

How to interview and recruit employees

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Follow our steps to recruit new staff, from creating a position description through to interviewing and selecting the best person for the job.

1. Review your current staff structure

The first step in any recruitment process is to review your current staff structure. One way to do this is to:

1. list all the tasks currently done in your business
2. assign only the tasks that employees should do
3. identify the gap in your staff from the tasks remaining

If you're replacing an employee, it's still worthwhile to do this review. It will help you assess whether you need to replace them or change the role for the new employee.

2. Create a position description

A position description is also sometimes called a job description. It gives you a clear understanding of the type of person you're looking for, as well as their roles and responsibilities.

If you're replacing an employee, review the previous position description. Based on your analysis of the staff structure, you may need to update the position description to reflect the new role.

A good position description includes:

- the job title
- who the new employee reports to
- who reports to the new employee
- which section or department the position sits in

- a summary of the job
- a summary of the business
- the employment type (full-time, part-time, casual)
- the key responsibilities of the role
- essential and desirable selection criteria the applicant needs to respond to
- any skills, knowledge, experience or education required for the role
- desirable personal attributes to fit the business's culture

You should create your position descriptions from scratch. Other businesses may have roles with the same title, but the person they want may be completely different from your requirements.

[Find handy recruitment templates including a job description and job advertising template.](#)

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3. Find potential staff candidates

Your job advertisement is your potential new employee's first impression of your business. They may need to impress you, but if you want to attract the best applicants, you also need to impress them.

Key elements to include in your advertisement include:

- wage details
- benefits of the job
- the location
- start date of the job
- closing date for applications
- details of a contact person
- instructions on how to apply

The job you advertise must comply with current legislation. Ensure you offer, at least, the minimum [pay and conditions](#)  and meet [anti-discrimination and equal opportunity requirements](#) .

To distribute your advertisement, consider:

- job websites
- your business website and mailing list

- direct mail to your networks
- social media
- business or industry newsletters
- trade journals
- newspapers
- university job boards

4. Evaluate applications

Each application you receive will be different, and you need to assess each one.

One way to achieve this is to create a matrix rating system. For example, you could:

1. place each candidate's name across the top of a page
2. list your requirements for the role down the side
3. assess each candidate on a scale of 1 to 5 for each role requirement
4. add up the scores for each candidate

With your candidates' scores, you'll be able to quickly identify which candidates you should interview.

Make sure the candidates you choose to interview:

- have the right qualifications
- align with your organisation and its culture
- have goals that match your requirements
- are able to work in Australia

Once you identify your shortlist of candidates, let the unsuccessful applicants know the outcome of their application.

5. Organise interviews

Invite the shortlisted candidates to an interview with you.

When you contact candidates, make sure you tell them:

- when and where the interview will take place
- how long the interview will take
- who they should ask for when they arrive

- what they should bring
- who will be on the selection panel
- what the interview involves

6. Interview candidates

When you interview candidates, try to create a relaxed environment. Your candidates will be nervous.

Prepare questions to ask the candidates. The best questions are open ended. These enable the candidate to talk about their previous experience.

Make notes during the interview, and review your notes and the job applications after all the interviews are complete. Sometimes the best candidate may not be the best at being interviewed.

[Practice your interview skills in this online hiring employees course.](#)

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7. Make an offer

Now that you've selected the best candidate, it's time to let them know.

Often you will still want to check their references, but you can provide the candidate a conditional offer of employment. If you don't find any issues through your referee checks, it's time to send a written offer of employment.

You can make a verbal or written offer, but a written offer and employment contract with the employment terms and conditions can help to:

- manage your employee's expectations
- protect your business

Once you secure your ideal employee, email or phone any unsuccessful candidates to let them know the outcome.

[Use a free tool to create your own letter of offer and employment contract.](#)

 [CREATE AN EMPLOYMENT CONTRACT](#)