



**10**

***essential* steps  
to take before  
you recruit**

So you need to **hire** new staff, and think you will just post an advertisement and the **right** person will just appear?

Sounds simple enough, right? Beginning the **recruitment** process is a perfect opportunity to take stock of where you are, where you want to be and **who** is going to get you there.

Don't just refill the old job. There are steps you need to take, and things you need to know, before you even start recruiting.

**BEFORE you start recruiting consider:**

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## Do you *really* know who you are looking for?

The first thing to do is to know who you are, what you want, and don't want. Know your management style, so that you can articulate the type of person you work well with. If you have a collaborative management style, which relies on a delicate chorus of equality from your staff, the last thing you want is to hire an outspoken employee.

Think about all the people you have worked with in the past, list the type of personalities you CANNOT work with and those that you CAN work with. Now list your own personal workplace traits. What common traits are appearing?

Knowing how you like to work, and who you have worked well with previously, will help you look for the same traits in a new recruit.



## 2

# Understand your company culture and values

Knowing your company's culture, underlying values (written or implied) and the type of person that will fit in, is essential.

If you need everyone to clock in on time and leave on time to keep your well oiled manufacturing plant working optimally, hire people who love the security of a regular routine. Similarly, if your company is more flexible in when or where people work, hiring people who like to work from home, or people who need flexible working hours, will ensure a good fit.

Cultural fit can be a bit more challenging to assess than functional capability. Some strategies to assess cultural fit include:

- Asking the candidate a range of behavioural-based interview questions aligned to values
- Panel interviews
- Role play
- Incorporating a trial period into the candidate contract such as a Temp to Perm arrangement

## Know your company strengths

You should know what your company can offer future employees. It's not a one-way street.

If you're a well-established company you offer candidates job security. If you are local, you offer more time at home with the family. If you are a start up company, you offer job diversity and opportunity to grow.

**Know your strengths and make sure each candidate knows them too.**

So what are the steps that should be followed to create a great employer brand?

The first step is to gauge how your current employees feel about the culture. The best way to do this is to design a confidential online survey. Using an online tool such as Mailchimp, employees should be asked a range of questions such as:

- What do you like about working for (insert company name)?
- Do you have any suggestions to improve the business?
- How does it compare to other businesses you have worked for?

This type of feedback is invaluable in trying to gauge the strengths and weaknesses of the culture and how to shape the key messages for both internal and external purposes.



# 4

## Setting realistic expectations for the current market

If you are looking for superman, but all the great jobs for superman are now in Dubai, all you have to choose from are *sad men in tights*.

You need to know your market, and the current supply and demand for particular roles. This will inform you on what salary and conditions you need to offer to be competitive. Do some research, look up the most recent ads for similar roles and don't be afraid to contact these companies explaining that you are about to recruit for a similar role, and want to get a feel for the current market place. How many applicants did they get? What was the quality like? Are there a lot of people to choose from or is there a skills shortage?

If there is an excess of people with the skills you need, you can afford to be picky. But if the market is sparse and you are faced with a skills shortage, you need to either offer a very competitive remuneration and benefits package, lower your expectations or think about promoting and training someone internally into the role.

Make sure your expectations are **realistic** and reflect the **current market**.



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## Have clear and current selection criteria

You will need a current P.D, whether updating the old Position Description or creating a new one, bring those impacted by the role into the process. Ask the exiting employee for input (if you can), seek out contributions from staff under and above the role and think carefully what outcomes you want from this new employee. When updating the old Position Description, bring those impacted by the role into the process. Ask the vacating employee for input (if you can), seek out contributions from staff under and above the role and think carefully what outcomes you want from this new employee.

Remember to include positive behaviours that are in line with the corporate culture and values of the company, and a wish list for anything you need from that role in the near future.

It's important that you **identify performance attributes or characteristics that prospective hires possess that make them more likely to be able to help your organisation improve its performance.**

For example, if you were able to assess that your business was providing less-than-stellar post-sale customer service, you would look for someone who has a history that includes customer service positions.

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On the other hand, if your top-line sales numbers are low compared to some of your previous years or quarters, you should look into hiring a candidate with all the qualities of a good salesperson: self-motivated, a good communicator, and the ability to make suggestions to help potential clients solve their problems.

The next step is to come up with a list of skills or abilities that the prospective new hire must have. First, think about any technical requirements or certifications that the new hire needs to have. A good example of this would be hiring someone who has a strong understanding of the specific software that the accounting department uses.

