

Voluntary Action-Leeds Recruiting Staff

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RECRUITING STAFF

This factsheet aims to give an overview about how your organisation should recruit staff for both new and existing jobs. The basic steps in the process of recruiting a new staff member are set out below.

1: Prepare a timetable

A good way to do this is to work backwards from the date you want the new person to start work. It is important to err on the side of caution and ensure that the times you allocate are realistic. It is better to have too much time than too little so take this into account when planning the process. Remember that the person to whom you offer the post may have to give their current employer a minimum of one month's notice.

2: Put together a pack for applicants

Some of the things that you might put into an applicant's pack are:

- A copy of the job description – this outlines the roles and responsibilities of an employee. If it is a new job then the Management Committee should spend time developing the job description and if it is an existing job then the Committee should review it before starting the recruitment process
- A copy of the person specification – this describes the qualities, skills, knowledge and experience that the person who undertakes the role needs to have. This should also be created or reviewed by the Management Committee to make sure it is up to date and accurate
- An application form, along with any guidelines on how to fill it in
- A monitoring form - to monitor the applicants' background, how they found out about the vacancy etc in terms of equal opportunities
- Copies of any relevant and up to date information about the organisation
- Clear statement of the deadline for application and probable interview dates

3: Make sure any internal preparation is done

There are some important tasks that need to be undertaken by the organisation before advertising the job. These include:

- Ensure that you are ready to deal with requests for application packs, etc. before you send out information about the job. And let any other staff who might have to handle these queries know what the procedure is
- Set up a system so that you can keep all the paperwork for the recruitment process. It may be very useful later in the event of a complaint, for example

- Choose who will be on the interview and shortlisting panel (it should be the same people on both). Include a representative of the Management Committee and the line manager for the job being recruited. It is usual to have between 2 and 5 people on a panel (but always more than 1). You should also make sure that there are no conflicts of interest for any of the panel members (for example if they are related to an interviewee they should not be on the panel)
- Provide training for the panel, if necessary, in the processes of selecting new staff
- Make sure that you have a system for shortlisting candidates for interview. See shortlisting section for more information

You should also remember that nobody who is on your Management Committee can be employed by the group (they must resign from the committee if they are offered and accept the job, and should have played no substantial part in the decision to recruit).

4: Advertising the post

Advertising is one of the main costs involved in recruitment so make sure that you budget this in from the start. You will need to balance out the costs with considerations about how and where you advertise the post.

Where to advertise? You can try The Guardian, The Big Issue, local papers, community newsletters, etc. You can also advertise in the specialist/professional press, e.g. the Pink Paper or Asian Times.

In the advert you would need to include information about:

- Who is funding the post, if the funders require you to do this
- Details of what the job involves, length of contract, pay scale, location, essential qualifications, skills and experience
- Deadline for applications
- Your charity registration number if you have one
- Details of how to get hold of an application pack including the phone number if necessary
- Possibly some basic information about the organisation

The way you advertise the job is important in terms of equal opportunities. Try to advertise in as many different places as possible to attract a wide variety of applicants. It may be possible to advertise through email lists or other organisations for free, or you can arrange for advertisements to be displayed in community venues.

5: Shortlisting

It is good practice to use a formal system when shortlisting. For example you could use a points scoring system to assess candidates against the criteria in the person specification.

The process should have two parts. First each panel member should read all of the applications individually and assess and score each applications. Then there should be a meeting where the panel compare their scores and decide who to interview. The panel should be honest in their evaluations as there won't be time to interview everyone who applies. It is good practice to hold all your interviews on one day so bear this in mind when deciding how many people to invite for interview.

The panel should also write down and agree the questions that candidates should be asked.

6: Interviews

Each interviewee must be asked the same questions so that they can be assessed against each other equally. It is a good idea to use a scoring system for interviews. Score each answer to each question and write down comments as you go along. Use your notes to help make a decision after the end of interviews. You can, if you feel it is appropriate, arrange to have some kind of competency based test as part of the interview (so long as you've told the interviewees of this beforehand). In the interview itself you should:

- introduce each of the panel members and explain clearly what will happen in the interview
- explain that you'll be taking notes during the interview
- give the interviewee an opportunity to ask questions of the panel
- explain to the interviewee when you expect to take a decision about which candidate will be offered the job and when they will be contacted.

7: Decision time

Using the scoring system as an aid, decide who you think should get the job. If necessary, you can go to second interviews, but balance the perceived need to do this against the cost of a second round of interviews. Once you have picked someone, make a verbal offer followed by a written offer of the job, dependant upon satisfactory references (and criminal record checks if these are needed). You could include with the letter of appointment 2 copies of a contract for them to sign and a copy of the Terms and Conditions of Employment. In the letter of appointment you should include information such as any probationary period that will apply, the start date, pay, etc. You should, once the verbal offer has been accepted, tell the other candidates that they have been unsuccessful and be prepared to give feedback if they request it.

8: Before they start

Before your new member of staff starts work you should make sure of several things:

- That you have let any other staff know who has the job and when they will be starting
- That you have arranged an induction for the new staff member

- That you have checked that the new employee is entitled to work in the UK
- That you have considered any training needs
- You should arrange your new employee's tax, National Insurance and pay.

There are two options:

- You could get someone to do the payroll for you, such as a Voluntary Action-Leeds
- You could register as an employer with the Inland Revenue and then arrange to pay your employee directly. You would then be responsible for making any deductions that are required and making regular payments to the Inland Revenue. For further details contact the Inland Revenue Employers Helpline for an employers pack to make sure that you are abiding by the law

This is very important as there are severe penalties for not complying with this law.

9. Are you recruiting staff for the first time?

If your organisation is employing someone for the first time, there are some further steps to take:

- Employers liability insurance needs to be in place
- Certain policies need to have been adopted e.g. a health and safety policy; a disciplinary and grievance policy; and an equal opportunities policy.

You also need to budget carefully. In addition to advertising costs, you will need to calculate pay plus tax and National Insurance. It is a good idea to use a salary scale, such as one used by the local authority (NJC scales). There are several bodies that can advise you on this, listed below.

An increase in the number of employees can also impose additional requirements on an employer e.g. requiring the findings of a health and safety survey to be recorded, or requiring the employer to set up a stakeholder pension.

10: Further help

Voluntary Action-Leeds



0113 297 7920



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info@val.org.uk

Payment & Employment Rights Service




0800 591 342



admin@pers.org.uk


 <http://www.pers.org.uk/>

West Yorkshire Community Accountancy Service (WYCAS)


 0113 270 6269

 info@wycas.org.uk

Inland Revenue Employers Helpline

 0845 7 143 143

ACAS

 08457 47 47 47

 <http://www.acas.gov.uk>