

How to hire the superstars who grow your business and avoid hiring the others who don't...

Wouldn't it be great if you only ever recruited high quality people for your business? Even better when these high quality people go on to have a high quality impact on your business performance?

It can be demoralising, highly frustrating and potentially lethal if you recruit the wrong people into your business. Like the saying goes 'one bad apple can rot the barrel'!

Here's a bitesize business breakthrough to improve your interviewing skills and processes. You can put this to work immediately (or the next time you want to hire someone) so you always hire brilliant people.

STOP: treating interviewing as just another one of your jobs or you'll never surround yourself with superstar employees.

START: hiring using a well-structured process like the one outlined below. Then fine tune the process to best suit your business and the superstars you'd love to work with.

Contents:

- 1 - **Be sensitive to HR legislation, regulations and issues**
- 2 - **Failsafe 6-step recruitment process**
 - A.** PREPARE WELL: Be crystal clear on the job specification and ideal candidate
 - B.** BE SCIENTIFIC: Psychometric profile your candidates to decide who to interview
 - C.** INTERVIEW 1 – like and relevance
 - D.** TELEPHONE CALL: Assess telephone manner
 - E.** INTERVIEW 2 – team involved – cultural fit – they do some work
 - F.** FINISH WELL: Offer the job face to face
- 3 - **Appendices**

1. Be sensitive to HR legislation, regulations and issues

The CIPD (Chartered Institute of Personnel Development) is a great way to access all the relevant legislation and issues facing businesses. You can get a great overview here:

http://www.cipd.co.uk/NR/rdonlyres/194F086A-6EE1-451C-B72A-D3C7CFECC435/0/9781843982531_sc.pdf

The document link above provides the following learning outcomes:

- Understand why it is important to adopt sound recruitment and selection practices
- Be able to identify the constraints and opportunities presented by legislation in this area and be prepared to keep up to date with forthcoming changes
- Appreciate the need for rigorous HR planning and job analysis as a starting point for the whole recruitment and selection process
- Be able to choose appropriate sources of recruitment and methods of selection, depending on the nature of a vacancy, and be willing to evaluate the outcome of your decisions
- Be able to identify the factors needed to ensure an effective induction process that meets organisational and individual needs.
- Be more able to anticipate and plan for the demand for new employees
- Be better placed to find suitable sources of employees in the labour market

And you can find a recruitment factsheet from the CIPD here (you may need to register for a free account to access this): <http://www.cipd.co.uk/hr-resources/factsheets/recruitment-overview.aspx>

This document is packed with information relevant to recruitment.

If you struggle to access these links please search on the CIPD website here - <http://www.cipd.co.uk/>

2. Failsafe 6-step interview process

This edition of Business Bitesize assumes you have generated a list of candidates you think are relevant to the job you're recruiting for. Your job now is to determine the best one to hire and the ones not to hire.

Follow some, or all of the 6-steps and improve your chances of hiring a superstar for your business.

Yes there are different levels of recruitment. A shop-floor worker warrants a different approach to the one you use to recruit customer service people, which differs from the way you recruit your next sales director. However the principles behind each step hold true.

You might fast-track interview 1 and 2 by having them on the same day but still involve several people in the process. Yes you'll want to modify the 6 steps, however think long and hard about applying the principles at each stage. After all, you want to hire well, not just any old body to fill a space in your team!

A. PREPARE WELL: Be crystal clear on the job specification and ideal candidate

If you are vague about the job or the candidate it's unlikely you'll find the best person for the job.

It's vital you work on this with the team who do this job. The person who's leaving the job can be a big help too. Doing this will also help you complete the job profiling exercise recommended in the next step.

Job specification: You want to be certain about what the job involves. What are the results and outcomes expected from the job? What responsibilities does the job entail? What will the person be accountable for? How do you describe the job simply and accurately? What hours, time keeping, flexibility etc. are required for the job?

Ideal candidate: What characteristics (character traits) best suit the job? What experience, what skills, what knowledge, is required to do the job brilliantly? What attitude do you expect of the person doing the job?

