

HUMAN RESOURCES

by Angela Del Corpo

Hiring Tips for the Entrepreneur

Hiring a new employee can be stressful, especially for an entrepreneur. Having a plan and outlined expectations can help you make a solid decision that will benefit both you and your new employee.

Here are eight tasks you need to do before making that final offer:

Write a Job Description

Many entrepreneurs skip this step because they feel that since they are such a small company, responsibilities really don't require clarification. Not true. This will help you focus on the type of employee you require and your expectation of him/her.

In addition, it will help you in the future with your job advertisement, employee reviews and potentially other positions that may need to be filled within your organization.

Things to consider while writing your job description; daily responsibilities, goals that need to be met (specify time frame – for example; must achieve at least \$50,000 per month in sales), itemize software or tools employee will use on the job as well as any physical demands the job may entail.

Determine your Salary Range/Compensation

Determining your salary range and total compensation is an important component in order to attract competent, good quality applicants.

Compensation takes into account salary, bonuses, benefits and perks. There are a number of ways to determine your salary range and total compensation package.

The first and most accurate way is to obtain the services of an agency that specializes in compensation. This can be a costly process, so be sure to confirm all fees before proceeding. This type of agency will fairly outline a compensation package for your industry that will attract your ideal candidate.

The second avenue is a bit more labour-intensive for you as a business owner, but it is very cost-effective.

With job description in hand, begin to research comparable jobs online or through contacting employment agencies with similar jobs posted. Be sure you are comparing apples to apples – try to locate jobs that are VERY similar to your job description.



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Be sure you are knowledgeable and prepared to deal with all that comes with hiring staff.

By not doing this, you are leaving yourself vulnerable to under compensating or over compensating the position. Also, recognize that not all job ads will outline **total** compensation packages.

If your position is one that may have combined or alternative compensation methods (salary plus commission, bonuses, etc.), be sure to stay in line with the compared, similar positions when determining your compensation package.

Compile and Determine your Method of Job Posting

Writing your job posting should be fairly easy since you have now completed your job description. There are a few other things to include in your posting;

Experience. Be sure to outline your experience requirements, usually a range (i.e. three to five years).

Education. Minimum education required (college, university, trade, etc.).

Salary Range. This is optional. To help, research if others hiring for the same position post their salary range.

Briefing about your company. This is also optional but offers the applicant an opportunity to research you so that they may better ask questions and come prepared with information.

Application details and deadline. Specify your application preferences (email, fax, mail) and be sure to include your details. Setting a deadline allows you a chance to put a plan in place to tackle the interviewing process.

After completing your job description, you must decide how you would like to market your advertisement. Most popular are online job sites such as Workopolis, Monster and many others. Be sure to consider the type of applicant you're looking for and the avenue most used when they search for a job. Be sure to look into all fees associated with posting your ad (in all methods), as well as its run time.

Reviewing your Applications

Many people approach resume/application reviews in different ways. The following method is my personal approach.

Keeping in mind the job description, review resumes or applications with a highlighter and make note of their skills and experience that match the description, experience requirements and education you want.

I disregard resumes/applications if I find the following; significantly under/over qualified, spelling errors (applicant doesn't pay attention to detail) and if

they've quoted a high salary not in my range. You may have other reasons to disqualify an application but be sure not to discriminate (this is covered in a separate topic further on).

Once you've selected the applicants you wish to interview, contact them to set up a meeting. If you wish to have references or any other information, advise your applicant during the phone call to bring the information in when they come for their interview.

Interviewing

Interviewing can be a fun experience, so don't fret. You have an opportunity to meet a number of people and you will learn something new about human nature every time you perform an interview.

Decide on the questions you wish to ask (again, keeping in mind not to discriminate). The most popular type of interview process is the "Behavioural Method." This style allows open-ended questions so that the applicant has an opportunity to provide examples (if they don't, make it clear you would like examples). Be sure to type all your questions leaving enough space to make notes on your applicants' responses.

While interviewing, always keep your applicant's resume/application handy, as you can pull additional questions from it if need be.

Always ask if they have any questions for you. And advise how you are proceeding with the next step of the process (testing, second interviews, final selection, etc.).

When you have completed the interview, be sure to attach the applicant's responses, their resume or application and any other documentation together, regardless of whether they move on in the process. Set aside the applicants moving onto the next step. File the ones no longer in the running and keep them on file for at least six months.

Information on Discrimination

Discrimination is discrimination – no question. In Canada, discrimination varies somewhat across federal, provincial and territorial jurisdictions. However, all jurisdictions agree on six prohibited grounds; race or colour; religion or creed; age; sex (including pregnancy); marital status and mental or physical disability. Other jurisdictions may include things such as pardoned conviction, place of origin and a few others.

Always check your local jurisdiction for other provisions to ensure you do not discriminate.

In addition, there are questions you should not ask an applicant during the interviewing process. Below are some examples:

"How many children do you have? What are your childcare arrangements?"



Instead, you can ask, "Are you able to work the required hours and, when applicable, overtime?"

"Are you married, single, divorced, etc.?"

Instead, you can ask, "If a transfer or travel is required, can you meet this requirement?"

There are many questions you should refrain from asking. If you are unsure, consult a human resource professional. You do not want to be accused of discrimination.

Selection and Hiring

Once you have selected and contacted the candidate you wish to hire, you should, in writing, confirm job responsibilities, start date, regular hours, location of work and compensation package. You may wish to have your new employee sign this information. Be sure to place a copy in their employee file.

Post-Hiring Things to Consider


There are many other items to consider once you've taken on a new, or several new employees.

You may want to consider issuing an employee handbook, outlining your policies on certain items (such as Internet use, personal phone calls, time off, etc.).

Another consideration would be to decide on how you will continue to evaluate your employee(s). Will you perform semi-annual or annual reviews? Will you increase compensation during your reviews? What will the increase be evaluated on?

Think about how you will keep morale and encourage and motivate your staff. This is very important as they will now represent your organization and can be an important face of your company.

In closing, there are many things to consider, not only when making the decision to hire an employee, but also what comes of increasing your staff. You will be responsible for the human resource functions of your business, bringing about many types of questions, situations and issues. Be sure you are knowledgeable and prepared to deal with all that comes with hiring staff.

Although this may sound daunting to you, congratulations on being able to grow your business in a new and exciting way! 



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