

Methods of Recruitment

Internal Advertising

Adhere to a strict deadline for applications to ensure your recruitment process remains under control. Treat internal candidates in the same way as external candidates and subject them to identical selection processes. A successful internal candidate will only truly value their achievement if they know they have competed fairly and openly for promotion. Similarly, if unsuccessful, they will be more likely to accept the appointment of an external candidate.

If there is no in-house HR function, a recruitment consultancy has the necessary objectivity and expertise to appraise any internal candidates and assess them fairly against those applying from outside.

Consider existing human resources within the business and be open-minded about internal candidates. This highlights their opportunities for career progression and gives a positive message to valued staff. Compare internal candidates directly with external ones to assess the current availability of skill levels within the business and outside. Could you effect change by examining existing staff structures? Consider the viability of offering internal promotion, up-skilling, exchanging tasks and mentoring in-house.

Networking/grapevine

Both of these provide an invaluable and highly cost-effective source of finding suitable candidates, particularly for senior positions. They also allow companies to gain information on competitors and to investigate similar businesses as possible sources of potential candidates. We all like to work with people who have been recommended to us. Networking, referrals and testimonials are essential means of communication in today's business world.

Advertised selection

A client may wish to use local or national press adverts or specialist trade media to source the right candidate. This can be done either anonymously or by using the client's own house style. However, the costs associated with space advertising can be high - this may be a limiting factor for some clients. The use of well-targeted advertising is an excellent way of sourcing from the open market and can attract specific, high calibre candidates who may not be registered with any consultancy nor actively seeking a change of job. It is also good for brand profile and creates a positive impression of a progressive and forward-moving company.

Web based advertising

A large proportion of the total time spent on a recruitment assignment is spent in the early stages in conducting the search, carrying out initial interviews and the subsequent selection process.

The Web is a very powerful means of generating candidates for any vacancy. It features job boards for every discipline. Web advertising can be a cost-effective means of advertising a vacancy and is also conducted in "real time", which means that candidates begin to respond immediately the advert is posted on the web.

Web sourcing can be used as a method in its own right or, alternatively, as a complementary method to other more traditional means of candidate generation. On a cautionary note this type of advertising can generate hundreds of applications and associated phone calls which will all have to be assessed individually.

Headhunt

This method is reserved for situations which may be perceived as sensitive or which may require a targeted approach into a specialist sector or discipline. If the pool of management talent from which to source the ideal candidate is small, headhunting can prove very effective.

It may be you already know who the ideal candidate is but cannot make a direct approach for various reasons. Headhunting is often carried out by external researchers. The use of external researchers is highly effective in retaining the client's confidentiality in the early stages.

Recruitment agencies

The cost of using recruitment companies can vary dramatically. Costs differ considerably from online agencies to the more traditional executive search and selection ones. It would be fair to say that the cost is usually proportionate to the service you will receive. If you only require CV's forwarded to you then the costs will be relatively small. At the other end of the scale some agencies will advertise, sort through every applications (rejecting unsuccessful ones), telephone preselect, interview, shortlist, obtain references, arrange and attend all interviews, and assist with final decision.

If you are unsure which agency to use it is always useful to interview them, after all you will be working in close partnership with them over a period of weeks, perhaps from initial advertising to offer stage - and then hopefully beyond. Look at what the recruitment company can offer you e.g. are they always contactable when you need them? Do they offer any guarantees? What do the guarantees cost? Do they personally interview every candidate they shortlist? Can they offer private interview space? Do they have any references/testimonials or case studies supporting their claims? Can you make contact with their previous clients? Are their terms and conditions

transparent? Is their pricing structure appropriate for what they offer? Can they offer employment law advice? Do you like them and feel you would enjoy working with them?

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