You'll find a job specification and ideal candidate form to help you complete this vitally important process, in appendix 1 pages 7 and 8.

B. BE SCIENTIFIC: Psychometric profile the job and your candidates to decide who to interview

Interviewing is a time consuming distraction from your core business. Why would you want to waste time interviewing people who do not suit the role? Here's a scientific way of deciding who to interview and who not to interview which requires you to spend a little money but saves you a lot of unnecessary interviewing effort:

STEP 1: Generate a job profile using your chosen psychometric profiling tool – this provides you with a reference point against which to compare your candidates. Using one of the simpler profile tests (DISC profiling by Thomas International) you can have this done for less than a supermarket shop.

STEP 2: Invite your candidates to complete a psychometric profile (which will take them as little as 15 minutes) to determine their suitability to the role.

STEP 3: Compare the two profiles (job profile and candidate profile), and see if there's a strong enough match to determine whether you interview them or not.

There are many types of profiling you can use. One of the simpler, more intuitive and easy-to-use methods is DISC profiling which also allows you to profile the role and then compare candidate profiles to the job profile as described above.

You'll find a list of 5 different psychometric profiles in appendix 2 p. 9, at the end of this document.

NB Rather than do the profiling first we know of one business who prefers to do the people profiles during interview 1 and uses the insights to decide whether to do interview 2 and also what questions to ask at interview 2.

C. INTERVIEW 1 – like and relevance

Interview 1 Goals:

- **Sell the job:** Sell the company and the career opportunity so they want to come back for the next interview.
- **Assess their attitude and values:** Decide whether you like them and you think they'll fit in
- **Share next steps:** Share with them the next stages of the interview process and agree the next steps with them

NB It's important you do not 'over-sell' the role or the company because when they start with you, you want them to see the job, role and your company as you described it at interview (not be disappointed at the reality which will undermine their willingness to do the job wholeheartedly).

It's always useful to remember there are three stages to every first interview:

Beginning – help the candidate relax a little – acknowledge that interviews are a little odd/nerve-wracking (talk about how they got to the interview; how long did it take; how did they manage to get there on time) – tell them how the meeting will go (run through agenda)

Middle – agenda – the Company; the job; the expectations; your background/experience; psychometric profiling

Michael Gerber, the famous business author and speaker, suggests interview one is preceded by a brief presentation of your company's story, your business goals and your business purpose too. And of course an outline of the role you're recruiting for and the way the work gets done. This can be done in individual interviews or at a recruitment event to many candidates at the same time if you wish.

After your brief presentation you want the answer to three questions:

- What stood out for the candidate in the story they've just heard about your business?
- What is it about the candidate's experience that suggests he/she can do this job?
- What one specific story about the candidate's background would suggest you should hire them?

End – next steps – telephone call – interview 2 – job offer

It's important you make the candidate aware of the next steps of your interview process too – telephone call – Interview 2 (where they do some work) – job offer meeting.

If you are happy they could do the job then agree a day and time for a telephone discussion (during which you'll agree a day and time for interview 2 or alternatively explain why they aren't suitable and end the process at this stage).

You decide whether they make the call to you or you make the call to them. The more senior the role, or if the role is customer related it is better to give them the responsibility to call you so you can assess their willingness and ability to be in control of making the call.

D. TELEPHONE CALL

This is relatively brief – 15 to 30 minutes. It is designed to assess their telephone manner, voice tone, and ability to make a call on time as agreed. Particularly relevant for any customer facing roles or management roles where they'll be on the phone to the team regularly and where timing and deadlines are important.

Questions you can ask to assess whether to go to Interview 2 stage:

- When you discussed the job/role with your partner/mum/dad/friends how did you describe it to them?
- And how did they respond to your description of the job/role/company story?
- How do you feel about taking the next step and spending a few hours with the team you'd be working with doing some of the work involved in the job?
- What hesitations/reservations do you have about spending some quality time with us like this?

