

SELECTION METHODS

Selection methods which are easily administered and relevant to their operation are particularly appropriate to the needs of small and medium sized enterprises.

A particularly valuable tool available to all SME's is to allow prospective employees to spend time within their organisation prior to job offer. Having conducted an initial structured interview shortlisted candidates can be invited to spend time actually working within the department with the team they have applied to join.

This serves to -

- allow the team to interact and feel that they are part of the decision making process
- allow the candidate to decide if the environment and culture suits them

COST OF GETTING IT WRONG

Making the wrong selection decision can be extremely costly.

Direct costs include -

- Repeated advertising costs
- Interviewers time
- Training and induction time

CIPD estimate that the average direct cost for recruitment per individual in the UK is £5800 a great deal more for senior managers.

Indirect Costs include -

- Managing poor performance
- Reduced productivity
- Low quality products or services
- Unhappy customers
- Low employee morale



THE INTERVIEW

Whilst it is almost inconceivable for someone to be offered employment without a face to face interview some organisations rely solely on the interview for all of their recruitment decisions.

Interviewing is notoriously unreliable at selecting the candidate with the right skills and experience for a vacancy.

Ask most managers and they will tell you about a time when they interviewed someone they thought would be brilliant for a job, only for what appeared to be a completely different person to turn up to work for their first day at work. The confident, seemingly competent person they recruited did not materialise when it came to actually doing the job.



In most cases it would be advisable to base selection decisions on a variety of selection tools. However, to make an interview of real value -

- Ensure interviews are always carried out by trained individuals.
- Structure the interview questions to reflect the job specification.
- Adequately prepare for the interview beforehand, not just regarding what you want to ask the candidate but also what information you want to provide to candidates.
- Ensure you allow the candidate to ask questions.
- Interview with a note taker present. Not only can they provide a valuable second opinion, they will also make sure you keep accurate records on which to objectively base any decisions.

RECORD KEEPING

There is no legal obligation on an employer to 'volunteer' to tell applicants why they have been unsuccessful; however, many employers committed to equal opportunities will provide feedback after interviews if required.

Carried out in a professional manner, explaining the reasons why a candidate was not selected and may reduce the likelihood of a claim for discrimination being made. This will also further demonstrate the objectivity and openness used in the process to that point.



Remember, unsuccessful candidates may ask to see the employer's recruitment records under the Data Protection Act 1998 as well as in discrimination questionnaires; so it is definitely worth spending the time and effort to ensure you have robust selection process and that accurate notes are taken and retained at each and every stage.

It is also good practice to audit selection records on a regular basis to ensure internal procedures are being followed consistently.

For HR advice specifically adapted to the needs of you and your business please contact us by telephone on 0560 230 6508 info@adaptivehr.co.uk or visit our website at www.adaptivehr.co.uk

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DISABILITY DISCRIMINATION ACT

When considering applicants with disabilities, an employer should note the positive obligation to make reasonable adjustments to ensure that a disabled employee is not disadvantaged in the recruitment process because of their disability.

This could be by, for example, ensuring that arrangements are made to facilitate attendance at interview.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

Ensure stereotypical assumptions are not made regarding the requirements for a job. For example, just because a job involves heavy lifting, this does not mean female candidates should be excluded.

Requirements such as specific length of residence in the UK are likely to be considered discriminatory unless they are absolutely essential and can be objectively justified. To avoid discriminating against foreign nationals you should not demand a standard of spoken or written English higher than is necessary to do the job.



When considering applications from individuals who wish to work on a part-time basis, an employer should consider whether part-time employees could undertake that job. A blanket refusal to do so may adversely affect one gender and give rise to a potential complaint for indirect sex discrimination.