



A GUIDE TO RECRUITMENT & ONBOARDING

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1. Introduction

Navigating the recruitment process can often feel like negotiating a minefield, with countless factors to consider.

This comprehensive guide aims to equip you with essential insights, from crafting an effective job description to attracting the ideal candidate for your organisation, all while avoiding common pitfalls and adhering to legal regulations.

As 2023 brings forth new challenges for every organisation, it's crucial to optimise your recruitment strategies to secure the right talent. The task is made even more challenging with the UK's unemployment rate standing at a low 3.7% as of January 2023, according to the Office for National Statistics (ONS).

Nonetheless, with the right approach, you can overcome these hurdles and find the perfect fit for your organisation.

3.7%

UK's unemployment rate in January 2023

2. Biggest issues facing employers

How to attract new employees

In certain scenarios, job seekers find themselves with multiple offers, allowing them to select the most advantageous option. Interestingly, the decision isn't always purely financial. Employers must find ways to stand out in order to attract the right talent.

A starting point is offering a competitive salary that aligns with the market. Employers can gauge the average salary for a specific role by utilising benchmarking tools available through online job platforms like Glassdoor, Indeed, and Reed.

However, what truly sets you apart from other employers?

Alternatively, a more effective approach could be centred on understanding what potential employees are seeking. Can you provide what holds significance for them, rather than just focusing on your own priorities?

This might very well be the recipe for success.

Here are some considerations for attracting new employees:

- **Focus on your values:** In today's landscape, there's a growing desire among employees to be part of organisations that resonate with their core values and principles. Creating harmony between your company's ethos and the beliefs of potential hires can wield substantial influence.
- **Highlight competitive benefits creatively:** Beyond the usual offerings such as pensions and sick pay, it's time to embrace a fresh perspective. Explore options like company share schemes, engaging mentorship initiatives, recognition programs aligned with your values, and distinctive perks such as designated "go surfing" days or interest-free travel loans.
- **Prioritise mental health support and employee wellness programs:** Provide resources and programs that support employee well-being. Websites like [NHS24](#) and [SAMH](#) offer information on supporting employees' mental health.
- **Emphasise training and career development:** Illustrate well-defined career trajectories and a robust personal development scheme. Convey to prospective employees that you highly esteem their progress and provide avenues for professional advancement.
- **Consider flexible working options and work-life balance:** In the post-pandemic era, flexible working arrangements have become crucial. This includes options like remote work, [flexible working](#) hours and days, compressed hours, and focusing on outcomes rather than hours worked.
- **Foster an inclusive work environment:** Employees desire a fulfilling work experience where they can take ownership, exercise decision-making authority, and feel deeply engaged with the company's operations. Steer clear of excessive micromanagement and empower employees to contribute according to their training and expertise.

By taking these factors into account and customising their approach to align with the values of potential employees, employers can enhance their ability to attract fresh talent and distinguish themselves in the competitive job market.

3. Defining the role needing to be created and/or filled

Effective recruitment is not just about filling a vacancy but it may be an opportunity to understand the skills needed for your organisational performance.

When do you need to hire?

- **Meeting increased workloads:** Your growing work demands call for additional staff to ensure seamless operations.
- **Embracing new opportunities:** Exploring fresh opportunities or ventures requires individuals with novel skill sets.
- **Replacing departing team members:** When someone departs from your organisation, finding a replacement becomes essential to maintain continuity.

To define the role, the following actions should be taken:

1. Assess the current needs of a current position rather than relying solely on past requirements.
2. If it's a new position, carefully consider the role and its requirements.
3. Prepare a job description:
 - Clear and specific overview of the role.
 - Job purpose and duties involved.
 - Include a non-negotiable salary and consider offering flexible working options by default.
 - Specify where the role fits within the organisation.

A person specification must also be formulated, detailing the optimal candidate for the position. This specification should encompass:

- Required qualifications.
- Requisite experience.
- Core competencies, which encompass job-related skills, knowledge, and attributes vital for executing the job responsibilities to the expected level.

It's vital to prevent discrimination based on protected characteristics like age, gender, religion, and disability when outlining these specifications. Follow discrimination laws and guidelines, provided by resources like [Acas](#), to prevent potential discrimination issues in the hiring process.

4. Advertise the role

When preparing a job advert, ensure it offers precise details about the position and the company, and most importantly, employs language that is free from bias. Always review the advert and eliminate any biased language

The advert can include:

- Job description
- Person specification
- Type of employment (permanent or fixed-term role)
- Hours of work
- Reward and benefits package
- Flexible work practices
- The organisation's values
- Details of how to apply
- Deadline

Where to advertise:

- Advertise internally
- Organisation's own website
- Recruitment agencies
- External on-line Job Posting sites
- Professional network sites (LinkedIn)
- Social Media platforms
- Employee referral schemes
- Links with Universities, colleges & schools
- Local job centres

External agencies also offer a wide range of services to help you recruit your staff, which include managing applicant responses, screening, short-listing and running assessment centres on your behalf.