E. INTERVIEW 2 – team involved – cultural fit – they do some work

Interview 2 should involve an extended period of time from 3 hours up to a whole day depending on the nature of the job/role. You ideally want several of your existing people to interact with them so you can assess their opinion of the possible candidates immediately afterwards.

Get a second opinion: determine whether the team they'll be working with can get along with the person

Assess their skills: determine whether they can do the job.

It is a great idea, if you have more than one candidate for the job, to have them together on the same day. This way, you and your colleagues can see them all on the same day and make a decision very quickly. If you see them on different days make sure you take a picture of them (so you can better recall them when comparing candidates later). You should also create an assessment process you can replicate for each candidate (*see appendix 3 p.10 for a suggested form for this*). Each of your team members can complete a form for each candidate.

Have another look: Interview them again (using the profiling report to pinpoint areas you wish to explore) and determine whether your original opinion of them was correct or not.

NB. Like interview 1 it pays to be conscious of the 3 stages of an interview – beginning – middle –

end. In particular you want the candidate to be as relaxed and natural as possible (if this is ever possible in an interview!) so you can properly assess their suitability.

The quality of your questions determine the quality of your interview. Preparation and planning around these questions is vitally important.

Examples of questions to use to help you with this are in Appendix 4 p.11.

F. FINISH WELL: Offer the job face to face

It's easy to send a job offer in the post or by email.

However the best candidates for your job are also the best candidates for the other jobs they have applied for. You have competition. So you have to go the extra mile to win the best candidates.

Most businesses will send job offers by email and/or post. A few companies will also make a phone call to verbally offer the job and follow up by email/post. This is better, however...

...you should consider meeting the candidate face-to-face to present the formal offer. This gives you an opportunity to assess their reaction, handle any last minute concerns they may have, and ask for a verbal commitment to take the job too.

By meeting them you also demonstrate how serious you are about them and how valuable you see them being in your company.

A great place to have this brief meeting is a quality coffee shop close to their home (Starbucks or similar) at a time convenient to them.

You might even consider having more than one offer letter in your briefcase to reflect two or three salary packages you'd be willing to offer. This enables you to have a conversation about salary at this meeting and present the offer letter you believe will secure you this candidate for your company.



Appendix 1 - job specification and ideal candidate forms

What's the job?

Job title:

Job description overview – describe what will be done every day/week/month:

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What are the results and outcomes expected from the job?

Happy BBS clients - on time delivery - accurate emails and reports every time - lead generation activity

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Customer liason by phone - research - website improvements - process improvements

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What responsibilities does the job entail?

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What will the person be accountable for/to?

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What hours, time keeping, flexibility etc. are required for the job?

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What else needs to be considered as an important aspect of this job/role?

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What does the ideal candidate look like?

Ideal candidate:

What characteristics (character traits) best suit the job?

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What experience will the ideal candidate have to perform this job brilliantly?

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What skills will the ideal candidate have to perform this job brilliantly?

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What knowledge will the ideal candidate have to perform this job brilliantly?

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What attitude do you expect of the person doing the job?

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Appendix 2 – 5 popular Psychometric Tests

Psychometric testing is a highly effective tool used by organisations around the world in various recruitment, coaching and development scenarios. Psychometric tests (also commonly called profiles, inventories and assessments) usually involve individuals completing questionnaires to measure individual preferences, personality, and ability (e.g. verbal and numerical reasoning).

Here's a brief review of 5 popular Psychometric Tests:

Myers Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI): Launched in 1962, this old classic has been around for close to 50 years. Taking the test results in one of 16 types with titles like “ESTJ” and “INFP”. These refer to four polarities (such as extroversion / introversion and thinking / feeling). The test is used to assess preferences without easy links to strategies or role models, so really requires an expert to interpret the results and translate it into effective action.

DISC profile: Launched in 1928, this system is simpler, and more intuitive. DISC refers to the four behaviour types the test assesses: Dominance, Influence, Steadiness and Compliance. It is more focused at behaviours than preferences, but has the same Jungian roots as MBTI, and there are correlations to the two. Teams find DISC easier to grasp and explain back than MBTI.

