How to Hire the Right People

A CorNu Enterprise Educational Product
BIZBITE CONSULTING GROUP

How to Hire the Right People

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Credit Page

The founders of BizBite Consulting Group and developers of CorNu Enterprises dynamic approach to education are

Graeme Robertson and Dr. Shirley Chapman

The following people contributed to this document:

Content Specialist

J. Graeme Robertson

Graeme Robertson is a seasoned business management professional with over 30 years of experience. He has held senior positions in retail, wholesale, and distribution operations. Additionally, Mr. Robertson was Regional Manager for a national personnel-consulting firm and he has been actively engaged in business management consulting for over 20 years.

Designer and Developer

Dr. Shirley Chapman

B. Ed. M.Ed. Ph.D.

Dr. Shirley Chapman is a veteran educator with over 30 years of experience. She is an expert in course/program design and development. Her experience covers public schools, colleges, and universities. Shirley is experienced in designing and developing training specifically for delivery via face-to-face, on-line (Internet), and manuals for organizations, colleges, and businesses. She is responsible for the page layout and format as well as the graphics in any materials that she designs.
How is this module organized?

We divided the Management & Leadership Skills into ten major headings:

1. Steps in the hiring process
2. The interviewing process
3. Effective interviewing
4. Effective questioning
5. Telephone interview questionnaire
6. Reference checking questionnaire
7. Candidate position rating process
8. Employment contract
9. Commission sales agreement
10. Handling lay-offs & terminations professionally

Within each of the ten subheadings, you will see the following organization pattern.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Introduction</th>
<th>Uses</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How to use this section</td>
<td>Summary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Module content)</td>
<td>Celebrate</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Celebrate!

It is important that you recognize your achievements and celebrate each small step. Phone some friends and celebrate it. We will offer you opportunities to celebrate at the end of each part of the module. Have fun with them. We had fun creating them for you.
Suggestions on how to use this module

This module is organized so that you decide:

- In what order you want to access the various titles
- What you want to ignore
- How many times you want to revisit the material

Just return to the Table of Contents and click on what you want to read or review again.

The six-pointed star

We have depicted business and a business plan as a six-pointed star. Each part of the star represents a major aspect of your business and an important element of a business plan. Together, they form a complete view of your business and your business plan.

We have carried this star throughout all the BizBite Consulting Group products and all the modules.

As each new section is begun or completed, the appropriate part of the star is colored and the rest of the star is colorless. This may help you to see how a specific topic relates to the whole business and to remind you that it is part of the whole.
How to hire the Right People

The journey of a thousand miles starts with a single step.
(Chinese Proverb)

Together we will work through this module
Overview of how to hire the right people

It is increasingly important that a business hire the very best people available. However, identifying them is not easy. It is difficult to pick the best person for the position and it can be very costly and time consuming if the wrong hiring choice is made.

The person who makes the best impression in the job interview isn't necessarily the best person for the job. Some people who make excellent employees do not interview well.

Hiring personnel is something that many business owners or managers are not usually very good at and they often don't enjoy doing it. They don't do it often enough and they were never trained to do it.

Often the reason they have difficulty making a hiring decision is that they do not adequately prepared:

- The job description
- Writing the hiring advertisement or selecting an employment agency
- Selecting the candidates for interviews
- Interviewing process
- Selecting the right candidate

How can you maximize your hiring successes and minimize your hiring mistakes?
The nine subheadings are:

1. Steps in hiring the right people
2. The interview process
3. Effective interviewing
4. Effective questioning
5. Telephone interview questionnaire
6. Reference checking questionnaire
7. Candidates position rating process
8. Employment contract
9. Commission sales agreement

How to use this module

This is an overview to the module, How to hire the Right People. You should decide in what order you want to read the nine headings.

Select the heading by clicking on the appropriate Bookmark to the right of this page.

As you read each of them, think about how you can adapt the ideas and suggestions to your business.

- What ideas or suggestions are you already using?
- Which ones simply do not apply?
- Which ones can be changed or modified to assist you in hiring the right people?

We designed this module so that you can return to any heading as many times as you need to and follow any order. Take advantage of this feature. How to hire the right people is not a linear process (a series of steps to be followed in chronological order).
Steps in the Hiring Process

Introduction

Hiring personnel is something that many business owners or managers are frequently not very good at and they often don't enjoy doing it. The reason for this is they don't do it often enough and they were never trained to do it. However, learning how to hire the right people is a very teachable skill and:

Practice makes perfect

In this section, we will guide you through the hiring process. You will learn methods and tools that will serve as a guide in the future. You will find it useful to review this section each time you are about to hire personnel.

How to use this information

It could be that not all of the following twelve steps apply to your business. Omit those that do not apply, add others that do apply, and modify the others to suit your business. Customize the process by adding your business name in the appropriate places or by adding a specific job or position.
Twelve steps to hiring the right people

We have twelve steps in this hiring process: the first ten steps are for the employer while the new employee completes the last two steps. The twelve steps are:

### Employer tasks
1. Identify and specify the business’ needs
2. Write a job description
3. Determine the various sources of job candidates
4. Select the medium to reach the job market
5. Prioritize the qualifications and/or skills of the job
6. Advertise the job or position
7. Screen the résumés based on your prioritization of the job description
8. Interview several of the candidates
9. Check the references
10. Make the job offer

### New employee tasks
11. Fill out application form
12. Sign a contract

As you read the following twelve steps, you will notice that we describe several of these steps in more detail under separate headings.

1. **Identify and specify the business’ needs**

   Consider whether you really need a full-time person for the job or if hiring a temporary or contract employee could satisfy your needs. This may give you more flexibility if there is a downturn in business as well as eliminate the risk of a wrongful dismissal suit in case of a layoff.

2. **Write a job description**

   For more information, see A Unified Salary Administration Program (Job Description)
3. **Determine the various sources of job candidates**

Use several sources to locate new employees:

- Your present employees may know of suitable people
- Your personnel files may contain résumés from previous employee searches
- Unsolicited résumés with interesting backgrounds that you have kept on file
- Professional contacts
- Professional associations
- Employment agencies
- Advertising

Keep the résumés of all finalists from previous interviews. It's a good idea to retain résumés like this no matter how old they are.

Don't make assumptions as to the availability of people. Their circumstances frequently change and you could be pleasantly surprised. Obviously, the greater the choice of good prospects, the better your chance of finding the right person.

It is wise to cast as broad a net as possible at the beginning of your search because many qualifying candidates who are offered positions turn them down.

If you find that after an extensive search, you have only a few prospects, re-examine your specifications or perhaps redefine the position in the light of the job market and the people who are available.

4. **Select the medium to reach the job market**

Before deciding to do your advertising, consider using selected employment agencies. Good placement services can be very effective and they charge no fee unless they are successful. Check out their track record in sourcing people for your industry before hiring these agencies.

If you do decide to advertise yourself, you may want to get assistance with designing and writing the advertisement. It can make a difference because you're paying for the advertisement whether you are successful or not.
5. **Prioritize the qualifications and/or skills of the job description**

Examine the job description and determine the most important qualification/skill, followed by the second, and so on. Decide which qualifications are "musts," and which ones are optional but good to have.

This step will help you when you are:

- Writing an advertisement
- Providing information to an employment agency
- Screening the résumés
- Interviewing
- Designing the Candidate Position Rating Guide

6. **Advertise the job or position**

It depends on your decision in step four whether you have to complete this step.

If you choose to hire an employment agency, then they will carry out this step. You will need to provide them with the necessary information.

If you choose to advertise yourself, then you need to complete this step. You will design and write the advertisement (Ad). There are others, such as personnel professionals, who can either write the Ad or assist you in writing it.

Here are some elements of an effective job Ad. It should:

- Be a quick read and easily understood
- Be economical in the use of words
- State clearly the position
- Indicate the position's degree of responsibility
- State the range of qualifications and experience required or desired
- Describe the reporting relationship
- Promote the company

How the Ad is crafted and presented will have an effect on the type of candidates who respond. That is why professional assistance can make a difference. The style of the Ad will vary with the position advertised.
Here is an example of simple personnel Ad format that you may wish to use:

**Acme Hardware Distributors**

Acme Hardware Distributors are leaders in the distribution of builders' hardware products. The key markets served are building contractors and building materials suppliers.

**Required**

**Territory Sales Manager**

The position reports to the General Sales Manager. The Territory Sales Manager is responsible for detailing building contractors and building materials suppliers in the assigned area. It will also be necessary to detail architects, engineers, and specification writers. The company is expanding into new territories and there will be a strong emphasis on new business development.

The successful candidate for this position will have at least 3–5 years' experience in successful field sales territory management. Ideally, the experience should be in products related to construction and building materials. Preference will be given to candidates with a Building Technologist Certification from a recognized technical school.

The compensation and benefit package offered is very competitive. A company car is provided.

Reply in confidence to Box 1234

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7. **Screen the résumés based on your prioritization of the job description**

You have established a set of priorities for the job or position. Use these to do a first screening of the résumés. Set aside all those résumés that do not meet these priorities.

