

# How To Build Your Dream Team

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If your goal is to end up with highly productive contributing team members that support your business direction, it all starts with effective planning.

Warning! Hiring casually will lead to low productivity and employee turnover. That means money out of your pocket. The first step to improve hiring results for small business is to use a system. That system needs to incorporate simple, effective steps focused on specific hiring standards. The steps are prepare, source, promote, interview and qualify , hire then orient.

## **1 ~ Plan and Prepare | Get ready for the best applicants**

Determine your hiring process (a) written application (b) tests? (c) personal interview (how many and by who?) (d) follow-up interview (e) hiring criteria

Prepare a reverse resume, application and interview rating sheet to evaluate each candidate equally.

Prepare a employee standards profile using our reverse resume format. This will help you focus on the goals, characteristics, specific skills, experience, education, aptitudes and attitudes you require for your position.

Prepare a job description outlining specific duties and responsibilities, pay, career path (or ways of achieving merit raises) within your organization. This will help you entice more qualified candidates and set the stage for a great employee/employer relationship from the start.

Be sure to adhere to government requirements for your application. Personnel law is fraught with land mines. Be certain all written and verbal interview questions do not violate hiring laws. Make sure your written application and interview process contains terminology your legal counsel has approved.

Prepare a specific list of interview questions to probe candidate's aptitude and skills and attitudes to qualify for the position. Take this information directly from your reverse resume. Make sure your questions are probing and open-ended. No questions should result in a yes or no answer—all questions should cause your applicant to think and respond with intelligence, no matter the position. This process helps you see how your prospective future employee will think on their feet. After all—you want thinking employees, don't you?

## **2 ~ Source | Choose promotional methods**

Make a list of the most likely sources to locate the best applicants. Be sure to include; local newspaper's help wanted section, trade publications, local junior and business colleges and universities, the competition, current employees, and local internet websites. Also include out-placement offices of larger companies within your area, government agencies, and employment services. Prepare your plan of contacts, advertising or other methods to maximize the number of candidates that will apply for the position.

Ask yourself if there someone within your organization that fits the qualifications.

Use a carefully thought-out application to ask probing questions of candidates. Be sure to address specific areas of importance to the job. Don't trust this important aspect of your business to an off -the-shelf application. See our example of some questions to include in your application.

## **3 ~ Promote | Put out the call**

Cultivate from within, first. Evaluate a present employees capacity to apply for the newly available position. Use the same application process you would use to recruit from the outside to make the best decision.

Expect to run your ads for thirty days and collect as many resumes or applications as possible. You want to screen from volume to make the best decisions.

Place a classified ad on Craig's list and websites that specialize in your type of candidate or industry. Shop sites as an applicant. This can usually be done for free. Use their ads to help you refine you own. After preparing a draft of your ad, let it rest for a day, then go back to it for editing. Always have a second set of qualified eyes help you review your copy for accuracy of content, grammar and punctuation – remember first impressions count!

#### **4 ~ Select | Filter Applicants**

During the interviewing and qualifying process of selection be certain to provide a copy of the job description and ask applicant how they see specific skills crossing-over to fit the stated position. The most effective interviewers are good listeners. Be sure to listen twice as much as you speak. Be clear about what you are listening for. Be sure to reference the reverse resume for comparison and ask probing questions related directly to the application or resume. Then listen carefully to applicant's answers and take good notes for later comparison with other applicants.

- Watch body language for additional insight into the person's abilities
- Rate each candidate on the most important items of the job
- Check references and candidate's work history ,within legal parameters
- Have the manager the new employee will work for also conduct segment of the interview with the top 3 candidates
- Compare notes with your managers and decide on your unanimous choice

#### **5 ~ Hire | Make the offer to #1 qualified candidate**

Iron out final compensation details. Negotiate final start date and orientation plans. Confirm the sending of any documentation the applicant should receive prior to their start date.

Complete the appropriate forms for your information and government agencies.

#### **6 ~ Orient | Starting Out On The Right Foot**

New employees must complete paperwork to comply with your needs and the law.

Spend time orienting new employees to your organization. Be sure to include an introduction to current employees, tour company facilities—no matter the size, review of the employee handbook, overview of holidays, vacation time, company benefits, safety policy and other items that are important for the new employee. Be certain employees know the specifics of the company evaluation process including frequency, how and what they will be evaluated on and how it will impact their wage structure. A skilled review of this information sets the stage for a professional relationship based on mutual trust and priorities. You never want employees to hear these details from other employees as rumor. These details are the foundation for success of your employer/employee relationship.

Outline a specific, written training program with a schedule that allows employees time to learn their new job functions at a pace that will inspire confidence. No matter how skilled and experienced the employee, in their given area of expertise, take the time to train them right the first time, so you won't have to do it over and over again with another new hire in the same position. Realistic time frames are critical to the success of your new employee's overall productivity and relationship with you.

Be certain training is effective and complete. Most small businesses short new employees on the training necessary to get off to a solid start on the job. Don't fall into the "I'm paying them to do a job, they should know how" trap. The better the training at the start of the job, the better employee you will have.

Set specific goals and timetables for learning certain procedures, policies and technical competencies. Consider a 90 day trial period in which goals are set by the week for the span of 90 days. When goals are met on schedule implement a 90 day initial performance review to promote your new employee to regular employment within your business. Remember, goal-setting is a joint effort. When employees participate in goal setting your chance of them accomplishing the goal increases.

Set specific times for review of progress and accomplishment of outlined job functions as a regular part of ongoing supervision. Identify what new employees must accomplish to accompany the company sponsored training for the new position. Use a weekly or daily meeting format incorporating to do lists and objectives for merit pay increases for every position.

Don't compromise on the necessity for employees to meet their goals.

Bottom line, highly productivity employees are nurtured, not born that way. It's our job, as owner, to invest in our employees for the greatest rate of return possible.

So, if you've chosen to learn to become a great recruiter, you now know you have your work cut out for you. Well, nobody said being a small business owner would be easy. However, competency in recruiting will become its own reward, and you'll receive the ultimate professional satisfaction of knowing you can build your own dream team.