Recruitment best practice top tips

Recruitment success is measured by happy, productive employees that choose to stay for many years. To support you in your recruitment planning, consider the following top tips:

1. **Plan ahead** – Where do you expect your department to be in the next 2–3 years? Will there be an impact of possible promotions? What can you do to ensure you have staff ready to move up? Who can you cross-train so there are no sudden skills or knowledge gap? Where might a member of staff leaving give you an opportunity to do things differently?

2. **Know what you want** – Is directly replacing a leaver necessary, or is there value in recruiting someone with wider skills? Think about the long term as well as about your immediate need. Define what the job involves and what sort of person you need. What experiences and competencies are non-negotiable and where can you afford to be more flexible?

3. **Set clear expectations** – There’s no point in making a job appear more attractive than it really is. Anyone recruited on that basis will soon be disappointed. The more honest and accurate your job description and advertising, the less time you will spend dealing with unsuitable candidates and the more focused your final shortlist will be.

4. **Have an efficient process for filtering out unsuitable candidates** – Using screening or filter questions, you can quickly eliminate those people without the skills or experience you require. Consider using telephone interviews to cut down your final shortlist.

5. **Create a standard list of interview questions relevant to the job** – Your interviews become fairer and more objective when you ask each person the same questions. If the candidate gives good responses, you can develop the conversation further.

6. **Give candidates tasks to do** – Simple tasks can tell you a lot more than an interview alone. Interviewing for customer service staff? Ask them to write an email response to a customer complaint. Looking for line managers? Get candidates together in a group and ask them how they would handle typical people management scenarios. Listen to what they have to say and watch how they interact with each other.

7. **Involve more than one person with the interview process** – A second perspective is invaluable to help you make sure you pick the best person for the job rather than the person you get on best with. Involve other members of your team or a management colleague.

8. **Show shortlisted candidates around** – Let people see the workplace and meet the people they’ll be working with. This helps them decide whether the job is right for them. It also allows you to assess the impression the individuals make on your existing team.

9. **Keep it legal** – Take advice to make sure your procedures are legal. What are you allowed to put in job adverts or ask in interviews? Could any of your selection activities be discriminatory?

10. **Have a structured induction programme** – Plan activities to ensure the new arrival feels welcomed and all essentials are covered in the first few weeks. This is the best way to get new people up and running quickly and ensure they stay.