Now search for gaps in the employment record and set aside those who have unexplained gaps or those that look suspicious. You may choose to interview some that have unexplained gaps depending on what else is in the résumé.

You probably will have several résumés left. Decide if you want to interview all of them or choose some criteria to delete some of the applications.

For the remaining résumés, respond quickly to the prospective candidates and set up interview appointments. The good candidates don't stay on the market very long and if you lose the prospect with the specific experience that you need, it could be months before someone else like that is available.
8. **Interview several of the candidates**

Determine how many interviews you want to do. There are several ways to handle interviews:

- Face to face
- Interactive TV—think of this method if bringing this person to your office will cost lots of money. It might be less expensive to use Interactive TV.
- Telephone—this is another method to consider if the candidate lives far away and you have to pay for their transportation, hotel, and meals.

There is detailed information provided in the following four headings:

- Sample Interview Process
- Effective Interviewing
- Effective Questioning
- Telephone Interview

9. **Check the references**

It is very important to check the references. You may wait to check the references of the one candidate who appears to be the best prospect for the position or job.

- Reference Checking Form

10. **Make the job offer**

Before making the job offer, consider the candidate's likelihood of staying with your business.

Is the job a move up for them?

Does the number of jobs they have had in the past six years make them a good risk considering the investment the business will make in them?

Treat candidates like customers, with honesty and respect. Be enthusiastic and motivated in your approach and you will be known as a business that attracts good people.

Make job offers by phone or fax and then confirm them by letter. Make the candidate feel valued.

The new employee completes the next two steps:
11. Fill out an application form

If the candidate accepts the position or job, you may require them to fill out an application form.

12. Sign a contract

Your business may require signed employment contracts or commission sales agreements. Have them signed before new staff commences work because asking them to sign them afterward may be considered unreasonable pressure.

We have included samples of two types of agreements:

- Employee Contract
- Commission Sales Agreement

Summary

In this section, you have learned how to prepare for the hiring process. You have also reviewed the twelve basic steps of the hiring process including the selection of a candidate and offering the job.

How does this compare to the thoroughness of your present approach?

In the next section, we will examine a detailed interview process.
Celebrate!
The Interview Process

Introduction

How the interview process is orchestrated, has a major effect on the screening and hiring of good employees. In this section, you will learn how to prepare appropriately for interviewing job candidates. You will also learn some basic dos and don'ts that will help you to conduct interviews more professionally.

In today's world, it is possible to interview candidates in more than one setting.

1. Face-to-face
2. **Telephone interview**—this may be very cost and time efficient

   Paying for a telephone interview may be less costly than paying for a candidate's travel, hotel, and meals.

   It may be more time efficient for the candidate, too.

   (See *Telephone Interview Questionnaire* for further details)

3. **Interactive TV (IITV)**—may be very cost and time efficient

   The IITV allows both you and the candidate to both see and speak to each other.

   Paying for IITV interviews may be less costly than paying for a candidate's travel, hotel, and meals.

   It may be more time efficient for the candidate, too.

   The advantage the IITV has over the telephone interview is that you can see and read the body language.
How to use this information

Use this section as a standard to compare the approach to interviewing of you or other managers in your business. Before conducting your next interview, review this section as part of your preparation. Practice makes perfect and, after a few times, the methodology will become second nature.

Many businesses provide no guidelines or training in professional interviewing procedures. You may wish to use this section and its related sections as a basis for inservice training for yourself or your managers.

You need to customize these steps to fit your business and its needs.

Interview process steps

Interviewing can be divided into five major steps:

1. **Deciding where or how the interview will take place** (face-to-face, telephone, or IITV processes—interactive TV.)

2. **Setting the stage for the interview**
   a. **Face-to-face interview guidelines**

If you invite candidates for interviews and they are from out of town, make sure they understand whether you are paying for their travelling, hotel, and meal expenses. Misunderstandings over things like this can sour a relationship and result in very poor public relations for the business.

Provide transportation to and from the hotel, if there is a need. When people arrive in a new city, it is a nice gesture to provide the transportation (e.g., assigning a staff person to pick them up or a taxi is hired).
When the candidate arrives at your office, make the right impression by ensuring that:

- The office and waiting area are tidy
- The receptionist knows why they are there and can call them by name
- There will be no interruptions during the interview

Create a good impression when the candidate arrives at your office. They will be sizing up you and your business, and you want to create a relaxed, cooperative atmosphere before the interview.

Typical things that put people off and indicate a lack of respect for the candidate and the interview process are:

- Uncomfortable waiting areas
- Lengthy delays
- Curt receptionists
- Interruptions during the interview
- Indications that you haven't read the résumé

b. **Telephone Interview Guidelines**

When you set up the appointment, tell them how long you expect the interview to last.

Phone the candidate when you indicated that you would.

Make sure that there will be no interruptions during the interview.

Consider using either a speakerphone or headphone set so that your hands are free for taking notes. It is also much easier on the ears and the hand than holding a phone.

You may consider having the interview taped for further review. However, you must gain consent from the candidate first.
c. IITV Interview Guidelines

When you set up the appointment, tell them how long you expect the interview to last.

Begin the IITV interview when you indicated that you would.

Make sure that there will be no interruptions during the interview. You are paying for all interruptions, too.

You may consider having the interview taped for further review. However, you must gain consent of the candidate first.

3. Preparing in advance for the interview

Make sure you have carefully read the résumé before the interview. Read it critically, looking for unexplained gaps in the work history, and make notes concerning chronology, defining specific job experience, and explaining in more detail accomplishments listed.

Prepare the candidate's position-rating form *Candidate Position Rating Process*. This form should adhere to the prioritization of the job qualifications and skills of the job description.

Write out many of the questions that you are going to ask. Writing questions before the interview does not mean that you have to read them to the candidate or even use all of them.

It means you have organized your thoughts. You have spent time thinking about how to ask good questions that will give you the kind of information that you need to assist you to hire the right people.

The answers to these questions will trigger other questions.

Base questions on the following criteria:

- Candidates position-rating form
- Prioritization of job qualifications and/or skills of the job description
- The qualifications listed in the advertisement
- The candidate's résumé
Using the same kind of questions for each of the interviews is very important. You are comparing the answers of the candidates so the questions should be similar. (See *Effective Questioning*)

You may have some questions that apply only to the specific candidate's résumé. If so, add a space to the candidate position-rating form to accommodate them.

There are two aspects of an interview:

- You are interviewing candidates to find the best employee
- You are selling your business to a candidate so that they will want to work for your business

Have a written job description to show at some time during the interview. Maybe this could be completed towards the end of the interview, especially if you feel they will make your short list. They are evaluating the company and the job and need to know the nature and scope of the position.

4. **Conducting the interview**

Let the candidate do most of the talking. This is another of those cases where the time honoured 80/20 principle applies. *(See *Effective Interviewing* for further details)*

Do not allow the interview to drag on too long. Effective interviewers plan these meetings to last between 30 to 40 minutes.

A 40-minute interview could look like this:

- 10 minutes for establishing rapport and verifying basic details on the résumé
- 20 minutes for in-depth questioning of the candidate
- 10 minutes for questions from the candidate

You also may provide additional details about the company and the job if you feel the person is a good candidate and likely to make your short list.
5. Concluding the interview

As soon as the interview is finished, fill out the candidate position-rating form and write your comments down.

Never see a second candidate before you record your appraisal of the previous one. After interviewing several people, impressions can easily become such a blur that even very experienced interviewers cannot properly rank the candidates a day or a week later.

Summary

In the interview process, you have learned how to plan and prepare for an interview. You have learned that conducting an effective interview can depend on how candidates are handled when they arrive for an interview and how you orchestrate the interview process. Doing this appropriately and consistently with each candidate will have a significant bearing on hiring the right people.

How does the process described here compare to the way that you are presenting handling it?

How can you use these suggestions when you next interview?

In the next section, we will examine typical interview questions and techniques.
Celebrate!!

Join us for a little beach ball. You deserve it.
Effective Interviewing

Introduction

Skilled interviewers know how to *draw out* candidates.

They know how:
1. To control the flow of the conversation
2. To pick up on unspoken clues in the candidates' responses
3. To zero in on the candidates' strengths and weaknesses
4. To ask questions that will determine the candidates' appropriateness for the job or position
5. To flesh out the skills and strengths of the candidate
6. To discover the compatibility of the candidate with the business and position to be filled

A skilled interviewer never gives the candidate the feeling that they are being interrogated.