The advantages include:

- They will have specialist recruitment
- They can focus on your hiring process, which will save you time and allow you to focus on other priorities
- Provide higher quality candidates.

The disadvantages include:

- No cultural fit assessment
- Lack of employer branding
- Higher cost, agency recruitment costs tend to range between 12% and 30% of the candidate's annual salary package
- There's no guarantee of success

When considering recruitment, it is crucial to account for the hidden costs associated with the process. Including advertising vacancies, screening applicants, conducting selection processes, and facilitating onboarding. According to a report by the CIPD, the average cost of recruiting a senior manager is £3,000, while for other employees, it is £1,500.

Be mindful of reviews left by former employees and applicants on Job Posting sites. Search for and check these reviews, expecting both positive and negative feedback. Respond positively to each review, using them as opportunities to learn and enhance recruitment processes.

5. Selection process

Certain organisations opt for application forms across the board. This approach ensures uniformity in the information provided by applicants and guarantees objective evaluation.

While considering CVs or LinkedIn profiles, bear in mind that they often differ in style and format, which could impact impartial review.

Establish the number of applicants to interview and form a shortlist based on pertinent skills. Extend the courtesy of notifying unsuccessful candidates that their application will not progress and offer constructive feedback.

Invite applicants to the assessment or interview stage

- Ensure easy and flexible scheduling.
- Inform applicants in advance about the assessment process and duration.
- Inquire about any reasonable adjustments needed.
- Clearly communicate the date, time, venue, and contact person for the interview.

Be prepared for the interview:

- Determine interviewers and other individuals the applicant will meet.
- Allocate sufficient time for the interview, note-taking, and scoring.
- Review each applicant's CV.
- Prepare interview questions focused on required skills and behaviours.
- Encourage applicants to discuss their achievements rather than team accomplishments.
- Request specific examples of past experiences.
- Watch for future tense usage or excessive reliance on third-person pronouns.
- Score each answer using a rating system.
- Consider using skill-based assessments for job tasks.

To prevent the repercussions of making misguided hiring choices, such as premature departures and the need to restart the process, prioritise accurate selection decisions. Thoroughly document the recruitment process to handle any applicant queries or grievances that may arise.

6. Offer

Verbal offer

Contact the successful candidate by phone and offer them the job.

Job Offer in writing

Once the applicant has accepted the offer, send out the formal offer in writing, by email. The applicant will be required to accept this.

The job offer should include:

- Subject to satisfactory pre-employment checks
- Name
- Job title
- Salary/Pay rate
- Start date
- Permanent or temporary role
- If temporary – end of contract date
- Probation period
- Other benefits
- Pre-employment check documentation required
- Ask if the applicant requires any reasonable adjustments

Pre-employment checks:

- Right to work in the UK
- Take up references
- Validity of educational and professional qualifications
- Criminal record checks, where required.
- Medical and health related questionnaires, where required

Make necessary preparations for new employee onboarding:

- Advise manager of new employee and start date
- Arrange provision of required equipment, e.g. desk, chair, laptop, access to systems & USERID.
- If home working, arrange to provide required equipment and conduct H&S workplace risk assessment.
- Welcome on first day – tour and introduction to colleagues
- Prepare an Induction programme
- Learning and development plan

7. Employing non UK nationals

Employers have to check and copy specific original documentation for any new employees, use the [“Employer’s guide to right to work checks”](#).

This sets out what checks must be made, how to check authenticity and what to photocopy and retain.

Checks must be completed before employment begins, but re-checking is also required for employees with time-limited immigration status.

It is also recommended that you use the Employers’ right to work checklist.

Employers must do one of the following before the employee commences employment:

- a manual right to work check
- a right to work check using Identity Document Validation Technology (IDVT) via the services of an Identity Service Provider (IDSP)
- a Home Office online right to work check

8. Key things to look out for

A key part of resourcing is attracting a wide range of candidates. Equality, diversity and inclusion should be integral throughout the process, with practices and systems regularly reviewed to ensure resourcing methods are inclusive and hidden bias is removed.

Under the [Equality Act 2010](#) it is illegal to discriminate against people on grounds of certain characteristics or situations, which includes age, gender, sexual orientation, sex, race, religious beliefs, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy, maternity, marriage and civil partnership.

Don’t ask questions based on protected criteria, for example whether a woman having a family or if religious beliefs could impact their ability in the role.

9. Where to find further help

- [An employer's guide to right to work checks](#)
- [Code of Practice for Employers: Avoiding unlawful discrimination while preventing illegal working.](#)
- [Employers' right to work checklist](#)
- [Check a job applicant's right to work: use their share code](#)
- [Ukrainian nationals and right to work checks](#)



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