



# Recruitment Basics

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***Your service may have recently grown, you may have had a valued member of staff resign or depart on parental leave and now you have a vacancy to fill. Whatever the reason may be, you now need to recruit.***

***For many organisations, recruiting staff can seem overwhelming, complex and fraught with danger. Employing the wrong person can be time consuming, costly and difficult to get out of. Equally if you are not compliant with relevant legislation and laws there are substantial penalties that can be applied. Alternatively, employing the right person can improve the education and care services you provide and boost workplace morale and culture. Provided below is some simple information, steps and strategies to assist you in the process of recruiting the right person. This is far from a complete account, but should steer you in the right direction.***

Before you commence, make sure you know and understand your service's internal policies for recruitment. This should provide you with guidance on whether you must advertise vacant roles and if so, where, who will be part of your recruitment process and who can ultimately approve the appointment of any new staff member.

## Review

Make sure you know what is needed. Having a vacant position is an ideal time to stand back and assess how you do things, why you do things and whether or not you need to continue doing these things in the same way. What do you want this new role/vacant role to do on a day to day basis?

## Document

Once you've reviewed your needs, document them. Make sure you have a detailed position description. Having a well written position description will assist you in identifying the right person for the role. It will provide clarity for the new employee and their supervisor about their duties and what defines good performance. It will also help you to determine the required qualifications, knowledge and skills. The position description must outline the basic activities of the role, the reason that this position exists and articulate the responsibilities of this position.

At this stage review or develop the selection criteria. Selection criteria should include; any mandatory requirements such as, a current Working With Children Check and any minimum qualifications required for the role, the characteristics that the individual will need to be successful and the skills and knowledge required. When developing selection criteria you must ensure that they comply with Equal Opportunity legislation and any internal policies. Robust selection criteria will assist those selecting the candidate to identify the applicant that is best suited to the position. Good selection criteria will also help you quickly identify applicants that do not meet your minimum requirements and therefore your service's needs.

Ensure you know which award and/or enterprise agreement your employees are covered by, check which classification in the award/agreement applies to this position, the days and hours that you will want this employee to work and the minimum salary and other conditions that will apply. Include this in your position description.

## Advertise

There are many different ways that you can go about finding potential employees beyond traditional forms of advertising. You could consider print media and online job boards (such as *seek.com*) but also think about how you could use your networks, referrals from existing staff or colleagues, social media (Linked In, Facebook or Twitter), industry associations, word of mouth and universities.

Some of these options are easier and cheaper than traditional advertising whether that is print or online.

However, when you advertise the position, the advertisement should be based on your position description and include a brief description of the duties, the required qualifications, skills and experience, who the applicant can contact for more information and details on how they should apply and closing dates.

## Assessing Applicants

Sharing the decision making throughout this next phase of the selection process will give you a greater range of opinions on which candidate is the best fit. Including others such as an educator or other team member and a committee member or other parent/user on a selection panel, will assist in alleviating any doubts about whether or not you are making the right choice.

With a well written position description, you can shortlist applicants by comparing their qualifications, skills and experience – narrowing down the field to those that best meet the selection criteria. Once you have a short-list of applicants, it is time to arrange for an interview to get to know them better, find out more about their background and experience, why they have applied for the position and to get a general feel for how they would fit in with your service and existing staff.

If you have not done a lot of recruitment, the interview can be as daunting for you as it is for the applicant. To ensure the interview goes well, prepare! Ensure that you have developed a set of questions that link to the selection criteria. Research has shown that the best predictor of future performance is an individual's past performance. Interview questions should be open-ended requiring answers that demonstrate past experiences and current knowledge relevant to the selection criteria.



Allow sufficient time to ask your questions and to respond to any questions the candidate may have. Document the candidates' responses and explore any skill gaps or discrepancies that have been highlighted thus far. The interview should be professional but friendly so as to allow the applicant to feel comfortable enough to present themselves in the best way possible. Treat all candidates equally. Make sure questions asked of candidates or referees are related to the position and do not address personal matters such as marital status, religion, or ethnicity.

Although interviews are a very important tool during the selection process, there are other tools to assist you in your decision, these include reference checking, asking for samples of previous work skills assessments and checking of qualifications.

As a minimum, talk to the candidates referees, making sure that you ask questions specific to the selection criteria and the candidates' skills and experience. Before contacting referees, confirm with the candidate that it is still appropriate to contact this individual. It is common practice to only speak with referees provided by the candidate, however, if you are concerned that you will not be provided with the information that you need, ask the candidate for additional referees.

### Select

Once you have gathered all of the relevant information, the selection panel then needs to decide on the most suitable candidate for your role. You should consider;

- Their skills and experiences relevant to the job
- Any other attributes that will benefit your service and your team
- Whether they will make a good fit and work well with you and your team.

Don't make a decision about a candidate's suitability for the role based on their gender, religion or any other discriminatory reason. Follow your internal procedures and get approval to make an offer. Depending on your governance structure, this may be from a Committee of Management or a line manager.

Contact the person that you have chosen first to offer them the position. Assuming they accept the offered position, you should then contact all other applicants and inform them that they have not been successful. If you have interviewed other applicants, it is best practice to offer them feedback about why they were not successful.

Remember throughout the process to treat any applicant the way you would expect to be treated, be respectful, communicate regularly, show courtesy and don't waste an applicants' time.

*If you have reached this stage of your selection process and have **not** been able to identify a candidate that meets your minimum requirements and/or would not be a suitable fit for your service, what's next?*

*Sometimes additional referee checks, a second interview with targeted questions to address any areas of concern or a request for the candidate to do a casual paid shift at the service can help alleviate doubts. Seriously consider commencing the recruitment process again, rather than appointing someone that you are not confident will be suitable for the role in the long run.*

### Offer

Formalising your verbal job offer is the final step in our recruitment process. Whilst a 'letter of offer' is not a legal requirement, it is best practice and will ensure there is no ambiguity about the terms and conditions. Your letter of offer should include details such as:

- Start date
- Position title
- Hours of work
- Salary and other entitlements
- Any applicable probation period, generally the first three months during which time you and your new employee have an opportunity to assess their suitability for your position, and
- A Fair Work Information Statement.

Having successfully recruited, it is vital that you start planning a comprehensive orientation and induction process.

### Support Available

- Contact your employer association for access to tools such as guides for interview questions and templates for letters of offer. Remember that as a member of Community Child Care you are eligible for discounted membership with Jobs Australia [www.ja.com.au](http://www.ja.com.au)
- Business Victoria have a range of information including templates for businesses undertaking recruitment [www.business.vic.gov.au](http://www.business.vic.gov.au) > Operating a Business > Employing & Managing > Staff Recruitment
- Fair Work Ombudsman website [www.fairwork.gov.au](http://www.fairwork.gov.au) > Employment > Employers > New employers
- Access CCC Resource Sheets, Recruiting Staff - *The Referee Check* and *Position Descriptions* - A guide, via our website [www.cccinc.org.au](http://www.cccinc.org.au) > Resources ◀