.
- Seek the advice of an employment law specialist concerning legislation applicable to your business. Local Chambers of Commerce and Business link may be able to provide support here.
- Seek advice from the Inland Revenue concerning National Insurance and PAYE.
- Seek advice from your local Job Centre regarding your eligibility to participate in any government initiatives.

### References

ACAS - National Helpline: 08457 47 47 47 [www.acas.org.uk](http://www.acas.org.uk) ACAS Publications: 08702 42 90 90

Business Link - 0845 600 9 006 [www.businesslink.org](http://www.businesslink.org)

[www.cipd.co.uk](http://www.cipd.co.uk)

[www.inlandrevenue.gov.uk](http://www.inlandrevenue.gov.uk)

[www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk](http://www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk)



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