In effective interviewing, you will learn how to conduct an effective interview. In addition, you will learn many of the questioning techniques used by professional interviewers.
How to use this information

Use this section to reflect on your present approach to interviewing. Do you usually:

- Think through the process carefully
- Examine your reasons, attitudes, and motivations for the interview
- Do very little or no preparation and just wing it

Use this section as a way of putting yourself in the 'right frame of mind' prior to an interview. Possibly, being well prepared for an interview will allow you to feel more comfortable in handling the interview effectively

Purpose of the interview

The employment interviewer assumes that people will act in the future as they have done in the past. How effective the interview is depends on the skill of the interviewer in using good questioning techniques to:

- Probe beyond the surface
- Flesh out the skills and strengths of the candidate
- Discover the compatibility of the candidate with the business and position to be filled

(See Effective Questioning and the Interview Process for further details)

One of the most important decisions that business owners or managers make are hiring decisions. They can have a greater impact on the future success of the business than many other factors.

The hackneyed phrase people are our greatest resource is true. It is essential that business owners and managers plan adequately by putting in the time and effort needed to build a strong team for their business.

After all, most business owners and managers would really do their homework if they were buying a $200,000 piece of equipment.

Most business owners or managers hope that successful candidates will be with the business for at least 3–5 years and that they will make a strong contribution to the organization.
What they don't always appreciate or consider is that they are making a $200,000 investment in people's services and therefore, they should exercise the same degree of care and good judgment in arriving at the hiring decision as they do for the $200,000 machine.

Hiring the wrong people is extremely costly to a business and results in hidden costs to the businesses that are often overlooked by management.

A good interviewer is trying to predict the future job performance of a candidate and assess their potential for career growth and promotion in the light of the immediate and future job requirements of the organization.

To do that the interviewer must, using only the résumé as a starting point, glean information from the candidate about his or her:

- Attitudes
- Motivation
- Personality
- Drive and ambition
- Education/training
- Work history
- Special interests
- Career plans

How effectively this is done depends on the preparation and skill of the interviewer.
How many interviewers should there be?

There are at least two schools of thought on this.

It is usual in large institutions like colleges and universities to have a panel of interviewers. This panel meets together to interview the candidate. Alternatively, they combine the team interview approach with the system where each interviewer meets the candidates separately.

If the interviewer panel meets together, assign each person questions to ask. You can place these questions and answers on a form like the Candidate Position Rating Form.

This form uses a rating system where a range of scores is assigned to all questions. At the end of the interview, each interviewer gives a score to all questions as well as written comments. The winning candidate is the one with the highest score.

Another school of thought is to conduct interviews with one interviewer at a time. Each interviewer will likely use the same Candidate Position Rating Form and then they compare their impressions.

We recommend that it is generally not a good idea to have several people interview a candidate together because:

- It is difficult to establish a rapport with the candidate
- The candidate usually will feel under pressure
- The interviewers are more likely to conflict in their approach
- It is often more difficult to 'draw out' the candidate and get detailed answers to questions

For many businesses, there will be one interviewer (business owner or manager).
Guidelines for effective interviewing

Be considerate to the candidates’ feelings

Most candidates try to protect themselves from the probing of the interviewer and some either exaggerate their skills, responsibilities, and accomplishments or try to conceal defects.

Therefore, you, the interviewer, should verify everything that is important and relative to your needs. However, don't fault someone for presenting the most favourable view they can of their work history.

Establish rapport during the interview

Establishing rapport during the interview is very important. Here are some dos:

a. Always greet candidates in a courteous, hospitable manner, like you would business associates or friends.

b. To open the conversation, choose something out of the résumé to put the candidates at ease (such as a mutual interest, hobbies, or industry acquaintance).

c. You can't assess candidates when you are talking.

Listen! Listen! Listen!

d. Provide candidates the opportunity to talk 90% of the time. Prompt them with short questions that keep the conversation moving and keep the candidates on track.

e. Ask one question at a time. You should not expect the candidate to remember 3–5 questions at a time. Conceivably, they will only answer the last one of the series.

f. Be a little permissive. Avoid showing any shock or disapproval at what the candidate says as this can cause the candidate to tighten up and withdraw from the conversation.
g. This is where your preparation of questions and notes on the résumé and job requirements really is valuable. Interviewers who don't prepare tend to talk too much and they do not allow enough time to hear and evaluate the candidates' responses.

h. Zero in on candidates' accomplishments and explore in detail how they reached these achievements. This will help you to ferret out the real achievers from those who are riding on the coat tails of others.

i. Provide the candidates with business scenarios and asking them to provide input will give you insights into their problem-solving abilities.

j. Explore the reasons for them leaving their last three jobs and be wary of frequent comments about 'personality conflicts' or 'lack of challenge.'

k. Describe the job duties clearly and don't minimize any negative aspects such as frequent travel.

l. Make sure candidates understand what is expected of them. Show them examples; if possible, of typical assignments as this has much more impact than just describing on-the-job conditions and expectations.

m. Be straightforward with candidates and allow them every opportunity to ask questions about the position and your expectations. An interview must be a free two-way communication that will satisfy both parties. (Refer to the 10, 20, 10-minute timetable for the interview suggested in The Interview Process—Conducting the interview).

n. Be wary of candidates who do not ask questions as they may lack interest, imagination, or commitment. Alternatively, they may not have researched your business before coming to the interview. It's better to drop a candidate now than to have them leave in a few months. This is very costly to your business.

o. When you describe your business and the position offered, be enthusiastic. Strangers will not be impressed with your organization if you don't sound upbeat and enthusiastic. Give good candidates literature about your business.

p. Phrase the questions in a non-threatening manner.

---

**For example**

Ask—what happened that you left the business?

Rather than—why did you leave a good job like that?
What to avoid during the interview

Avoid these five possible attitudes during an interview.

They are:

- Biases
- Halo effect
- Projection effect
- Overstressing weaknesses
  Insisting too much on directly related experience

1. Biases

Making snap judgments based upon personal appearances such as race, hair length, facial hair (beard and moustache), or choice of jewelry is a bias. Thinking that she/he looks dishonest or her/his eyes are too close together may very well lose you an excellent candidate for the job. Not only that, but exercising such biases is against the law and if, even by accident, they were revealed, you could find yourself and your business sued.

2. Halo effect

Forming an overall impression based on only one or two attributes is a halo effect. Poised and articulate people are not necessarily good managers and may even be impostors. A neat-looking résumé does not mean that the person has neat work habits.

3. Projection effect

If you're a hockey fan, don't just hire hockey players or fans. In other words, don't impose your own values and interests upon the rating of candidates. People are unique and have every right to be different from you while still being excellent candidates for a position.

4. Overstressing weaknesses

We all have weaknesses and the interview will probably identify some. However, don't forget that they may be more than compensated for by the candidates' strengths and may not have any impact on the job.
5. **Insisting too much on directly related experience**

People have accomplished many of the most difficult jobs without any prior experience. Often the very reason they excelled at the job was because they had no preconceived notions about how to do it. They approached problems with a fresh set of eyes and brought insights, energy, and enthusiasm to the position that someone who had been doing it for years probably would not have.

**Questioning techniques**

Good questioning techniques are essential to conducting effective interviews:

- The wording of the questions
- The substance of the questions
- The tone of voice when asking questions
- The context in which the questions are asked
- How the person's responses are handled

Orchestrating this process requires skill and a lot of practice to do well. *(See Effective Questioning for further details)*
Interviewing checklist

Below is a checklist that you can use to assist you in the interview process. There are nine headings in this checklist.

1. Prepare for the interview
   - Provide suitable surroundings
   - Arrange for no interruptions
   - Be punctual and organized
   - Prepare the Candidate Position Rating form
   - Prepare questions for the interview
   - Critically read the résumé and make notes
   - Have a written description of the job

2. Put the applicant at ease

3. Keep control of the interview

4. Ask carefully phrased/worded questions

5. Take time to discuss the job, the business, and its benefits to promising candidates

6. Don't let the interview drag on

7. Immediately write down your impressions of the interview

8. Check references to confirm résumé facts and your findings

9. Make a choice
2. **Put the applicant at ease**
   - Be friendly, welcoming, thoughtful and considerate
   - Begin the interview with the candidates describing themselves (training/education, work experiences, and skills)
   - Allow applicants to talk
   - Avoid *challenging* applicants in phrasing your questions
   - Only interrupt to guide the conversation back on track
   - Avoid being too stiff and formal, but don't let it degenerate into a social occasion

3. **Keep control of the interview**
   - Guide the interview through all the specifics you wish to explore—keep it flowing
   - Watch for inconsistencies in candidates' résumés and answers to questions
   - Watch for answers that 'raise flags' and ask probing questions to explore them

4. **Ask carefully phrased/worded questions**
   - Avoid suggesting answers with leading questions
   - Avoid asking questions that can be answered by 'Yes' or 'No'
   - Don't challenge candidates
   - Be persistent—explore the whole story by rephrasing your questions more specifically

5. **Take time to discuss the job, the business, and its benefits to promising candidates**
   - Nature and scope of the job
   - The business and its key policies that may need to be explained
   - Benefit packages
   - Bonus programs or car allowances
   - Moving expenses
   - Be ready to sell the advantages of working for your company to the right candidate
6. **Don't let the interview drag on**
   - When you feel you have covered all your questions, say so
   - Invite candidates to ask any final questions they may have
   - Tell candidates what communication about the position selection they can expect and approximately when
   - Close the interview on a polite and friendly note

7. **Immediately write down your impressions of a candidate's interview**
   - Their appearance and demeanor
   - Confirmation of their experience and accomplishments
   - Impression of their strengths and weaknesses
   - Suitability and rating of the candidate

8. **Check references to confirm résumé facts and your findings**
   - Check the references of those candidates who you have selected for further research
   - Always check academic/training qualifications with colleges, universities, and other appropriate people or institutions.
     If these qualifications are important to the position, photocopies of transcripts may not be acceptable. You may need copies of the transcripts that carry official seals or originals.
     (Original documents cannot be kept.)
   - It is preferable to check three references, two of which should be immediate supervisors

9. **Choose a candidate for employment**

    **Summary**

In this section, you learned how to 'prep' yourself for the interview process and raised your awareness of some important do's and don'ts to follow during an interview.