Determine and list which selection criteria are mandatory and which ones are desirable, depending on the requirements of the role.

## Applying a flexible staffing approach

Many companies are open to employing temporary or contract workers in their business. In fact, 8 out of 10 employers (78%) believe that contract workers are an advantage to them as candidates can benefit from both flexibility and some level of job security.

76% of employers feel that hiring a combination of both permanent and temporary staff is vital to their department or organisation as it enables them to scale up or down quickly without impacting full time equivalent (FTE) headcount. David Morris from Robert Half feels that an additional benefit is having access to a much larger pool of skilled talent in a candidate short market.

Providing a flexible working environment can be a fantastic benefit for candidates and can include compressed work weeks, flexible working hours and working from home when required. Speak to your teams about how appealing flexible working environments are to them and what arrangements suit their requirements.

Having a flexible work schedule can also assist in increasing employee retention rates. Many employees that are required to juggle family commitments will find flexible working an appealing offer.



## Tapping into the passive candidate market

Many potential candidates for your business may not necessarily be in the market for a new job (the passive candidate market) but that doesn't mean they might not be tempted by a great offer. We've found LinkedIn to be an excellent tool for sourcing suitable candidates who aren't applying for roles. LinkedIn is also a great tool for screening candidates – checking whether they have skills to match your role. In order to use LinkedIn for recruitment effectively, you need to do the following:

- Keep your company page up-to-date and relevant and communicate a strong value proposition aimed at the market
- Encourage your staff to set up their LinkedIn profiles which link through to your company page
- Advertise any available roles on your company page and encourage your staff to share them to their networks
- Determine the essential skills that are required for the role and use the search function of LinkedIn to explore suitable candidates who may be your 1st, 2nd or 3rd connections

## Connect with your existing contacts

Your existing network is a great way to not only build your own business but to source staff that are a great fit for your culture. If you are looking to recruit, speak to your team about who they may know that may be a good fit. Some organisations also offer incentive schemes for staff that bring suitable candidates on board.

Additional strategies to finding the right staff for your business are:

- Ensure that your staff have information about the position availability (along with the Position Description if possible) to share with their networks
- Tap into your industry contacts, memberships and trade associations you are involved with and make them aware of upcoming roles
- Start compiling lists of industry 'movers and shakers' from networking groups that your employees are involved with
- Ask your employees to share upcoming positions with their networks on social media sites such as LinkedIn

## Shortlist, shortlist, shortlist

You'll need to agree upon a method of shortlisting candidates. One way is to confirm the 4-5 essential skills required for the role and mark on a spreadsheet which candidates meet more of the skills than others. This method should provide a list which ranks candidates from meeting the most to meeting the least skills. It's an easy way to start the process.

Starting with the job description – the pre-requisite skills, knowledge and abilities specified in the job description will quite often influence which candidates apply, are shortlisted and eventually selected for the role. So the question is – should you hire for knowledge, skills or ability?

Sharlyn Lauby from HR Bartender provides excellent definitions for these qualities:

### Skills

Proficiencies developed through training or experience – meaning that you have demonstrated how to do something through the application of knowledge such as the application of a model/completion of a task.

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## **Knowledge**

A theoretical or practical understanding of a topic or subject. This doesn't necessarily mean that the candidate possesses the practical application, just that they know the subject and understand it.

## **Abilities**

These are the qualities of being able to do something. There is a small distinction between skills and abilities, being defined as skills being learned and abilities being innate.



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## Screen candidates effectively

We recommend phone screening 6-8 candidates for a single role. This is a sense check that the resume details provided are correct and the candidate is still available and interested in the role and happy with the remuneration package on offer. It is also a good way to determine cultural fit and attitude.

Recruiting the right candidates can be tricky.

Flexi's Recruitment Process Outsourcing (RPO) offers completely unbundled recruitment services and lets you decide how much or how little you'd like to outsource.

Let's face it – keeping on top of your bills is essential to running a successful business. If you are looking for a recruitment solution that helps you manage your budget, Recruitment Process Outsourcing could be an option.

RPO allows your business to manage parts of the recruitment process in-house and outsource those that you may need support with. If you don't have the time to screen candidates or to write an effective job advertisement, these could be elements of the recruitment process that you outsource to your recruitment partner.

Like to know more? Contact Flexi Personnel on 9360 9722 about how RPO might benefit your business.