Strength Finder: A more modern test created by Gallup and championed by Marcus Buckingham, Strength Finder focuses at your strengths rather than focusing on preferences or behaviours. The test identifies your top 5 strengths out of a possible 34. Accompanied with a relevant modern philosophy (focus on your strengths and you will be happier and more productive for it), this test is more prescriptive on proactive strategy than MBTI and DISC, but lacks an intuitive model that team members can transfer (few can remember all 34 strengths, let alone how they relate to each other). It also does not identify top weaknesses, in either individuals or teams.

Wealth Dynamics & Talent Dynamics: Wealth Dynamics has grown into a widely adopted profiling system for entrepreneurs and business owners around the world. The reason for its success is that it links both your strengths and weaknesses to your preferences, and then gives you clear role models and strategies to follow. It takes the very best of MBTI, DISC and Strength Finder, and delivers a system that is intuitive, relevant and easy to explain to others.

Five-Factor Model (Big Five): This last of the five is not an established test like the other four, but it is the acknowledged system by which the behavioural sciences industry and psychologists assess all psychometric tests. It identifies the five factors that make up our personality and that all tests seek to measure. These are: Openness (are you more curious or cautious?); Conscientiousness (are you more organised or careless?); Extraversion (are you more outgoing or reserved?); Agreeableness (are you more friendly or cold); and Neuroticism (are you more sensitive or secure?). Ensure the system you choose does a good job at measuring all five of these elements.

[The above is modified from the Wealth Dynamics website]



Appendix 3 – Candidate Review Form

Name:

Address/location:

Psychometric profile match? Low – medium – high – perfect

Do you like them? 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 – 6 – 7 – 8 – 9 – 10

Will they fit in? 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 – 6 – 7 – 8 – 9 – 10

Picture of candidate here

How well did they tackle the three jobs they were given to do?

Task 1 – description:.....

Notes on how well they performed:

How well did they do? 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 – 6 – 7 – 8 – 9 – 10

Task 2 – description:.....

Notes on how well they performed:

How well did they do? 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 – 6 – 7 – 8 – 9 – 10

Task 3 – description:.....

Notes on how well they performed:

How well did they do? 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 – 6 – 7 – 8 – 9 – 10

Overall how would you assess their ability to do the job brilliantly and fit into your team? 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 – 6 – 7 – 8 – 9 – 10

What's your decision? **Hire** or **Don't Hire**

Appendix 4 – Interview questions worth considering

Below are some strong example interview questions. It pays to add additional questions you and your team believe will help you decide on whether a person is well-suited to the job or not. You might have specific technical questions or questions about specific situations the job will involve:

Questions you can ask:

1. What is it about the job and the company that appeals to you the most?
2. What is it you like best about our company and the way we do things?
3. What reservations do you have about the job or the company?
4. What do you like best about your current job? Why is it you like this the best?
5. What do you like least about your current job? Why is it you like this the least?
6. When I speak to your current (most recent) manager for a reference how would they describe your strengths? How would they describe your weaknesses?
7. Tell me about one aspect of your job you are most proud of? Why is this important to you?
8. Tell me about the person you most like working with in your current job? And why?
9. Tell me about the person you least like working with in your current job? And why?
10. Tell me about a situation where you disagreed with the decision of your boss on handling an important issue? What did you do? Why?
11. Tell me about a time you had more work than could be finished by the deadline?
12. Tell me about a problem that came up at work recently or a big problem that came up in the past?
13. Tell me what have been your biggest lessons learned over the last 12 months?
14. What is it about you, your history, and your experience that makes you so suitable for this job?
15. What do you think you'll enjoy the most and be most proud of?
16. What working hours, holidays and other benefits do you see as being ideal/important to you?
17. What are you currently earning doing your current job?
18. What level of salary/pay/benefits are you expecting if you are successful?
19. What other interviews and job offers are you looking just now?
20. How does this job and our company compare to the other opportunities you are looking at?
21. If you were offered this job how likely are you to say yes?