



## Recruitment, Selection & Appointment of Staff

This Factsheet has been produced to assist Outside School Hours Care services conduct a thorough recruitment process when hiring staff. From writing the job description, phone screening, reference checking, to a comprehensive employment contract, this step-by-step guide has everything you need to ensure the right people are hired.

### STEP 1: WRITING A JOB DESCRIPTION

The service's Constitution should state the make- Writing a good job description (JD) is the first step in your recruitment process. It is the start of a successful relationship with your new employee. The JD ensures both parties, from the onset, are aligned to the expectations of the position. It will not only offer guidance for your potential employee to make an informed decision, but provide the added benefit of clarifying your own objectives for the role.

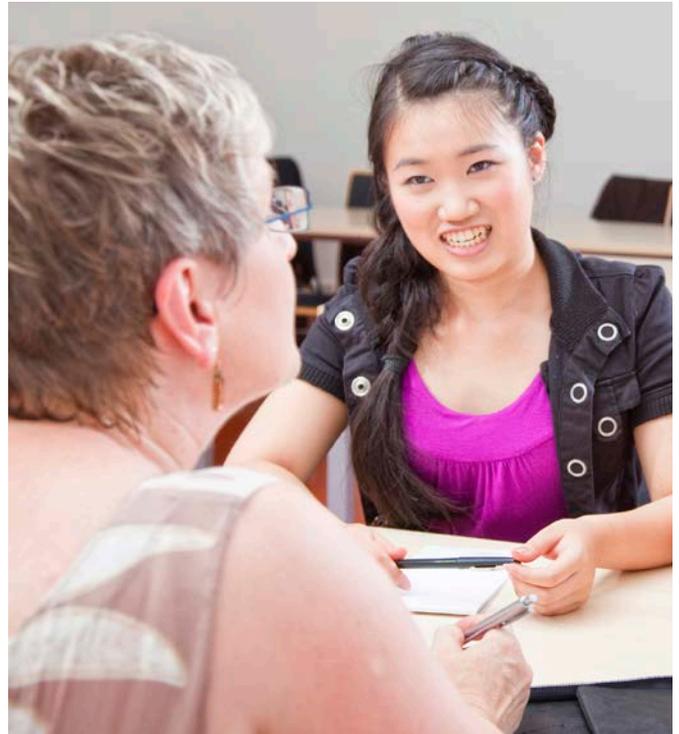
When writing the JD, you need to determine the experience, qualifications, skills and qualities required to fill the position. If you already have a JD for the position – review it. Does it still apply, or are changes required?

Example Job Descriptions can be downloaded from the Network website: [http://www.netoosh.org.au/oosh\\_resources.htm](http://www.netoosh.org.au/oosh_resources.htm)

### STEP 2: WRITING AND POSTING THE ADVERTISEMENT

Writing a successful advertisement and posting it in the right place is essential for attracting candidates for your position. Your advertisement is not a copy of your Job Description, but a marketing tool for attracting people to the job. Once you've written the advertisement, it should be listed in as many places as possible to ensure maximum response. Suggested places include:

- Network website
- Employment websites, for example, Seek, My Career
- Local and/or major Newspaper
- Recruitment agency
- Within the service itself



### STEP 3: RESPONDING TO APPLICATIONS

Decide who will be responsible for collecting the applications and responding to any telephone or email enquiries about the position. From an applicant's point of view, it is frustrating to not have the application responded to – this has the potential to cause them to lose interest in the position and withdraw their application. Respond as soon as possible and give the applicant a time frame in which you will be conducting the interviews. This is also an opportunity to undertake pre-screening of the applicant (see Step 4 below).

### STEP 4: PRE-SCREENING

Pre-screening job applicants allows you to narrow down the pool of applicants to those who are the best fit for the position - without spending hours doing in-depth interviews. Anyone can look good on paper, but a thorough pre-screening can separate the most appropriate applicants from all the rest and enables you to save the lengthy interview process for only the very best.

A well-conducted pre-screening process should give you a solid list of applicants to interview more thoroughly, and some initial insight into those applicants, allowing the full interview to probe more deeply into each applicant's most relevant skills and experience.

Pre-screening begins with a brief review of all the job applications. Once a shortlist of applicants has been selected for pre-screening, one of the following methods can be used:

- **Cover letter:** The applicant's cover letter should be a concise and well-crafted overview of their most relevant work experience for the job. It should neatly summarize why the candidate is well qualified for the position, and should be free of errors and easy to read. Poorly constructed cover letters are generally considered grounds to eliminate a potential candidate.
- **Resume:** The applicant's resume should reflect the skills and experience listed in the job posting. Look for keywords that match the qualities you are seeking. Be attuned to potential red flags such as long gaps in employment and spelling errors. Ensure the candidate's educational background is in line with the position. Look for a well-organised resume that has been customised to the specific position.
- **Phone interview:** You may wish to interact briefly with potential candidates by phone in order to get a better idea of their ability to present themselves verbally. Select a few key questions, no more than five, and keep the conversation brief. Take notes so that you can compare candidate responses later. Be sure to evaluate both the quality of the responses, as well as the candidate's understanding of and enthusiasm for the position.

