

The 7 Steps to Successful Recruitment

You cannot build a business without a team. Not just any team; the right team.

As Jim Collins, in his classic book *Good to Great*, describes it: Get the right people onto your bus sitting in the right seats and you have a winning team. Get the wrong people on the bus and/or sitting in the wrong seats then you have problems; big problems.

Recruiting the right people onto your team is difficult; very difficult. So we have taken the recruitment process and broken it down into seven steps. Follow these and your chances of success are greatly enhanced.

Step 1 – Hire a person for the job; don't create the job for a person

Before you do anything; before you talk to people, before you put the word out that you are looking for someone, define the job. Without a clear job description there is a greater possibility that you will hire someone you like before you hire the right person for the job. It also makes sure you understand the job you need filled.

If you are hiring for an existing position and there is a job description, review it carefully. This is a perfect time to reconsider what you really want in the job.

Ask other people to review the job description and provide you with comments, questions and recommendations. Take your time; it's worth the time!

A typical job description is organized into four components:

1. Purpose of the Job
2. Specific Duties
3. Outcomes & Expectations
4. Job Requirements
5. Work Context, which includes:
 - a. Authority - reporting structure, supervisory responsibility, decision making
 - b. Relationships with others
 - c. Environment - working conditions
 - d. Equipment & software used - tools, materials, equipment

Step 2 – Put it out there; find those great candidates

Let the world know about the job! Explain it to your team and your networking groups. Share the job description with your clients; they may know the right person. Somewhere out there is the RIGHT person waiting for this wonderful job opportunity. Engage with people who know and like your company's culture, values and style.

Create a short version of the job description and post it on the most appropriate job posting websites. Use LinkedIn to search out potential candidates. It's the law of numbers; the more people who know about the job the more good candidates you will get. And good candidates lead to good team members.

Step 3 – Shortlist the showstoppers

Your recruitment goal is to find about 3 qualified candidates to interview face to face in Step #5. To achieve this you now go through a process of eliminating candidates who do not meet your minimum criteria. In this step you review the resumes to eliminate candidates.

Identify the skills and attributes required of this job. For example, if your business is Microsoft based then Microsoft experience must be shown in the resume; if not then the resume is removed from consideration. If you have requested a personalized cover letter and there isn't one, the resume is removed from consideration. If the job requires QuickBooks experience and there is no mention of it in the resume then it too is removed from

consideration. The goal is to find no more than 10 qualified resumes for further consideration in the next step.

Step 4 – Shortlist through telephone interview

The purpose of this step is to identify the showstoppers that further eliminate candidates from consideration in order to have no more than 3 very qualified candidates to invite to a face to face interview. Some examples of these showstoppers:

- ✓ If your office is downtown and that is a problem for them because of a long commute.
- ✓ If the job requires a car make sure they own one.
- ✓ If your office is dog friendly ask if they allergies.
- ✓ If the job requires them to be working on their own for long periods of time ask if that will be a problem.

Also ask if they have checked out your website. If they haven't, ask them why not? Is it lack of interest in the company?

This is also the right time to make sure the compensation is acceptable. No point in going further if the candidate wants more than you are going to pay.

Step 5 – Face-to-face interviews

Now is the time to meet the shortlisted candidates. Ideally you are down to three to four candidates. Take lots of preparation time to develop the interview questions. Make sure the questions are based on the job description, NOT the candidates.

Don't be afraid of taking notes during the interview. Not only will this ensure you don't forget important things but it also shows the candidates that what they are saying is important.

If possible have another person interview them as well and compare notes.

And assume you will want to do a second and possibly a third interview with one or two of the candidates.

Throughout the process remember that interviewing is a 2 way street. The candidate wants to prove that they could work for you AND you must prove that your company is worth working for!

And here is the tough decision. If you have any doubts about the shortlisted candidates do not hire the second best; after all you do not want a team of mediocre people. Go back to the beginning and start again!

Step 6 – Reference checks

Never bypass the reference checks. Past performance is always an indication of future performance and the reality is some people just shine in interviews. If you are uncomfortable checking references hire someone to do it for you.

The reference check questions should be around the person and the job responsibilities they will have in your company. Depending on the job description, here are some examples:

- ✓ What are their strengths? They told you in the interview but what do their past bosses think!
- ✓ Do they work well in a team?
- ✓ Do they work well with details?
- ✓ What role did they play? Leader or follower?
- ✓ Ask if they would hire the person back! The answer to this question usually tells you a lot!

Step 7 – Onboard the new team member

The first few days of a new person joining your team are crucial. Quickly include them into the team (have a team lunch) and quickly have them doing meaningful work. There is nothing more disheartening for a new team member than being handed a bunch of manuals to read for a week.

Here are some onboarding ideas:

- Cover the lay of the land – restaurants, washrooms
- Explain the company – its mission, goals, history
- Have lunch with the team
- Describe the plans for the future
- Meet a client

- Give them a space of their own; make sure they have everything they need!
- Have passwords, codes, contact names all arranged
- Review the job description; especially your expectations

Get together at the end of the first week and review the results so far. Ask those difficult questions like: "Is the job what you had expected?"

As in business there are no guarantees that following the Seven Step Process will always be successful. But we do know if you follow these steps thoroughly you will minimize the possibility of making a mistake. But if there are strong indications that the person and job are not a good match then end the relationship early, preferably within the first three month probationary period.