

Top 10 Tips to Improve Hiring Success

1. **Make sure you have a Written Job Description**

What does the job actually involve?

What are the key tasks, accountabilities, actions or deliverables required in the role?

Avoid phrases such as “and any other tasks determined by the manager from time to time, etc, etc)

Remember – Write it down. This clarifies your thinking and helps when interviewing / selecting applicants

2. **Identify what type of Candidate you are seeking**

A written **Person Specification** will help you identify suitable applicants for the short-listing stage

What skills sets are you looking for?

Do you need a specific qualification?

What, if any, industry experience is important?

Can you identify 5 things that you need and/or are looking for in your next employee?

Think about what they *Must Have*, *Could Have*, and what would be *Nice To Have* (but not critical).

3. **Ask your existing team or network of associates if they can recommend anyone**

Your own people will know what works in the team and may be your best source of potential candidates

A current employee will not purposely recommend a useless applicant (as this reflects badly on the employee not the applicant)

4. **Advertise Properly**

Make your advertisement attractive to the right candidates while discouraging inappropriate applications.

A well worded advertisement for a vacancy should exclude those people who do not fit your position description and/or Person Specification. List the Important or essential requirements.

Unless you are prepared to handle an avalanche of responses, avoid phrases like “No experience necessary” or “Full training given”. Avoid phrases like “While not essential, a background in XXX will be advantageous.”

Be clear – Do you want it or not?

It’s no accident that You get what you look for. To coin a phrase “Ask and you shall receive”

5. **Set a deadline for applicants to respond by**

NOTE: It doesn’t have to be *Friday 4 pm* – Make it a Wednesday! This gives you 2 business days to consider the applicants and set interviews for the following week.

6. **Make it easy for applicants to apply**

If you have the facilities and time, invite applicants to call to discuss the position first

You should then shortlist over the phone, using your key criteria from the written Job Description

Make appointments now for those who meet the selection criteria. You don’t have to wait for the response deadline

Online or email responses are easy for you to deal with

7. **Interview applicants in private without interruption**

Plan and prepare your interview questions, don’t make it up as you go along.

Have a written set of questions.

Use evidence-based interview techniques – you are looking for examples/evidence and proof of performance.

Write down the applicant’s response or your impressions (don’t rely on your memory)

8. **Establish if the applicant meets the 3 Key ingredients**

Can they do the job? (Technical Competency)

Will they do the job? (Motivation)

Will they fit in? (Do they resonate with your business culture? Are they a Team player or a Lone Ranger?)

9. **Conduct a “Live” test**

If the position warrants it, have the applicant perform a simulated task

I have had applicants perform Excel competency, Typing, and Word Processing tasks

An engineer might ask someone to do a quick tack weld

Ask the applicant to sell you the pen on the desk

10. **Reference check**

Use a standardised set of questions to contact current or most recent previous employers.

Ensure you ask the referee why the person left their last and or previous positions (does this match with the applicant’s explanation?)

Ask if the company would hire the person again (and if not why not)

Check Criminal Convictions – Police Clearance

Internet Search the applicant’s name. You may be surprised by what you can find

Ask applicants for permission to conduct a Criminal Convictions check.

(You could just ask them what will show up – many people will tell you especially if they know you are going to conduct a check)