

A seven-step hiring process

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“A job description is your roadmap to success”

By Fiona Collie | Nov 09, 2011 02:20

Preparation is the key to success in hiring a new employee, says Cissy Pau, principal with Clear HR Consulting Inc. in Vancouver. Without a proper process, you can waste time and money — not to mention hiring the wrong candidate. Once you know you are ready to hire someone and the qualities you're looking for, follow these seven steps to find and sign a new team member:

1. Write a description

Get down to the basics of who you want to hire and why.

"A job description is your roadmap to success," Pau says.

A detailed list of duties and responsibilities, she says, will lead you to identify the reason to hire someone, what to look for during an interview, how the new employee should be trained, how to evaluate his or her work and what the salary should be.

2. Create a posting

A job posting shows potential candidates what will be expected of them and whether they should apply for the job.

In addition to outlining job details, Pau says, use the posting to show what an employee can expect from your business.

For example, describe the work environment and the characteristics of a successful candidate. You can even mention who would not be a good fit.

3. Screen the applications

Use a checklist to slim down that pile of resumés.

Come up with a list of "must have" and "nice to have" skills for candidates that are easily identified on a resumé, Pau says. Then, place a checkmark beside the person's name for each criterion he or she meets.

Divide the applications into "yes" and "no" piles for interviews based on the number of checks beside an applicant's name.

4. Ask the right questions

Get to know candidates better in an interview by asking behavioural questions.

By asking the candidate how he or she would act in specific work situations, Pau says, you can get a sense of the way he or she will behave as a member of your staff.

For example, instead of asking: "How would you handle a stressful situation at work?"

Ask candidates: "Give an example your handling a stressful situation at work."

Interview four to five candidates in person, says Pau. To wheedle the number of applicants down, you may have to conduct a few telephone interviews first.

5. Keep score

Develop a scorekeeping system to help you evaluate interviews objectively.

Prior to the interview, come up with a list of points you expect to hear from candidates, Pau says. Create a score sheet to indicate when someone meets each mark.

The score sheet will allow you to evaluate an interview objectively, says Pau, and will deter you from making a decision based on a gut feeling.

6. Check references

Make sure you do reference checks once your list is narrowed to one or two candidates.

Call at least two to three references, such as a current or previous employer, says Pau. Verify the candidate's employment history and clarify any concerns you may have following the interview.

7. Put it in writing

Once you have decided on a final candidate, Pau says, write an offer letter.

The offer letter should include the position, salary, start date, end date (if applicable), hours, vacation and termination provisions, such as how much notice and severance the person will receive if he or she is fired.

This is the final instalment of a three-part series on hiring staff.

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