In the next section, *Effective Questioning*, you will explore situations encountered in actual interviews.
Celebrate!

Reward yourself
Go sledding
Effective Questioning

Introduction

Effective questioning intends to take you right into typical interview situations and give you examples of:

- Questions to ask
- Typical responses
- How to deal with the responses
- How to conduct yourself during the questioning process

Actual interviews are never exactly like the textbook illustrations. However, you will encounter many of the situations illustrated in this section during actual interviews.

You will improve your skills, if you review this material a few times before the actual interview process. In addition, experience will enhance your skills and comfort zone.

How to use this information

Use this section to help sharpen your interview questioning technique. You should learn from the examples of questions and answers how important it is for an interviewer to plan:

- Questions that will be asked of the candidates
- Questions that will be asked that are related to a particular candidate's résumé
- Questions that will be asked to 'draw out' information from candidates about areas in their background that need clarification
Interviewing etiquette

There are several tips for interviewing etiquette.

1. Being critical of the candidates' responses will put candidates on the defensive. You won't find out what their actions have been, and why, if you take that approach. Therefore, you won't be able to make an effective evaluation.

2. Lean forwards a little and show that you are interested in what candidates have to say and avoid interrupting. An interviewer who comes across as remote and disinterested will likely cause candidates to be more withdrawn and conservative in their responses.

3. The interviewer should not explore personal matters with candidates until establishing a good rapport with them and they are clearly opening up about their background. Even then, avoid being too aggressive or blunt when making an enquiry.

Questioning techniques

Questioning is not as simple as it would appear.

The way the questions are phrased will determine what information the candidate will provide.

   Poorly worded questions will provide answers that are likely unsatisfactory.

   It is easy to blame the candidate for poor answers, when it might be the fault of the questions and interviewer.

Here are nine good questioning technique tips:

1. Ask open-ended questions rather than closed questions because candidates must volunteer more information in making their response.

   Good examples of statements are:

   Tell me more about __________.
   How did that happen?
   What happened after that?
   Could you give me an example of a particular case?
2. Avoid closed questions (answered by 'Yes' or 'No') because they stifle conversation by putting the pressure on the interviewer to keep thinking of new questions rather than listening to the candidates' responses.

These types of answers do not provide useful information. The interviewer is forced to either move in another direction or ask more questions to obtain the required information.

One well-worded question is more effective than four poorly worded questions.

3. Pause briefly after you ask a question to allow the candidate to think so that they can give a detailed answer.

Allow 15 seconds for the candidate to answer before rewording the question. Watch the facial expressions before speaking. Sometimes it takes time for a candidate to form an answer.

Most people hate to have a lull in the conversation because they will feel that they must say more if you sit silently looking at them. This is one reason why different interviewers will sometimes have quite opposite opinions of a candidate.

4. Ask one question at a time. Too often interviewers ask a series of questions at once and expect the candidate to remember them all.

5. Candidates will sometimes open up and give answers that are more detailed if you repeat part of their answer in a questioning tone.

For example
Candidate: I don't think there is any future in staying with the business.

Interviewer: There isn't any future? [Pause]

6. Don't allow the candidate to evade your questions.

For example
Interviewer: How did you come to leave that job for one with less pay?

Candidate: I just wanted a change.
Rephrase and focus the question until you receive a satisfactory answer.

For example
Interviewer: Why were you prepared to accept less pay in seeking a change?

7. Always look for clues in the candidates' responses that will suggest further questions. These new questions may reveal a better picture of their work history, attitudes, and personality.

For example
Candidate: After I lost that job, I couldn't sleep at night.
Interviewer: Why did it upset you to lose that particular job?

Don't make them clam up.

Say for example
Interviewer: Have you had difficulty in the past holding down a job?

8. Probe further whenever unusual circumstances are mentioned or candidates don't offer plausible reasons for their acts.

For example
Candidate: I got into a little money trouble, but everything is okay now.
Interviewer: Would you mind telling me more about the trouble?

Asking questions that probe as to what, where, when, why, and how something happened are the most useful and revealing. However, it takes skill and practice to use this technique successfully and consistently. (See How to write and ask effective questions below for examples.)
9. Pregnant pauses' will usually encourage candidates to talk about embarrassing or awkward situations.

   So, don't be too quick to interrupt, or move to another question and let them off the hook because the answer could reveal something important.

10. Putting words in the candidate's mouth may preclude you finding out the real reason.

   **For example**
   
   Avoid asking a leading question like—Did you leave school to support your parents?

   A better question is—why did you leave school early?

11. Watch out for vague answers particularly to important questions.

   In these instances, the candidate either has something to hide or they may have misunderstood the question.

   Don't let the answer pass, but rather be more specific in rephrasing your question.

**How to write and ask effective questions**

Determine the quality of the interview by the quality of the interviewer's questions.

Therefore, determine the quality of the candidate's interview by the quality of their answers.

Effective questions that do not allow for yes/no answers begin with the following kinds of words:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What</th>
<th>That</th>
<th>Define</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Which</td>
<td>Then</td>
<td>Trace</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who</td>
<td>Is</td>
<td>List</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Where</td>
<td>Did</td>
<td>Analyze</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How</td>
<td>Does</td>
<td>Compare</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Why</td>
<td>If</td>
<td>Contrast</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When</td>
<td>State</td>
<td>Give examples</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Each of these words in the list above asks a different kind of question. Below are some examples:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question Words</th>
<th>Kinds of Information Requested</th>
<th>Sample Questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **What or Which** | Requests specific information | **What** did you enjoy best about that job?  
**What** sort of work do you think you would not like?  
**What** are some of the things you look for in a job—factors that you feel are important to your job satisfaction?  
**What** sort of business were they to work for?  
**What** kind of supervisors have you had? Describe their strengths and their weaknesses.  
**What** do you do in a typical day at work?  
**What** do you look for in people who work for you?  
**What** criticisms did you receive from that supervisor?  
**What** do you feel are your greatest assets?  
**What** do you think are the characteristics of a good supervisor (job being offered)?  
**Which** was the most difficult assignment you have had and how did you deal with the situation?  
**Which** product lines did you most enjoy selling?  
**Which** group of accounts were your best revenue producers, commercial, industrial, government or institutional? |
<p>| <strong>Who</strong> | Requests the identity of | <strong>Who</strong> were your major accounts in |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question Words</th>
<th>Kinds of Information Requested</th>
<th>Sample Questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Who            | a person or a personified thing | Who were the decision makers that you dealt with at that company?  
|                |                               | Who were the people that were party to making that decision? |
| Where          | Ask for the situation, location, position or place of a thing or a person | Where would you place the importance of that issue on a scale of 1-10 where 10 is the highest?  
|                |                               | Where did you discover the greatest opportunities were?  
|                |                               | Where did you finally find out the answer to the question?  
|                |                               | Where was the problem finally? |
| When           | Requests the time or a period or under what condition or situation | When did you assume that responsibility?  
|                |                               | When did you find out the truth of the situation?  
|                |                               | When was the promised assistance available to you? |
| How            | Ask for the way or manner, by what means, to which extent or degree | How do you see yourself applying the experience you have to this position?  
|                |                               | How do you react when you have a job to do that you don't like?  
|                |                               | Now that you have had experience in supervising others, tell me how you like it and how you would rate your performance.  
|                |                               | How would you say that you differ from him/her? |
| Why            | Ask for what reason(s), for what cause(s), and for what purpose(s) | Why did you find your previous boss an easy or hard person to work for?  
<p>|                |                               | Why did you leave the Armed Forces? |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question Words</th>
<th>Kinds of Information Requested</th>
<th>Sample Questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Describe</td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Describe</strong> any additional qualifications and the standing attained. <strong>Describe</strong> your general health and your attendance at work in the last five years. <strong>Describe</strong> your formal education and technical training and elaborate on any additional courses or training that may relate to the position being offered.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Examples</td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Give examples</strong> that demonstrate that you work safely. <strong>Give some examples</strong> of how you have improved productivity in your current job.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Summary

In effective questioning, you have examined typical interview situations. You have learned how to use probing questions to 'draw out' information from the candidate.

