

Recruiting & Staffing

Successful hiring takes more than defining a job's essential functions and skills. It also requires defining the individual characteristics needed for success *in this job*.

Supervisors have to be able to define these characteristics in job-related terms. They must avoid stereotypes and references that could seem discriminatory. Every hiring decision has a big impact on the success of the department, the organization, and the person selected to fill the job.

We can't afford to be casual or careless about whom we hire. We want the time and money we invest in a new hire to pay off. We want each employee to perform at a high level and make a valuable contribution to our operation. That type of hiring calls for careful planning, thought, and decision-making both in defining the job we're filling and in selecting the person to fill it.

In addition, we have to assure that the hiring process doesn't discriminate. Beware of making false assumptions about what the job requires, or what an applicant can do. It could open you up to legal challenges *and* cause you to lose out on hiring people who could make a major contribution to our future.

What is the best way to describe a job that needs to be filled?

Listing all the qualities wanted in a new employee might be the best way to describe the job. But the problem with this method is that it can attract just about anyone without drawing in applicants who meet the most vital requirements. For example, you might think being "cooperative" is an important requirement for a secretarial position -- and it is. But anyone can claim to be cooperative, and really believe it, too. Listing that requirement does nothing to attract individuals who have good typing, shorthand and proofreading skills, which are the skills really needed.

Instead, concentrate on the critical requirements for the job, the few qualifications that are absolutely essential, no matter which method of recruitment is used. They should be objective capabilities that anyone can easily and accurately assess in them. To recruit a database administrator, who can provide an IDM knowledge base of both internal and external parameters for IDMS-DB/DE say so, and you'll draw in qualified professionals. At the same time, you'll turn away people who don't know what these terms mean.

It's also important to include reasons for a prospective employee to consider joining your company. Mention your company's reputation, its working atmosphere, strong benefits package, and desirable location -- items that will be attractive to prospective employees.

What are the ingredients of a reliable employee selection system?

A selection system is simply an organized hiring plan. It consists of these steps, though the exact sequence will vary with the nature of the job:

1. Advertising and recruiting
2. Initial screening and evaluations
3. In-depth screening and interviews
4. Preliminary selection of a candidate to fill the job
5. Reference and medical checks
6. Job offer
7. Handling of applicants who are not hired
8. Orientation and training

How can resumes be evaluated?

Bear in mind that a resume is a selling tool. Many of them are professionally prepared. They should be treated as a demonstration of the intelligence, organizational ability and thinking of the individual it describes. Make yourself notes on each resume. Indicate which areas should be probed during the interview. Keep handy the list of the job requirements and check them against the knowledge and skills claimed on the resume.

These four major areas are the most important ones:

1. Education --is it the right kind for the job?
2. Specific work experience -- good resumes give details of achievements as well as descriptions of main duties and responsibilities. If anything is unclear, make a note to have it clarified in the interview.
3. Progress in each job -- look at the numbers of different positions the applicant has held in each company, the kinds of positions, and whether the progressions indicate promotions, lateral moves, or even demotions. Look for signs of increasing responsibility.
4. Stability -- frequent job changes suggest the candidate easily becomes dissatisfied, though there may be extenuating circumstances that you'll want to inquire about in the interview.

How should rejected candidates be handled?

It's always to the company's advantage to personally contact those individuals who have been interviewed but will not be offered a job. It's possible, for example, that you might want to make an offer at some future time to one of the applicants, either because your first choice didn't accept your offer or didn't perform up to your expectations once he or she took the job. Or you might have another opening suitable for a person you've rejected for a different job. Beyond those practical considerations, it is unkind and unethical to totally ignore individuals who have applied and have taken the time to be interviewed. It's also extremely poor public relations.