



Youth Employment

How Employers Can Take Action When Recruiting

You can help young people kick start their career by making small changes to how you recruit. The following questions and tips can make your recruitment practices more supportive of young people so they are more competitive for job vacancies.

Step 1: Before Advertising

1. What does this job really require?

Be clear about the duties and tasks for this job. Include any physical aspects of the job, the types of people and workplace skills or certifications (e.g. drivers licence or safety white card) required. Indicate any tools and equipment that are used in the job and whether applicants need to supply any of these.

2. Does the work have to be done on a full-time basis?

If the answer is 'no', consider candidates combining work and study; such as trainees, tertiary students and school-based apprentices.

3. Does the work need to be done during specific hours?

If flexible work hours are available, you can promote this opportunity to young people with study, caring, sporting or other responsibilities.

4. What sort of person would suit the role?

Think about the kind of person you are looking for. What values, personal attributes and soft skills like reliability, team work and communication skills would be a good fit for your business?

5. What skills / licenses do applicants need when they start and what can be learned on the job?

What technical skills/competencies, tickets or licences are required and what can be developed in house, either during induction or through on-the-job training? If you need someone with a specific skills-set that you aren't able to provide training for on-the-job or through a traineeship, put it in the job ad.

6. Do you need to advertise?

Keep a record of cold callers looking for work and review their résumés. Alternatively, you can use your networks (including existing workers) to access possible candidates.

Step 2: When Advertising

1. Don't wait for young people to come to you.

Contact your local employment service providers (e.g. jobactive) or educational institutions (e.g. schools, RTOs and TAFEs) and tell them you want to support young people in your community. Be clear about the kind of person who would suit the role and ask for their help in referring the right people.

2. Review your job ad.

Write the ad so it focusses on an applicant's ability and personal attributes rather than their work experience. Use simple, plain English.

3. Let them know if you are willing to train.

Be open to educators like Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) and TAFEs helping you to design a traineeship or internship that meets your needs.

4. Publicise widely.

Ask educators (such as schools, RTOs or TAFEs), employment service providers and young workers on where best to advertise to attract young people.

Step 3: Interview and Selection

1. Provide candidates with information about the process.

Being clear and upfront about your recruitment process can help young people during the recruitment process. Provide information about what they should wear, who to ask for in reception and what to expect in the interview (e.g. is it a panel or group interview? Is there a written component?). Don't assume applicants will know what you expect or about your recruitment processes.

2. Take action to put the candidate at ease.

You might ask existing young workers to act as ushers during the interview process to encourage young people to ask questions outside the interview. Begin the interview with an informal chat or give them a quick tour of the office.

3. Provide guidance and training for managers interviewing young people.

Make sure managers know why young people are important to the business. Try strengths-based rather than competency-based interviewing with young people.

Step 4: Provide Feedback

1. Acknowledge each application with a standard email.

You can automate this response by setting up a mailbox dedicated to recruitment.

2. Provide candidates who are unsuccessful with feedback.

For applicants who didn't make it to the interview stage, take the time to send them an email. Contact them to thank them for their application and let them know why they have not been successful in this instance.

Make it manageable for your organisation by not providing tailored advice to all applicants. Provide all applicants with a list of 'common reasons' applications have been shortlisted in an email/letter to candidates.

Offer candidates who were unsuccessful at interview an opportunity to receive tailored feedback. If they were rated suitable for the job but were out-competed on the day, let them know. If they are still interested in working with your organisation then let them know what they need to improve on, or suggest alternative roles they may be better suited to. If you don't think they were a good fit for the role, then let them know why.

3. Be positive and genuine.

It is possible to be honest and constructive when providing feedback. By choosing your words carefully you can encourage young people to bounce back and try again. Getting feedback from an employer is one of the best ways for young people to improve their chances of success next time around.