



A GUIDE TO RECRUITING RECRUITERS

DEFINING A ROLE

Before you start placing job adverts and booking interviews take a few moments out to create a detailed and accurate description of your new recruits role and your expectations of them.

You will find it much easier to assess whether an applicant is suitable for the role when you have clearly defined what the role will entail. You would be surprised how many businesses start the recruitment process without a clear picture of what a new recruit would do.

Some of the most basic questions you should be asking are:

- What market will they cover?
- Will they be responsible for temporary, contract or permanent recruitment?
- Will they have an established client base or be responsible for generating their own clients?
- Who will they report to?
- Who will be responsible for their development (even Experienced Consultants will have development needs)?

What does 'good' look like?

It is important that you clarify what 'good' looks like within your business so you can clearly clarify this to your new recruit.

How will you and your new recruits know if they are successful?

How will you measure their success?

What support will you be providing to them in their first 6 months to help them achieve this?

RECRUITMENT PROCESS - GRADUATE/NO EXPERIENCE

The following outlines a two-stage interview process for a graduate or inexperienced recruitment consultant.

STAGE ONE - SKILLS AND APTITUDE ASSESSMENT

+ PREPARATION

Before the interview ensure you have:

- Job description
- Suitable corresponding CV of a candidate
- Notepad
- Pen/pencil

Time: 45-60 minutes

This interview is designed to assess the candidates ability to react to coaching and guidance. The primary assessment tool used within this first interview is roleplay followed by facilitated coaching. It is created to emulate much of the training they will experience should they be successful.

+ INTERVIEW STRUCTURE

Introduction and set an agenda

Brief history of the business and vision for the future

(It is important that you prepare notes for this element to ensure consistency in the message you deliver to each candidate).

Overview of the role of a Recruitment Consultant

Invite questions from the candidate

Ask the candidate:

“How does this compare to your expectations of the role”

“What core skills do you believe will be necessary to succeed?”

+ ROLEPLAY 1

[For simplicity from this point the person you are interviewing will be referred to as the “attendee”]

Give the attendee:

- a brief job specification
- a CV of a suitable candidate
- a notepad and pencil/pen

Brief the attendee on the fact that they are going to phone the candidate about the job. The candidate is currently looking for work so this is designed to be a test of listening skills. The attendee should firstly find out what the candidate is looking for and then secondly demonstrate relevance within the job specification.

Make sure they also take notes as if on the phone.

After their first attempt give them feedback as appropriate.

Now coach them through the principles of effective questions.

Before roleplaying again make sure they have an objective set as to what they are seeking to achieve from the conversation.

Roleplay a second time and again give feedback - did they achieve their objective?

Repeat the process for a third time.

+ ROLEPLAY 2

Brief the attendee and set up the following scenario:

“You call to speak to a client and tell them about the candidate you have just spoken to [Roleplay 1] however they are not available to take your call.”

Give the attendee either access to a computer, an iPad or just simply a pad of paper and a pen and ask them to construct an email to the client regarding the candidate that will get the client to call them back.

Leave the room and give the attendee 10 minutes to complete this activity.

Recently clients have reported that are concerned their new recruits lack the written communication skills to professionally represent their brand. Although we always promote the importance of verbal communication within recruitment it is undeniable that with the increased use of email, LinkedIn updates, e-shots, job advertisements and tweets there is definite need for written communication also.

RECRUITMENT PROCESS - GRADUATE/NO EXPERIENCE

This short exercise will give you a quick insight into their ability to construct a well worded professional email. Can they effectively communicate the key information they uncovered during Roleplay 1?

Naturally, keep an eye out for the obvious spelling and grammar mistakes but also that the greetings are appropriate and professional. Absolutely no 'text speak' should be allowed!

How do they manage to convey the information they gathered during the roleplay call?

Did they include a 'call to action' – what will make the client call the consultant back?

Ask yourself, would you be happy for them to represent your company?

If there are problems are you prepared to spend the time teaching them written communication skills as well as the recruitment process?

Review together and then move onto roleplay a call. You are now the client who phones regarding the email you have just received. The attendee should present the candidate and answer any questions that you may have.

After the first attempt give feedback. Before starting the second roleplay ensure they have relevant objectives that are commitment based.

Other roleplays you could consider:

- Chasing a lead
- A headhunt call
- A candidate pulling out of an interview - tomorrow!

Key Measures:

Use a separate score sheet for each of the roleplays (ie. you will need at least 6 score sheets) Look for the rate of improvement from attempt 1 to 2 to 3.