In addition, the intent of it was to show how the interviewer could control and direct the flow of the conversation.

The skills discussed in this section are not easy for most people to master. They require regular practice to implement effectively. It requires skill to master these ideas and not have job candidates feel pressured or under interrogation.
Celebrate!!

You have learned so much about the art of questioning.
Telephone Interview Questionnaire

Introduction

Sometimes very good candidates living in remote locations apply for a position with your business. It is often too expensive for these candidates to travel to an interview or they may be employed and not be able to take the time off work. It may not be practical for businesses to be flying in job candidates for interviews.

These candidates may be the very candidates with the skills, experience, and personal attributes that your business needs.

The following form and interview format is effective in screening long-distance applicants. It is a general form and some questions may not apply to all businesses and positions. It acts as a guide to keep the interview on track. It is too easy in any conversation but, particularly on the telephone, to have the conversation drift and important questions are not asked.

Of course, the downside of the telephone interview is not being able to 'read' the body language of the candidate when they respond to your questions.

Using this telephone interview questionnaire

Use this telephone interview questionnaire as a guide when doing your next long-distance job interview. You may even find this format useful in organizing your thoughts for a face-to-face interview.

Below is a sample telephone interview questionnaire. You need to customize it to fit your business and the job requirements.

Ask carefully written questions so that you can obtain the same information that you would have if you were facing the candidate.

If you are interviewing both face-to-face and by telephone, then use similar questions as much as possible.
A sample telephone interview questionnaire

The sample telephone interview is for a technical position.

The questions below are divided into six headings. They are:

1. General information
2. Personal information
3. Administration information
4. Safety information
5. Technical information
6. Summary questions

You will need to customize this telephone interview questionnaire to fit your business. That may mean changing the headings as well as the questions to fit your business.

Candidate

Name: _________________________ Phone: _________________________
Address: __________________________________________________
Position and Location: _______________________________________
Employer: _____________________________________________________
Supervisor: ____________________ Phone: ______________________

1. General information
   What do you know about our business?
   Why do you think you would like to work for our business?
   What do you know about the available locations? [This is particularly important in the case of businesses having remote locations.]
   How would you (and your family) feel about living in one of these locations for at least four years?
   How soon would you be available to work?
   Does your current employer know that you have applied to work for us?
May we contact your current employer and/or previous employers regarding your work performance?

2. **Personal information**

Describe your general health and your attendance at work in the last five years. Would you be prepared to undergo a detailed medical examination (and perhaps aptitude or psychological testing) as a pre-condition to employment?

Describe your formal education and technical training and elaborate on any additional courses or training that may relate to this position.

Describe your work history including employers, positions held, and the reasons for changing employers and positions.

Have you ever been warned or disciplined for:

| Unruly or improper conduct (fighting, drinking on the job, theft) |
| Inadequate work performance |
| Unexplained absences |
| Insubordination |
| Safety infractions |

Describe the sort of community activities, sports, or hobbies that interest you.

Give some examples of where you used common sense or initiative in doing your job.

Have you had difficulty or conflicts in your working life with:

| Co-workers |
| Trades |
| Technicians |
| Supervisors/managers |
| Contractors |

How have you dealt with these conflicts? What are some examples?

What has occurred in the workplace that caused you the most stress? How did you deal with that stress?

Give some examples of how you have improved productivity in your current job.

What do you feel your major accomplishments have been in your current job and in your employment history?
3. **Administration information**

   What familiarity do you have with computerized systems?

   Describe your exposure to (skills in fields desirable for the position.)

   Describe any written or oral skills you would bring to the job. (If they are required for the position)

   Describe any additional skills or experience you have that you feel might make a useful contribution to this business.

4. **Safety information**

   Describe your work history from the point of view of safety. Please note any major or minor injuries, medical treatment received, lost time due to injuries and any awards you have received for safety.

   Describe your familiarity with formal safety regulations and in particular Worker's Compensation Board (WCB) regulations.

   What is the correct procedure for (provide an example)?

   What first aid training have you had over the past five years and what tickets do you hold currently?

   What is the purpose of safety inspections—what should they include, when should they be done and who should do them?

   Give examples that demonstrate that you work safely.

   Describe your involvement in the promotion of safety in your current job, for example, serving on safety committees.

5. **Technical information**

   Describe your basic technical qualifications.

   Outline, as specifically as possible, your experience in each of the following areas:

   Describe any additional qualifications and the standing attained.

   Add whatever technical questions are necessary to determine specific experience.
6. **Summary questions**

This is an optional part of the interview and it depends on whether the interviewer is satisfied with previous responses and considers the candidate a good prospect.

The interviewer provides an overview of the business (its organization, current business position, and/or future direction) and elaborates on employment terms, conditions, and any relocation assistance.

The interviewer asks if there is anything more that needs explaining and whether the candidate has any final questions.

The interviewer provides an indication of what the candidate can expect as far as further contact is concerned and what the timing of that will be.

**Summary**

Professional interviewers in screening long-distance job applicants have used the foregoing format effectively. Of course, thorough reference checking is advised with any job applicant but it is particularly important with long-distance candidates.

If the candidate becomes a finalist for a position, it will be necessary at some point for the candidate to travel to a face-to-face interview. In that event, it is normal for a business to provide some compensation to a finalist for travel costs.

It should be stressed that the interviewer must be very careful not to mislead a candidate in any way. The candidate should have no illusions that they have been accepted for the position or are even close to being accepted for a position. Candidates are known to quit their jobs because of being given false impressions and companies consequently have been successfully sued.
Celebrate!!

I am looking for you so that we can celebrate!
Reference Checking Questionnaire

Introduction

Always check references with immediate supervisors and educational institutions in the case of professional and technical people. You would be surprised at how many times impostors or even criminals are revealed.

If a candidate is travelling from some distance to the interview, try to check three references before they travel to minimize the risk of needless expense to the candidate or you.

Many jurisdictions require that you advise the candidate in advance and get their permission before checking a reference.

If you hire somebody to do the reference checking, the same conditions apply.

In addition, the candidate may have the right to see the reference check and correct any misinformation. You may be required to advise a candidate of an outside reference in the event that you turned him down.

Never contact a candidate's present employer without permission, as some companies will fire people known to be job hunting.

If you do this, candidates can successfully sue you if they lose their job because of your inquiry.

It is essential, that following the interviews; all short-listed candidates have their references checked. Having a standard reference checking form is important. It helps you to keep focused and on track while telephoning for a reference on a candidate.

Without a format like this, it is very easy to forget to cover all of the information needed. It also assists you to make a hiring decision by making it easier to compare candidates.

It is important to remember that many jurisdictions prohibit discrimination based on:

- Age
- Sex
- Sexual orientation
- Ethnic origin
- Religion
- Disabilities in some cases

How to hire the right people ©
In fact, in many jurisdictions it is unlawful to disqualify candidates by asking them questions related to these issues and it may be unlawful to ask a reference any questions related to these issues.

*How to use the reference checking questionnaire*

The following list is the standard information that is usually asked for when doing a reference check.

You will need to customize the questionnaire to fit your business and job description.

**Sample reference checklist**

Applicant's name: ___________________ Telephone: _________________________
Name of Reference: _________________________________________________________
Reference's Relationship to Applicant (work/personal) __________________________
Name of Business: _________________________________________________________
Title of Reference within the Business: ________________________________________
Dates of Employment within the Business: _________________________________
Position(s) held: _________________________________________________________
Last Salary: _____________________________________________________________
Personal Qualities: (cooperative, appearance, relations with others, application to work, shortcomings, or strengths): _____________________________________
Character: ______________________________________________________________
Experience and Progress: _________________________________________________
Suitable Level of Responsibility: __________________________________________
Overall Rating (versus others at his/her level Use a scale of 1–5) ________________
Reasons for Leaving: _____________________________________________________
Would You Rehire the Applicant? ___________________________________________
Other Comments: ________________________________________________________
Summary

If you obtain conflicting information from references, you may have to procure additional references to clarify certain issues. In some cases, you may have to call a reference back to clarify a comment they made or to ask further questions. Sometimes, the person providing the reference may not wish to say anything negative about a potential candidate so you must probe a little to get at the truth of a situation.

In addition to recording answers to the questions on this form, be sure to write down your impressions of the referee's tone and overall attitude to your questions. Sometimes a reference will answer all of the questions directly but it sounds like an undercurrent to their responses. It is as if there is more to the story. In this event, another reference is probably indicated to clarify further the candidate's suitability.
Candidate Position Rating Process

Introduction

After you have interviewed several candidates for a position, remembering them all and their relative strengths and weaknesses can be difficult.

If you have interviewed ten candidates, remembering the last two candidates is relatively easy; however, remembering the first five will be more difficult.

Many organizations have designed a process that allows them to rank the candidates using the same criteria.

