

Getting your recruitment right first time

Are you planning to recruit new staff over the next year? If so, congratulations. Bringing in new talent to help you to nurture and grow your business is often a huge indicator of success, and it can give you a really big push towards your important goals.

If you're new to the field of recruitment though, you need to take a step back and think through your approach before you move ahead, so you step aside from the commonest pitfalls. Any mistakes in the process could be very costly for you, but they're also pretty easy to avoid.

Here, we'll take a look at the practical steps you can take to make sure that you get it right first time.

- **Ask yourself whether you really need to recruit**

Okay, so this might seem like a no-brainer. You need another pair of hands, so of course you need to recruit, right? Well, not necessarily.

There are a number of other options you need to be aware of. First of all, go back to the drawing board and think about what you want out of your business. What are your big, overarching goals? If you want to build and manage a team, that's great. But many people don't. They'd prefer to just focus on doing what they love, whether that's fixing cars or designing dresses, and they don't want the stress of becoming the big boss and managing other people.

If you're questioning whether you really want to take on this responsibility, you could consider hiring someone on a fixed term contract, or as a temp via a temp agency just to see you over the busy period. This gives you the benefit of extra help when you need it, but without a lot of the stress or obligation, and it's much more flexible.

- **Consider how you'll find the best talent**

The job market is tough right now for people looking for work, but that doesn't mean that you don't have to pull out all the stops to attract the right people for your role.

What will the right person be able to do? What do you have to offer? What's the benefit of working for your business, aside from the salary? And how can you communicate this? Where would the right people look if they wanted a new job?

The go-to option is often placing an advert online yourself – such as your local newspaper, Indeed, Gumtree or Totaljobs. Once you've put together the right words to attract the right people, with the skills and experience the jobs needs, this is a cheap and quick option. Make sure you're geared up to handle the response, which can run into 100 + especially if you haven't stated your criteria clearly.

You might decide that you can find the best people through targeting specific trade publications. The most expensive option is to engage a recruitment consultancy that you already know and trust from your own experience, they can advertise and shortlist on your behalf. They will charge you a percentage of the annual salary, so for example if their rate is 15% on placement for someone who will earn a £20,000 p.a. salary, you'll be charged £3,000. As a successful small business owner, you don't need to be told to negotiate on rate and agree beforehand on the level of service!

So the message is: Be strategic, and dig a little deeper before you rush into anything.

- **Get your processes right**

Always remember that the recruitment process works both ways. You're looking for the best people for your roles, but even in this tough economic climate, high-calibre applicants can often afford to be choosy. By planning your recruitment process carefully and taking care to project the right impression as an employer, you'll give off all the right messages about your business to potential employees.

This starts at the very beginning of the process. How are you communicating with candidates in a way that demonstrates that you value them? How are you assessing their strengths and weaknesses in the role? How are you showing them what it would really be like to work with you? And how are you ensuring that you're grabbing their attention and making your offer more compelling than that of your competitors?

"It's vital that when you start employing people you get the best.

When I started out I kind of cheated my way through and thought, this person isn't that expensive and they can do the job, but you have to pay for somebody that has the experience you need because this will save you in the long term.

One of my biggest mistakes was investing in the wrong people. It put me back a few years".

Caprice Bourret

Celebrity Entrepreneur



Recruiting doesn't have to give you a headache, but you do need to be prepared and really mean business. Need help with your upcoming recruitment drives – defining what you're looking for and how you'll recognize it, wording the advert, questions to ask at interview, decision making? Call The Human Resource on 01249 811506 for a no-obligation chat.