What was the quality of their listening both during the roleplay but also the coaching sessions?

How did they respond to feedback and constructive criticism?

What was the quality of their presentation:

- i) verbal skills
- ii) planning
- iii) matching

RECRUITMENT PROCESS - GRADUATE/NO EXPERIENCE

The level of final result is only secondary at this time as the primary objective was to assess how the attendee will respond to the coaching. If the attendee responds and improves at a desired rate then you can more accurately predict how they will develop in the business environment and from the training they will receive.

Make sure you accurately record on the score sheet your findings for each attendee to help with easy comparison of results between each interviewee.

+ CLOSING THE INTERVIEW

Finally, give some initial feedback on their performance and then invite questions. Ask the attendee:

“How did you feel you did?”

“What impact has this had on your desire to work as a recruitment consultant?”

STAGE TWO - COMPETENCY-BASED INTERVIEW AND 'PERSONALITY-FIT'

+ PREPARATION

Before the interview make sure you have:
Competency-based interview score sheet

TIME: 30 minutes

Competency-based interviews, sometimes referred to as structured interviews, are interviews where each question is designed to test one or more specific skills. The answer is then matched against pre-decided criteria and marked accordingly.

For example, you may want to test the candidate's ability to deal with stress by asking:

"How would you generally handle stress?"

You can then seek evidence to support their answer by asking:

"Give me an example of a situation where you worked under pressure."

Normal interviews, sometimes referred to as unstructured interviews, are essentially a conversation where you ask a few questions without any specific aim in mind other than getting an overall impression of them as an individual. Questions are often fairly random and can sometimes be quite open. For example, "What can you offer my company?" can be used to gather general information about them but does not test any specific skill or competency. In an unstructured interview, the candidate is judged on the general impression that they leave. Unstructured interviews are therefore much more likely to be subjective.

Interviewing a candidate with little or no previous experience as a recruitment consultant the key competencies we would look to test are:

- Emotional Intelligence
- Goal Orientation
- Influence
- Planning
- Relationship Building
- Work Ethic
- Urgency

TALENT BUILDER INSIGHT



Full frameworks for each of these **seven competencies** along with example questions are available to download in Stage Five of the Talent Builder success roadmap.

RECRUITMENT PROCESS - EXPERIENCED

The following outlines a two-stage interview process for an experienced recruitment consultant.

STAGE ONE - SKILLS AND APTITUDE ASSESSMENT

+ PREPARATION

Before the interview ensure you have:

- Relevant information for in-tray exercise
- Notepad
- Pen/pencil

TIME: 45-60 minutes

This interview should be with a senior manager within the business. The interview is designed to test the attendees' ability to think commercially and demonstrate their 'recruitment brain' capacity. It combines the use of situational questions and an in-tray exercise.

Interview Structure

Introductions and set agenda for interview.

Brief history of your company and vision of the future.

Overview of the role

Invite questions

+ SITUATIONAL QUESTIONING

Example Situational Questions:

A candidate tells you that they have an interview scheduled for a job as a **[INSERT JOB TITLE]** in three days time. They are very interested in the position and tell you all about what the role involves: It is for a **[INSERT RELEVANT SECTOR/INDUSTRY]** (exactly the candidates background). They are due to meet with the Managing Director, Bob Smith for the interview. Salary is around the **[INSERT A RELEVANT SALARY]** with the potential to develop a team around themselves. The agency they are going through has told them they are one of one so looking very promising.

What will you do or say on the call and afterwards?

RECRUITMENT PROCESS - EXPERIENCED

Whilst sourcing for candidates through LinkedIn you speak to a really good Account Manager who tells you that they have just accepted another position, so there is no point in carrying on talking to them.

What will you say next? What are your objectives now you have heard this?

Whilst conducting your business development activity, you speak with a Head of Sales who is currently recruiting for a Senior Sales Manager to be the first person "on the ground" in their new North West office. Although struggling to find the right candidate she does not have time to talk on the phone and wants to email you a job description and get some CVs from you ASAP.

What will you do or say on the call and afterwards?

How will you handle this?

TALENT BUILDER INSIGHT



It is a good idea to create 10+ of these questions along with model answers for a Low, Medium and High result. That way during the interview the interviewer can select the 2 or 3 that they feel are the most appropriate.

This will also help for you to assess potential training needs of the consultant prior to them joining so that steps can be put in place to address these as soon as possible.