There are a number of reasons for using this process:
1. It compares the 'long list' of candidates and ultimately the 'short list' of candidates for a position.
2. At the end of the interviews, it becomes relatively easy to determine which candidate should be hired.
3. It helps to prevent personal bias in the hiring decision.
4. Use it to provide meaningful feedback to the candidate if they request it.
5. Use it to provide the required information if any of the candidates challenge the hiring decision.

How to use this information

This form is developed and organized in the preparatory part of the interview process. All of these qualifications written in the candidate position form are drawn from the job description that was completed in the Unified Salary Administration Program (The job description).

Organizations that use an interview panel use this form or one like it. Supply the form to each member of the interview panel. Discuss it in detail so that each panel member understands how to use it.

For businesses that have one interviewer, this form may not be as formal. Write key questions out. Note key ideas so that the interviewer can address them in the interview.

Regardless of whether there is one interviewer or several, immediately after the interview, take time to fill it out completely before showing in the next candidate into the interview room.
Sample candidate position rating form

The candidate position rating process is divided into the following headings:

1. Minimum qualifications
2. Desirable skills, background, and traits
   • Personal traits and technical experience rating form
   • Instructions on to how to use the rating form
  
  An illustration of how the ratings given candidates are weighted
  An example of how a candidate's weighted ratings are calculated

Name of Candidate: ____________________ Phone number: ______________
Address: ______________________________________________________________________________________
Position and Location: _____________________________________________________________________________
Employer: ______________________________________________________________________________________
Supervisor: ___________________   Phone number: ______________
Position Applied for: _____________________________________________________________
Location: ______________________________________________________________________________________
Preference: _____________________________________________________________
Supervisor: ____________________   Phone number: ______________

How to hire the right people ©
Minimum qualifications

These are basic requirements that must be met. Sometimes the profession, industry, or trade dictates them. Other times, they are requirements placed there by the business.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>List of Minimum Qualifications</th>
<th>Qualification Met</th>
<th>Qualification Failed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>T/Q Certification [technical or formal qualifications, if applicable]</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Certificates</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skill</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skill</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strong Experience</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Desirable skills, background, and traits

In addition to minimum job requirements, there are usually other skills, personal traits, and work experience that may be desirable. In other words, those qualities you wish the candidate to have over and above the basic skills and work experience.

Uses this sample form to help you to determine the personal traits and work experience. It uses a weighting score, a rate score, and a final score.
### Personal traits and technical experience rating form

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Personal Selection Parameters</th>
<th>Weight</th>
<th>Rating 1-10</th>
<th>Final Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Initiative</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assumes responsibility</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintenance of records</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safety work record</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training and education</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disciplinary history</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooperativeness</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commitment to productivity</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Subtotal</strong></td>
<td><strong>200</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Technical Selection Parameters                 |        |             |             |
| Operating                                      |        |             |             |
| Operating                                      |        |             |             |
| Ability to                                     |        |             |             |
| Trouble shooting                               |        |             |             |
| Experience at                                  |        |             |             |
| Experience at                                  |        |             |             |
| Experience at                                  |        |             |             |
| **Subtotal**                                   | **300**|             |             |

**Final Total** (add both subtotals) 500
Instructions on to how to use the rating form

Review each set of parameters and assign a weighting number that you feel reflects the relative importance of that parameter within the group.

For example

In the personal selection group, we have assigned 200 points for the nine parameters. The scores could be distributed like this.

Sample distribution of weights:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Personal Selection Parameters</th>
<th>Weights</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Initiative</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assumes responsibility</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training and Education</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Subtotal</strong></td>
<td><strong>120/200</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One parameter @ 20</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three parameters @ 15</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One parameter @ 10</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One parameter @ 5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Subtotal</strong></td>
<td><strong>80/200</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total (add both subtotals)</strong></td>
<td><strong>200</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Now, when you rate a particular candidate on each of the parameters (you do so on a scale of 1–10), place that rating in the box alongside the weighting number, multiply the two numbers and place the resulting 'score' in the box at the right.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Personal Selection Parameters</th>
<th>Weight</th>
<th>Rating 1-10</th>
<th>Final Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Initiative</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>40 x 7 = 280</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assumes responsibility</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>40 x 8 = 320</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10 x 4 = 40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

You repeat this process for the Technical Selection group. Then add the total scores for that candidate. After rating many candidates, this Candidate Position Rating Process is a very useful screening and comparison tool.

**Summary**

The position rating process is an objective way of defining the best candidate for the position. A person who is not only the best-qualified candidate for the position but also brings the experience and attitude makes a real contribution to your business.

The entire hiring process outlined in the previous sections may seem lengthy but it is extremely cost effective. Always remember that if you were buying a $100,000 piece of equipment for the business, you would certainly do careful research before making the purchase. Why not take the same care when hiring a person.

A mistake in hiring can cost your business far more in both money and effort.

A mistake in hiring can cost your business far more.
Employment Contract

Introduction

For many key positions in a business, it is important to have an employment contract. People in key administrative and supervisory positions are often privy to private business information. They are possibly in positions of trust. Therefore, for the protection of the business and the employee, a formal employment contract is a good idea.

How to use the employment contract

Customize this sample employment contract to your business—that means that you can delete, change, or add to this sample. This sample provides you with the kind of information that may be included in an employment contract.

Sample employment contract

Between: __________________________ [herein called] ____________________

And: __________________________ [herein called] ____________________

In consideration of the mutual and respective covenants and agreements herein contained, the parties agree, as follows:

1. This Employment Contract is a contract of indefinite hiring between [Business] and the employee subject to rights of termination as subject herein.

2. [Business] shall employ the employee at a wage of $ _______ per month/week. [Business] may increase such wage from time to time. In case of economic recession, [Business] may decrease the employee's wages without notice.

3. The employee shall perform such duties as may be assigned by [Business] from time to time. [Business] may change (at its sole discretion and without notice) the duties of the employee.

4. In addition to the wages paid by [Business] to the employee, the employee shall be entitled to the following benefits. [List them here.]

5. During the period of her/his employment, the employee shall devote her/his entire working time and attention to such duties as may be assigned to her/him by [Business] and shall faithfully and diligently serve and endeavour to further the interests of [Business].
6. The employee agrees that she/he will not engage in or be connected with any other business that will require her/his personal attendance during the regular business hours of the Employer. The Employer shall specify the regular business hours of the Employer from time to time.

7. In consideration of being employed by [Business], the employee hereby agrees not to divulge any information that she/he receives during her/his employment concerning the personal, financial, or other affairs of clients of [Business].

Alternatively, divulge any information that she/he receives concerning the personal, financial, or other affairs of [Business]. All such information will be treated by the employee in confidence and will not be divulged to any person.

8. The employee may terminate this agreement upon two weeks' notice.

9. [Business] may terminate this agreement for just cause at any time without notice to the employee.

10. [Business] may terminate this agreement without cause as follows:

   a. During the first six months of employment, without notice

   b. After the expiration of six months of employment, upon one week's notice

   c. If the employee shall continue in the employment of [Business]

Beyond one year, the continued employment of the employee shall be on a month-to-month basis and [Business] may terminate the Employment of the employee, without cause, upon one month's notice.

   Upon notice equivalent to that this is required by the labour legislation in your area

   a. [Business] may pay (instead of giving notice as required under item 10 above) the employee severance pay equal to the period of notice specified therein.

   b. Upon termination for any reason, the employee shall not be entitled to notice or severance in lieu of notice, except as provided in this agreement.

   c. This agreement replaces any earlier oral or written employment agreement between the parties. There are no oral or written inducements, promises, or agreements, except as contained herein.

   d. The provisions of this agreement shall continue to apply notwithstanding any change in position, promotion, or demotion of the employee.
Dated this ______________ day of __________, 200_ __________________
Name of Employee: ________________________________________________
Address: __________________________________________________________
Telephone: __________________________________________________________
Employee Signature: ________________________________________________
Date Employment Commenced: ________________________________________
Business Name: _____________________________________________________
Company Name: _____________________________________________________
Per: __________________________________________________________________
Title: __________________________________________________________________

Summary

The employment contract illustrated here is very basic and most businesses would add a number of clauses to cover issues relevant to their business.

In addition, we recommend that after you complete the employment contract that you have your lawyer look at it to make sure it does not contravene the laws of your jurisdiction.
Commission Sales Agreement

Introduction

The Commission Sales Agreement, like an Employment Contract, defines terms and conditions of employment. It defines the expectations of both the employee and the business. It is a good way to eliminate any misunderstandings that may occur at some time in the future.

Not all businesses need this Commission Sales Agreements. However, for those of you who have salespeople (who work on commission) the agreement will be useful.

How to use the commission sales agreement

You will have to customize this sample agreement to suit your business but this example will provide you with a framework.