### **What to look for when pre-screening job applicants:**

What you look for when pre-screening applicants depends on the hard skills an applicant will need to do the job. However, there are other additional factors you will want to consider that may make or break an applicant's chances of getting a full interview. These include:

- **Salary expectations:** Some employers ask for salary expectations immediately, in order to ensure the candidate's expectations are in line with the budget. If you have a wide budget range and are willing to negotiate for the right applicant, then this might not be an appropriate factor to screen for.
- **Personal attributes:** Characteristics like work ethic, integrity and personal values go a long way toward setting candidates apart.

- **Soft skills:** The ability to communicate clearly, to work well with others and to problem solve are examples of soft skills that don't necessarily come across effectively on a resume. However, a pre-screening assessment can identify whether a candidate's skills in these and other critical areas match the job requirements.

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### **Who conducts the pre-screening interview?**

The best employee to conduct a phone interview is the Nominated Supervisor. He or she is most in tune with the qualifications and experience necessary for successfully performing the job. The Nominated Supervisor will have to work most closely with the selected employee and often has the needed qualifications and/or experience to assess the skills of the prospective employee.

## **STEP 5: FACE-TO-FACE INTERVIEW**

Before you conduct any face-to-face interviews, you need to determine whom you will interview. If you have conducted a thorough pre-screening of the applicants, you will be able to develop a shortlist of candidates, based on the information gained during the pre-screening.

If you have not conducted pre-screenings, then you need to read all of the applications and decide on a shortlist, based on how each applicant has addressed the selection criteria.

As an employer it is important that you get the best person for the job. That's why the interview process – and the interview questions – should focus solely on matching the skills and experience of the candidates against the requirements of the job.

People on the interview panel should have a good understanding of the job requirements; appreciate the importance of asking only job-related questions and follow equal opportunity principles. If possible, it can be helpful to include people on the selection panel from a range of backgrounds, including both men and women and people from different cultural backgrounds.

### **Preparing for and conducting interviews**

To ensure a consistent and fair approach, prepare a list of questions that relate directly to the job requirements. All candidates should be asked the same set of questions. Allow

candidates time to make their point and, if necessary, ask follow-up questions so they can elaborate on their initial answers.

It is also important to make a record of the answers provided by each candidate.

To help select the preferred candidate, the panel should consider developing a system to rank each candidate's ability to meet the 'essential' and the 'desirable' selection criteria.

### **Discriminatory questions**

It is against the law to request information about someone's personal background or attributes – such as their age, marital status or parental status – and then refuse them a job based on this information. In addition, it is generally unlawful to ask candidates whether they have ever made a workers' compensation claim, how many days sick leave they took in the previous year or other questions about health conditions that do not relate to their ability to meet the requirements of the job.

The interview panel should also avoid asking questions that are presumed to be relevant only to certain applicants, for example to women, older workers or parents. Instead, applicants should be asked whether they could fulfill the key requirements of the job based on the Job Description for the position.

### **STEP 6: REFERENCE CHECKING**

Before making the final decision about which applicant you will offer the position to, it is essential check each applicant's references. Reference checking is about making educated hiring decisions. Hiring an employee has an immediate and ongoing impact on your business, therefore thorough due diligence is required. Ask candidates for at least two referees and contact details for each. Once you've done two successful reference checks, you can move to Step 7 – offer the successful candidate the position.

Please refer to the document 'Guide to Checking References' on the Network website: [http://www.netoosh.org.au/pdf/checking\\_references.doc](http://www.netoosh.org.au/pdf/checking_references.doc)

### **STEP 7: OFFER AND LETTER OF EMPLOYMENT**

Once you have interviewed, completed reference checks and perhaps re-interviewed the applicants on your shortlist, you are ready to offer the position to the successful applicant.

If you have two candidates in the running, make a verbal offer to your preferred candidate and don't inform the second candidate until you have a signed acceptance of the position from the first. If the preferred candidate asks for more time to decide, no more than two days is reasonable. Ensure a letter of employment is produced swiftly after receiving a verbal acceptance, as your candidate may not resign from current employment until he/she has something in writing.

An example Letter of Employment can be downloaded from the Network website: [http://www.netoosh.org.au/oosh\\_resources.htm](http://www.netoosh.org.au/oosh_resources.htm)

Once you have reached this step, the unsuccessful applicants can be advised of their failure in obtaining the position. You can ask if you can keep their CV on file in case a position comes up in the future.

NOTE: Before the successful applicant commences work, they must produce evidence of their Working With Children Check (WWCC), if they do not have this, a WWCC must be conducted.

### **OTHER RELEVANT OOSH DEVELOPMENT FACTSHEETS:**

- **Job Description – Nominated Supervisor**
- **Job Description – Educator**
- **Letter of Employment**



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