+ INTRAY EXERCISE

An intray exercise measures the prioritization skills of a potential recruit and their ability to be able to think on their feet.

The following example intray exercise can be simplified or developed according to the level of the individual. The exercise should be timed with the attendee having 5 minutes to read through the contents and then a further 10 minutes to discuss how they would approach the day that has been mapped out for them.

Give your attendee the following:

A selection of 10 – 15 different emails of differing priorities:

- A client with a request to discuss a new spec
- A candidate pulling out of an interview tomorrow
- 6 new CVs from candidates previously profiled
- Request from a manager for stats by lunchtime
- Old placement asking to look again Also:
- Voicemail messages to respond to
- LinkedIn requests

Some of the above will interlink e.g. the LinkedIn request could be from someone who is a good match for the new job that has come in and the placement returning to find a new opportunity could be right for the job the candidate is ducking out of attending the interview for etc.

The attendee has to prioritise what they are going to do and then act upon each element.

The interviewer/ assessor can then look at prioritization, time management, thinking and to roleplay any calls that need to be made (if the consultant feels they need to use the phone at all!)

Building the intray exercise once will then allow it to be used multiple times. Elements can be added and removed to test different attendees from different backgrounds and levels of experience.

+ CLOSING

Final feedback and then invite open questions on how they felt they did and what impact it has had on their desire to work for you.

Set action plan.

STAGE TWO - COMPETENCY-BASED INTERVIEW AND 'PERSONALITY-FIT'

Before the interview make sure you have:

Competency-based interview score sheet

TIME: 30 minutes

Each business will have it's own set of competencies that they require in an experienced consultant. However we would suggest that a candidate with previous experience as a recruitment consultant the key competencies we would look to test are:

- Business Development
- Commercial Awareness
- Emotional Intelligence
- Goal Orientation
- Influence
- Integrity
- Planning
- Relationship Building
- Situational Empathy
- Teamwork

SCORING COMPETENCY BASED INTERVIEWS

The answers to the competency based interview questions will fall into one of two categories:

Positive Indicators

Negative Indicators

In some cases, negative indicators can be divided into two further sections:

Minor Negative Indicators - those which are negative but which don't matter so much

Decisive Negative Indicators - those which should not be over looked eg. not asking for help when needed

Marks are then allocated depending on the extent to which the candidate's answer matches those positive and negative indicators.

n/a	No evidence	No evidence reported Does not score - needs further probing
-1	Poor	Little evidence of positive indicators Mostly negative indicators, many decisive
0	Areas for concern	Limited number of positive indicators. Many negative indicators, one or more decisive.
2	Satisfactory	Satisfactory display of positive indicators. Some negative indicators but none decisive.
4	Good to excellent	Strong display of positive indicators.

If you feel that there are areas that the candidate has failed to address, you can help them along by asking some of the probing questions.

Weak answers may be the first evidence considered. Ask again later or prompt immediately with "Tell me about another time"

For example, in answering the question:

"Describe a time when you had to deal with pressure."

If during their answer the candidate focuses on how they dealt with the practical angle of the problem but doesn't cover how they managed their stress during and after the event you may want to prompt them with further questions such as:

"How did you handle the stress at that time?"

This gives the candidate an opportunity to present a full picture of their behaviour at that time.

COMPETENCY BASED INTERVIEW - SCORESHEET

COMPETENCY:

QUESTION:

n/a	No evidence	No evidence reported Does not score - needs further probing
-1	Poor	Little evidence of positive indicators Mostly negative indicators, many decisive
0	Areas for concern	Limited number of positive indicators. Many negative indicators, one or more decisive.
2	Satisfactory	Satisfactory display of positive indicators. Some negative indicators but none decisive.
4	Good to excellent	Strong display of positive indicators.

NOTES:

ROLEPLAY ASSESSMENT - CLIENT CALL

INTRODUCTION

How clearly did they introduce themselves?

How well did they introduce the business and their specialization?

Did they verify who you were and your role?

CANDIDATE PRESENTATION

How succinct was their candidate presentation?

How good did the candidate they selected actually sound?

What can you remember about the candidate now?

Did it sound like the candidate was an achiever?

Was it clear as to why they were phoning?

OPENING QUESTION

How good was their first question to you?

Was it open or closed?

QUALIFICATION QUESTIONS

How much did they discover about you and your business?

Did they find out when you last recruited and probe further?

Do they know how you recruit?

How well did they progress the call from the candidate marketing call to an investigative sales call?

LISTENING

How well did they listen to what you said?