This example commission sales agreement has 13 headings:

- Employment
- Remuneration
- Vehicle allowance & conditions
- Sales territory & accounts
- Sales agreements
- Sales prices
- Sales leads & referrals
- Commission payments
- Performance
- Advertising & promotion
- Conflict of interest
- Terms
- General
Sample commission sales agreement

Between: [Employee Name] hereinafter referred to as Employee and Business Name] hereinafter referred to as _____________________

_____________ wishes to employ the Employee as a commissioned salesman and the Employee wishes to take on employment with __________ as a commissioned salesman;

The _____________ and the Employee agree on the following terms and conditions of employment:

Employment

1. __________ hereby employs the Employee as a commission sales clerk commencing the day of _____________, 2000 to sell specific products as may be designated from time to time by ___________ and the Employee hereby agrees to diligently and faithfully use her/his best efforts to sell such products on behalf of _________________.

Remuneration

2. ______________ shall pay to the Employee a commission on sales as set forth in the attached commission Schedule "A".

3. ______________ reserves the right to make changes in the schedule as it may determine from time to time but ______________ will give two months' notice of any change. Commission payments will be payable monthly on the _________ of the month following the date in which commissions were earned.

4. In order to assist the Employee at the beginning of her/his employment ______________ may allow the Employee to take a draw during the first three months as an advance in the amount of ______________ per month on the anticipated earned commissions.

An example of the draw might be:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>June 20th</td>
<td>$1,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 20th</td>
<td>$2,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 20th</td>
<td>$2,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 20th</td>
<td>$1,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

How to hire the right people ©
5. For the purpose of this agreement, a commission is earned when the Employee receives full payment on the sale.

6. The Employee will be eligible for Medical Services Plan (MSP), including dental coverage and extended health benefits after a three-month waiting period. The Employee will not be eligible for MSP, the group life insurance program, or the pension plan.

Vehicle Allowance and Conditions
7. ______________ shall pay the Employee a vehicle allowance of __________ per month in advance as an allowance for the use of the employee's own vehicle, provided that the vehicle displays designated advertising. Such advertising shall be provided at __________ expense and shall be removed by __________ on the termination of this agreement.

8. The Employee understands and agrees that it is a condition of employment that she/he maintains her/his driver's licence in good standing. The failure to renew such licence or the loss of such license may result in the termination of employment. The Employee shall operate at no time her/his vehicle on __________ business without a valid BC license and valid insurance as specified herein.

9. The Employee shall insure any vehicle used on __________ business for business use and shall maintain, at her/his own cost, at least $2,000,000 in third party liability coverage. __________ may require (from time to time) proof of such coverage.

Sales Territory and Accounts
10. ______________ shall assign to the Employee a specific sales territory and may assign specific client accounts whether inside or outside such territory. ______________ may alter or reassign such territory or such accounts from time to time if, in its opinion, such would further the interests of the business but __________ will confer with the Employee before such reassignments if such will affect the work of the Employee.

11. ______________ assigns to the Employee the territory and accounts specified in Schedule "B".

Sales Agreements
12. The Employee shall use the forms prescribed by __________ from time to time in contracting for sales. The forms provided shall include a requirement that a Departmental Manager approves sales and no sale is eligible for payment of a commission unless so approved.

13. It is understood and agreed that __________ may at any time:
14. Refuse or reject an order for good cause

15. Cancel any order, in whole or in part, for good cause

16. Consent to the cancellation of an order for good cause either before or after the shipment of the merchandise

17. Accept any return of merchandise for good cause

18. Grant an allowance on merchandise or a service for good cause and for the purpose of this clause 'good cause' shall include good business and customer relations and ______________ shall be the sole determinant of whether such good cause exists.

19. If ___________ cancels or revises a contract for good cause then any commission payable will be paid based on the revised contract price.

Sales Prices

20. The Employee in making sales contracts shall calculate prices based on sale prices in schedules provided from time to time by __________. Such schedules may provide some discretion in pricing to the Employee.

Sales Leads and Referrals

21. Maintenance sales leads: The business will rotate all general maintenance sales leads to each commissioned salesperson. When a specific salesperson is requested by name, the lead will be referred to such salesperson and this lead will not count as a general lead subject to rotation. Any general lead rejected by a salesperson will be offered to the next sales person in rotation. A salesperson rejecting a sale's lead will not be offered another lead until their next turn comes up in the rotation.

22. For the purpose of paragraph 14, a rejection includes a verbal rejection or non-performance on the lead for one business day.

23. New Business Leads: __________ will assign, as per Schedule "C", a list of customers who it will be the Employee's responsibility to serve. New business customers will be added to the employee's list when prospected for by the employee and approved by the Sales Manager. The Sales Manager may add or remove from the Employee's list customers where the Sales Manager is of the opinion that such is in the best interest of the business, but the Sales Manager will consult with the employee affected prior to any such change.

24. Territory Leads: Leads originating in the Employee's territory that are not customers assigned to other employees shall be assigned to the Employee with responsibility for that territory. In the event that the salesperson does not accept or perform on the lead within one business day, the lead will be reassigned as part of the rotation.
25. The Employee agrees to sell a minimum dollar value of jobs as set forth in Schedule "D". Failure to achieve such sales shall be grounds for termination, if no unusual circumstances exist and the failure continues for three consecutive months.

**Commission Payments**

26. The commission on sales shall be paid as follows:

27. Fifty percent of the commission payable shall be paid as an advance in the payroll period in which the contract was signed and accepted, providing that the contract deposit exceeds 25% of the contract price.

28. The remaining 50% of the commission is due upon receipt of the final payment from the customer. In the event, the contract price is adjusted; the commission payable shall also be adjusted to reflect the revised sale price.

29. Notwithstanding the foregoing, __________ may advance (at its discretion) the employee funds before the receipt of the final payment from the customer. The Employee does not earn such an advance until final payment is received and, in the case of non-payment for a period of four months, is repayable. If payment is ultimately received, then the Employee shall be paid the balance of the commission payable under this agreement.

**Performance**

30. The Employee shall use her/his best efforts to effectively and professionally perform her/his duties under this agreement, Without limiting the generality of the foregoing, the employee shall:

31. Provide prompt follow-up to all leads which are accepted

32. Prepare and present to the customer, estimates and contracts at sale price levels set by __________

33. Present all contracts for acceptance by the Sales Manager

34. Maintain contact with the customer throughout the project

35. Use best efforts to ensure the customer is satisfied with the project throughout its' duration

  - Collect promptly all deposits and obtain funds following the completion of the project
Advertising and Promotion

36. The amount of advertising or promotion spent in any territory or on any product is the sole responsibility of the Sales Manager. The Employee is encouraged to give the Sales Manager ideas to enhance product sales and shall meet with the Sales Manager from time to time as may be required by __________ to plan or consider such activities.

Conflict of Interest

37. It is a conflict of interest for the employee to either directly, indirectly sell, or offer to sell services or merchandise in competition with __________. Conflict of interest is a ground for termination of this agreement. The Employee shall inform __________ of any current or future employment with any third party and __________ shall determine whether the same is or could become a conflict of interest.

38. Notwithstanding paragraph 22, the Employee shall use their best efforts to maximize sales following this agreement.

Terms

39. This agreement shall take effect as of the ________ day of ______, 2000 and continues in force until terminated.

40. __________ and the Employee may terminate this agreement without cause upon 15 days' written notice or upon notice as provided by section 42 of the Employment Standards Act, as amended, whichever period is greater.

41. In the event of termination of this agreement for any reason, the Employee shall:
   - Cease to act as an employee of __________, and cease using the name of the business or any trade names or trademarks belonging to the business.
   - Return all leads, sales contracts, and documents pertaining to her/his employment with __________.
   - Return all equipment, brochures, and display materials to __________.
   - Moreover, if the former Employee complies with the above may, at its discretion, advance the former Employee 75% of the anticipated earned commissions. If __________ is not satisfied with the former Employee's compliance with this clause, then such commissions shall only be paid when there is full compliance with these provisions.
General

42. This agreement constitutes the entire agreement between the parties and supersedes all previous agreements, memoranda, and understandings between the parties.

43. Failing to enforce any term or condition under this agreement does not constitute a waiver of __________ rights under this agreement.

44. If any part of this agreement conflicts with provisions of the Employment Standards Act, then that clause or provision shall be severed from this agreement. In the place of the conflicting provision shall be inserted any requirement under the said Act and the requirement of that Act shall become a part of this agreement.

SIGNED, SEALED AND DELIVERED

In the presence of: _______________________________________________________
Occupation: ___________________________________________________________
Address: _____________________________________________________________

SIGNED, SEALED, AND DELIVERED in the presence of: _____________
Name: _____________________ Occupation: _____________________________
Address: _____________________________________________________________
Celebrate!!

Reward yourself
Handling Lay-Offs & Terminations Professionally

Introduction

In how to hire the right people, we have discussed the hiring process in detail. We have discussed the importance to a business of handling that process in a professional manner in order to maximize the success rate of hiring the right people.

