6. Employing and managing people

6.4 Advertising your vacancy

The search for suitable candidates and the process of marketing needs to be undertaken carefully so as to ensure the best response at the least cost. The object is to get a good selection of good quality candidates. Possible methods to consider are:

- **Internal recruitment** - this method can have the advantage of building on existing staff's skills and training, and provides opportunities for development and promotion. It is a good way to retain valuable employees whose skills can be further enhanced. Other advantages include the opportunity for staff to extend their competencies and skills to the benefit of both the organisation and the individual, and the enhancement of individual motivation. Use of a consistent, clear, procedure, agreed jointly between employer and employees, has many advantages and avoids suspicion of favouritism.
- **Job Centres of the Department for Work and Pensions** - will display employers' vacancies and refer potential recruits. They also administer some of the Government training programmes. The Disability Service Team staff at JobCentres can help address the specific requirements of attracting disabled people.
- **Learning and Skills Council** - may well have trained workers available through their recruitment service, and can tailor training to an employer's requirements.
- **Commercial recruitment agencies** - often specialise in particular types of work, eg secretarial, office work, industrial, computing, and may already have potential applicants registered with them.
- **Executive search organisations** - usually working in the higher management/specialist fields, will seek out suitable candidates working in other companies by direct approach, or via specialist advertising.
- **National newspapers** - advertising in the national press is expensive, but likely to produce a good response for particular, specialist vacancies. Remember too there are national ethnic group newspapers which will reach a wide audience.
- **Specialist and professional journals** - less expensive than the national press, these journals can guarantee to reach the precise group of potential applicants for specialist and professional vacancies.
- **Internet** - is beginning to emerge as a key recruitment medium. It is mainly used for graduate-level and technical jobs because it tends to target a self-selected group who are computer literate and have access to the web at their place of study or work. Its use is likely to grow.
- **Local newspapers and radio** - for less specialised jobs, or to target groups in a particular local area, advertisements in the local media may produce a good response.

- **Local schools, colleges and the Careers Service** - maintaining contact with schools, colleges and careers advisers will ensure that the organisation's needs for school/college leavers with particular skills and abilities are known. It can be particularly useful to offer students the opportunity to spend some time at the company, on work experience, or 'shadowing'.
- **Word of mouth** - introduction via existing employees or through an employers' network. Whilst this may be economical, it is likely to lead to a much smaller pool of suitable applicants and does not normally satisfy equal opportunities requirements because any imbalance in the workforce may be perpetuated. The Commission for Racial Equality and the Equal Opportunities Commission both warn against such practices where the workforce is predominantly one sex or racial group.

Once the recruitment channel or channels are decided, the next step is to consider:

- The design and content of any advertisement used.
- How applicants are to respond - by application form, fax, telephone, in person at the organisation or agency, by letter, by email on the internet, by tape or Braille.
- Who is to be responsible for sifting the applications? What is the selection process going to be?
- If interviews are to be held, when will they be and will everyone who needs to be involved be available?
- Are selection tests to be used? Is there the expertise to administer them and ensure they are non-discriminatory and appropriate?
- Are references/medicals to be requested?
- Are arrangements in hand to give prompt acknowledgement of applications received?

The advertisement

Any advertisement needs to be designed and presented effectively to ensure the right candidates are attracted. Look through national, local or professional papers and see what advertisements catch the eye. The newspaper office will often advise on suitable formats. Advertisements must be tailored to the level of the target audience, and should always be clear and easily understood. They must be non-discriminatory, and should avoid any gender or culturally specific language. To support this, the organisation should include in the advert its statement of commitment to equal opportunities, which will underline the organisation as one that will welcome applications from all sections of the community.

Consider the following factors in the advertisement:

- If the organisation is well known, does it have a logo that could feature prominently in the advertisement? Make the advertisement consistent with the company image.
- Should the job title be the most prominent feature?
- Keep the text short and simple while giving the main aspects of the job, pay, career prospects, location, contract length.

- Can specific details - such as pay, qualifications and experience required - be given in a way which will reduce the number of unsuitable applications?
- Is it possible to avoid generalisations such as 'attractive salary', or 'appropriate qualifications' which may discourage valid applications?
- Can you provide job details on tape or in braille and accept applications in a similar format?
- Is the form of reply and the closing date for applications clear? Is there a contact name and phone number for further information and enquiries?

All advertisements should carry the same information, whether for internal or external use.

Further information

Recruit3
www.recruit3.org.uk

ACAS
Tel: 08457 474747
www.acas.org.uk

Home Office (Asylum)
0845 602 1739
www.ind.homeoffice.gov.uk

Health and Safety Executive (HSE)
Tel: 08701 545500
www.hse.gov.uk

Information Commissioner's Office
Tel: 01625 545745
www.ico.gov.uk

Network Jobs – Weekly
networkjobs@wcva.org.uk
Tel: 0800 2888 329

Disclaimer
The information provided in this sheet is intended for guidance only. It is not a substitute for professional advice and we cannot accept any responsibility for loss occasioned as a result of any person acting or refraining from acting upon it.

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