Did they "put the candidate down" when they established there was no needs?

Did they summarise what you said?

OBJECTIONS

How well did they deal with your objections?

Did they remain calm when you gave them any objections?

Did they empathise with you?

CLOSING

Who ended the phone call?

What was agreed at the end as a next step?

Did they get your contact details?

Are you expecting to receive any follow up? Phone? Email?

ROLEPLAY ASSESSMENT - CLIENT CALL

OVERALL

What did it feel like receiving the call?

How good did the candidate really sound?

Would you use them if you were recruiting?

Where could it have been improved?

SCORING	(1 - Unsatisfactory; 2 - Poor; 3 - Acceptable; 4 - Good; 5 - Excellent)				
Introduction	1	2	3	4	5
Candidate Presentation	1	2	3	4	5
Opening Question	1	2	3	4	5
Qualification Questions	1	2	3	4	5
Listening	1	2	3	4	5
Objections	1	2	3	4	5
Closing	1	2	3	4	5
Overall	1	2	3	4	5

ROLEPLAY ASSESSMENT - CANDIDATE CALL

INTRODUCTION

- How well did the consultant introduce themselves?
- How clear was it as to why they were phoning?
- How comfortable did you feel with their introduction?
- How quickly were you involved with the conversation?

QUESTIONING

- How good were the questions they asked you?
- How well did they question your current status and interest in the opportunity?
- How many open questions compared to closed questions got asked?
- Did the call feel as though it had direction?
- Did they probe red flags on your CV to establish potential issues?

LISTENING

- How well did you feel listened to?
- How good was their summary?
- Did they establish what was most important to you?

SELLING THE OPPORTUNITY

- What were you told about the job?
- How relevant was it compared to what you said (not necessarily what you wanted)?
- How well did they describe it to you?
- Did they close you on content, rate/salary and location?
- Did they question you to identify deal breakers? (such as other jobs)

SETTING AN ACTION PLAN

- Do you know what is going to happen next?
- How realistic do you think their action plan is?
- Do they have enough information to progress on your behalf?

OVERALL

- What were their objectives before the phone call?
- How would you feel if you were to receive that call as a real candidate?
- Where could it be improved?

ROLEPLAY ASSESSMENT - CANDIDATE CALL

SCORING	(1 - Unsatisfactory; 2 - Poor; 3 - Acceptable; 4 - Good; 5 - Excellent)				
Introduction	1	2	3	4	5
Questioning	1	2	3	4	5
Listening	1	2	3	4	5
Selling the Opportunity	1	2	3	4	5
Setting an Action Plan	1	2	3	4	5
Overall	1	2	3	4	5

BEFORE THEY START

If you already have a small office team try to organize a small social event so that they can meet everyone. This will also help to make their first day less daunting and will reduce the possibility of them not turning up for their first day. If it is not possible or practical to arrange a small get together before they start then arranging something within their first week will help them to settle into an already established team.

+ KEEP IN CONTACT

Notice periods can feel like a lifetime. Do as much as you can throughout this period of keep their motivation high.

If they are working through a month (or even longer) notice period then ensure that you call them every week to check in with them – but have a reason! For example, check that they have received their contract, ask if they have any specific needs for when they start, etc.

Also, send them a congratulations card to their home address.

+ PLANNING THEIR START DATE

TIP: Choose the best day and time for you. Not when you are first available.

It is not recommended that your new consultant joins you at 9am on a Monday morning as from a practical point of view it will probably be difficult to donate the required amount of time to them and their first experience in your office will probably be a little chaotic.

By picking a slightly later time, such as 10am, or possibly even delaying it until Tuesday you can ensure that you are fully prepared and organized.

If you do have existing team members ensure that they are also aware of the day your new starter will be joining you.

+ SETTING PRE-START ACTIVITIES

With so much to complete in their first week there are a few things that your new starter(s) can do before their first day to provide a good foundation for building upon.

Ask your new starter to provide a short 5 minute presentation on one of the following topics (of course add your own question if desired).

1. Who will their main competitors be within the market they are covering?
2. Who are the big employers in their market?
3. What changes could be happening over the next 2 years in their market which will impact on businesses recruitment needs.

Schedule a time for them to give their presentations during the afternoon of their first day.

Also ask them to set up both a LinkedIn and a Twitter account if they don't already have one which you can then tweak during their early days with you.

All of this should be completed prior to their first day with you in the office. How well they complete these activities will serve as a good indicator to their commitment levels to their new role, your business and their desire to learn as much as they can about their market.