Unfortunately, in spite of best efforts, the hiring process is not an exact science because of unknown factors concerning candidates and the involvement of human judgment. It may be necessary to fire an employee only a few months after hiring or it could be many years after hiring. In either case, it is never an easy task.

Because of this, we will discuss how to handle the firing of an employee in a professional and civilized manner.

Firing or laying off people can be a traumatic experience for both management and the employee. Sometimes, the situation can even result in ugly, angry scenes and, after the fact, suits for wrongful dismissal.

The reasons for this are that management and supervisors in general are often ill prepared to carry out this periodically necessary function. They are not trained to do it and it occurs infrequently.

Managers usually hate to have to lay off or fire someone and often work themselves into a sweat over the prospect of doing it. These two activities are often executed very poorly.
Some typical reasons why managers would terminate the employment of a person are:

- Incompetence
- Failure to perform at the required level
- Poor work habits
- Failure to respond to training or counselling
- Inability to work with others
- Insubordination
- Contravention of company policies and procedures
- Falsifying records or reports
- Damage to company property
- Criminal activity
- A downturn in the economy
- A reduction in business due to competitive activity

Some typical reasons why management needs to lay off staff are:

- Budget cuts
- Downsizing (or any other term that is currently being used)
- Loss of markets
- Company reorganization or restructuring
- Global economic problems
- The company eliminated some products or services
- The company closes operations in a market
- The company contracts out some production or services
- The company decided upon a different organization structure
- A consolidation of company departments
- A merger of companies
- Another company buys the business
- Technology makes a position redundant
- A reduction in business due to competitive activity
- Company reorganization or restructuring
- Global economic problems
Suggested steps to follow

Advance planning is the key to eliminating the potential problems in carrying out this necessary, but disagreeable, aspect of every business owner or manager's job in a professional manner.

Here is a checklist of 25 do's and don'ts that will minimize potential problems and enable the manager to handle the situation with tact and dignity:

1. If someone is not performing in his or her present position, you should first look at alternative duties or positions for the employee.

   They may do well in another area of the company.

   Similarly, reducing staff in one area of the business, the skills and experience of some of the staff might be useful in other areas of the company.

   If your business is large enough to have several divisions or subsidiaries, canvass them to see if there are any suitable openings.

2. Seek the advice of your lawyer and a reputable personnel-consulting firm to determine the amount of severance pay that is appropriate under the circumstances if you do not already have a policy that addresses this.

   The person's age, employment status, length of experience, their employment status before joining your business and their marketability are important factors in determining the severance amount.

3. Avoid too generous a severance allowance.

   You should offer enough money to support the person during their job search but large allowances such as a year or more may encourage people to take extended vacations.

   It further promotes too selective an attitude towards job opportunities and can even lead to personal problems such as family difficulties and substance abuse.

4. Have your lawyer review your letter outlining the separation terms.

   Write in plainly understood language.

   Letters written in formal 'legalese' can have a negative effect on people and worsen an already difficult situation.
5. The person's immediate supervisor should always do the separation interview.

However, you can reduce the risk of misunderstandings about the terms of the separation by having the personnel manager or accountant attend the meeting.

Be careful that the meeting is not 'top heavy' with, for example, three management type people, and one employee.

If there is a union involved, they must attend to represent the employee.

6. The supervisor should practice what is going to be said, perhaps with other managers, particularly if it is the first time they have had to conduct a separation interview.

7. Confine the knowledge of a coming layoff or termination to as few people as possible.

It can be really bad news and potentially damaging to the business to have this information leak out prematurely.

Therefore, be careful not to cancel access to information or privileges that may cause the employee to get the wind up that their employment is about to be terminated.

On the other hand, if this is a termination, the employee should have had regular job reviews that indicated the kind of changes that were require, therefore, it should not come as a surprise to them.

If the job reviews have indicated satisfaction of the job well done, a dismissal can lead to legal problems.

If the reviews have indicated problems, there may have been timelines established for corrections or modifications.

8. If an employee has medical problems, a history of mental instability, or has not handled crises well in the past, it may be advisable to have medical assistance standing by at the time of the interview.

It is rare for this to occur, but people have been known to react violently in these situations and even have heart attacks when they are given the bad news.
9. Be aware of the person's business schedule and as much as possible of their personal engagements.

It is very insensitive to fire someone when a member of her or his family is very ill or on the eve of a significant holiday, personal, or business event.

It also could affect relationships with business clients who may have a deal in progress with the person involved or/and have meetings scheduled with them.

10. Plan to do the interview early in the week so the person has the rest of the week to make contacts and start a job search rather than 'stew' about things over the weekend.

11. Late afternoon is the best time and you should do it in the person's office if it is private so that you can leave at the conclusion of the interview. Otherwise, choose a quiet place out of view and hearing of other staff.

12. Be open and direct during the interview.

The person should know within a minute or two of the start of the interview of them being released from employment and the reasons for the decision.

Leave no doubt that the decision is final and that you have considered all the alternatives.

Do not give a detailed justification for the lay off, as nothing you can say at that point will possibly satisfy the person.

13. The interview should last only 10 or 15 minutes.

Allowing it to go on any longer than that will not make the person feel better and you run the risk of the meeting degenerating into an excuse or 'bitch' session—or worse.

14. Do not apply any pressure to accept the terms you are offering.

Simply present the letter outlining your terms of separation and suggest that they may wish to think it over or consult a lawyer.

15. Do not make any commitments during the meeting because any suggestion that you may be prepared to negotiate the terms of dismissal will often lead to further anger and frustration if you decide later that you will not change your terms.

16. Give the person an opportunity to respond to what you say, but leave no doubt that the decision is irreversible.
17. Make sure employees leave the interview with their dignity intact.

   It doesn't matter what the situation is, there is nothing to be gained by criticizing employees and attacking their self-respect.

   People are often filled with a whole range of negative emotions in these circumstances, such as anger, guilt, or embarrassment and provocative remarks just exacerbate the situation and may even cause violent reactions.

18. Show that you are sensitive to the person's needs and want to help her/him through the situation if you can.

   If your business is able to help, outline whatever you can offer such as relocation counselling.

19. Ensure that employees return all business identification, credit cards, keys, manuals, documents, or equipment.

   Some businesses have a checklist of these items and management, upon their return should initial them.

20. Protect yourself against sabotage.

   Sometimes disgruntled/fired employees destroy records, wipe out computer programs, or pass confidential information to competitors.

   Some businesses will have someone return to the employee's office, desk, or workspace with them to supervise the clean-out process and assist them out of the building or offices.

21. If you can, end the meeting on a positive note by wishing the person well in their job search and inviting them to contact you at any time.

22. It is often advisable to have a relocation counsellor in an adjoining office to 'pick up the pieces' after the interview.

   This usually deflects the person's anger and concentrates their attention on the forthcoming job search.

   The relocation counsellor is seen as an impartial professional, acting in confidence, with the sole purpose of helping the employee get re-employed and their life back on track.

   In recent years, companies have found that providing relocation counselling can improve the speed of re-employment by 20%, avoid costly lawsuits, and enhance the company's image as a good corporate citizen.
23. If you are laying off a large number of employees, before doing so, check with the provincial/state government authorities. Some jurisdictions require companies to provide various degrees of assistance. Besides, it is a good public relations move to inform various levels of government and agencies of the impending lay offs.

Typical Canadian examples
Mayor, Members of Parliament, Canada Employment officials, and Chamber of Commerce offices

24. In the case of large group lay offs it is sometimes good politics to have a job search centre set up on site providing individual counselling, secretarial and telephone answering services as well as allowing other employers to interview people there.

Notify and consult the union before any lay offs, if they are involved. They often have counsellors and other people who will assist the employees during this period. They often are required to sit in the meeting with the employee.

25. Any firing or lay off can affect the morale of the other employees so prepare a statement that will set any rumors to rest and assure them, if it is truly the case, that their own employment is not threatened.

Summary

None of these steps will make a lay off more pleasant, but they will facilitate the process and minimize the impact on remaining staff, customers, suppliers, and even future recruits.
Summary of How to Hire the Right People

In How to hire the Right People, we have talked about hiring the right people for your business takes planning and organization. We have discussed interviewing and questioning techniques as well, how to screen and rate job candidates. Finally, you have explored how to handle properly the firing of an employee.

You should compare these ideas and methods to the way in which you now handle hiring and firing in your business.

You should ask yourself questions such as:

- How do the ideas and methods presented in this section compare to the way you now handle hiring and firing is handled now?
- What are the specific ideas and methods that would improve the way you do things now?
- What do you feel the financial impact will be on your business of improving the success rate of hiring the right people?
- Do feel it is financially worth the effort to adopt the ideas and methods presented in this section.
Celebrate!!

This is end of how to hire the right people.
And, I need some fun
So, let's go for it
Other products & modules for sale

Other modules available on this site deal with other aspects of managing personnel. For a complete in depth treatment of this subject, the BizBite Consulting Group product Personnel Management also is available. For detailed information on the content of these products, please go to ‘Product’ on the menu bar on the web site.