

Recruitment and selection

Getting the right person, in the right place, at the right time, is crucial. Mistakes can be expensive and damaging to the reputation and activities of staff and the organisation.

RECRUITMENT

Define the requirements: Clarify what needs to be done and risk assess. Consider options of redistributing tasks; training up current staff; short term contracts versus longer term; specialist versus generalist; local versus international; sharing recruitment with other organisations.

Job descriptions: Outline broad responsibilities involved in the job, and expected outcomes.

Person specifications: What skills, knowledge, experience, competencies, qualifications and personal qualities are essential/useful to do the job? Avoid setting discriminatory criteria.

Take legal advice: Before starting, consult a local lawyer or access <http://natlex.ilo.org> to ensure procedures, contracts and compensation and benefits are compliant with all applicable laws; or ask HR managers, or other organisations with experience in the area.

Advertising: Avoid discriminating by the wording and placement of your adverts. Give clear instructions and timing.

Consider previous applicants, emails, newspapers, local radio, word of mouth but consider best options to encourage right people to apply while discouraging too many inappropriate applications

- **Avoid poaching staff** from local agencies or government.
- **Set up HR forums** so agencies can pool resources more effectively.

Applications: Standard application forms assist shortlisting. CVs are simpler and faster BUT information is not standardised and cultural differences can lead to misinterpretation.

SELECTION

Shortlist: Assess applications based on your selection criteria – watch out for bias and discrimination.

Interviews: Create a good impression of your organisation.

- Welcome the candidate and put them at ease - they will tell you more if relaxed.
- Ask open questions (*Tell me about...How do you...Why did you...Talk me through...*) to find out about their experience, skills, knowledge, and attitudes to stress, pressure, their role.
- Ask similar questions to all candidates to ensure fairness and allow for comparison.
- Avoid discriminatory questions e.g. if you ask only females '*Who looks after your children?*'
- Describe the organisation and the job.
- On closing, agree the next steps.

Tests and checks: Ask candidates for evidence of qualifications, examples of previous work or do a presentation, case study or test.

References from previous employers can be useful but ask for candidate's permission and let them know when references will be taken up, by phone if possible. If internal candidate, check performance reviews.

Making a job offer: Prepare and send the necessary documentation in accordance with local laws. Include for signature: organisational Codes of Conduct, security procedures, protection policies etc.

Induction: Planned induction and handover ensures new staff settle in and become productive quickly (see Briefing and Handover page).

Cross-cultural interviews

Tips for Interviewing candidates who belong to different cultures.

ESTABLISH RAPPORT

Explain clearly the purpose of the interview and agree mutual goals – create a cooperative climate.

FEELINGS and MOTIVES

Ask 'projective questions' if the candidate is not used to talking about feeling and motives. e.g. ask them to describe a best friend or colleague and their reasons they admire them.

DEALING WITH STRESS

In order to gain insight into how candidates deal with difficult situations, ask them to describe their worst work experience.

STEREOTYPES and PREJUDICE

Be aware of your own bias affecting how you rate a candidate – positively or negatively.

Get contrasting views by having at least two interviewers per candidate, and have a standard format for questions and responses.

Additional resources on All In Diary website

HR Toolkit for NonProfit Actors, CODF & CHS Alliance, 2017
Staff Reward Programme Case Study – TPO Uganda, 2015
Recruitment and Selection, People in Aid 2008

Web links for further information

Competency based interviewing and Recruitment courses:
<https://disasterready.csod.com>