

# Guide to Recruitment

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## FIRST THINGS FIRST



There will come a time when you will leave your current job in search of your next journey whether it's to look for your next challenge, or because your personal circumstances have changed or due to redundancy. This is the time to sit back, pause and reflect for a moment and ask yourself these questions -

- What sort of job am I looking for? (*full-time, part-time, contract, casual, temporary*)
- Is there a particular industry I would like to work in? (*travel and hospitality, agriculture, education, health*)
- What sector do I want to work in? (*corporate, government, not -for -profit, private*)
- What size business do I want to work in? (*large, medium, small, family*)
- Do I want to work as part of a team or sole charge?
- What locations am I willing to travel to? (*do I want to stay local or travel to the city?*)
- Have I got the right skills and qualifications? Do I need to do some study? Should I volunteer somewhere to get the right skills or a foot in the door?
- Do I want to go out on my own? Consultant, Contractor? (*can I afford to?*)
- Is there something I'm really good at and enjoy doing? If so would I consider a career change?

Now is the time to make the changes you have been thinking about or start working towards a longer term goal.

## WHERE DO I LOOK FOR WORK?

Now that you have an idea or what you want to do there are lots of places you can look for work, here are a few -

- Local papers
- National papers
- Professional or trade magazines
- Local employment agencies
- City employment agencies (*Find the agencies specialising in your profession*)
- Websites, trademe, seek, linkedin, social media, professional membership websites, career opportunities on company websites
- Let friends and family know or people who work in the industry what you are looking for (word of mouth).



## WHAT DO I DO WHEN I FIND A JOB I MIGHT BE INTERESTED IN?

That all depends on whether you found it through an employment agency or you found it yourself. If you found it through an employment agency they will tell you about the position and give you a copy of the job description. They will also put forward your CV to the employer for consideration of an interview.

If you found the job yourself the first thing to do is ask for a copy of the job description and an application pack, this way you know exactly what the position is and what you have to do when applying for the role. An application pack can consist of the job description, an application form and sometimes a police check form.

After reading the job description you will then know if the position is pitched at the level you are looking for. You may need to up-skill in a certain area or enroll in some training. You don't always need to know how to do everything in the job description as there is normally room to train and learn and challenge yourself.

While you are waiting to receive the application pack, check out the website of the company or organisation and gain some knowledge of -

- How they are structured.
- How your role fits into the immediate structure and the bigger picture.
- What their vision and values are.
- How they fit in with your values and beliefs.

You may even think of a couple of questions you could ask at the interview.

## APPLYING FOR THE ROLE

Some key things to be aware of when applying for the role -

- Make sure you know when applications close. Most businesses won't accept late applications. If you know for some reason your application is going to be late then ask if it is ok to send in a late application, if they say yes, give a date and make sure you stick to it.
- Make sure your covering letter relates to the company and the role you are applying for. Pay attention to detail, be careful of cut and pasting.
- Complete the application forms and any other forms that are included in the pack. Complete all sections, do not put 'refer to CV' in the sections. There is a reason for them having that section on the application form. Make the effort and write it again.
- Make sure your CV is up to date and looking professional. Try to include as much relevant information to the role as possible. Remember the person who is reading the CV doesn't know you and can only tell from what you have submitted whether it is worth their while interviewing you.
- Provide a covering letter. This looks professional and gives you an opportunity to offer more information in support of your application.



## COVER LETTER

The cover letter is normally the first contact the employer has with you. It has to look professional with no spelling mistakes or irrelevant information. Tailor the letter to the job. By this stage in the process you should have checked out the company website and read the job description. The purpose of this letter is to get the employer to be interested enough in you to read your CV.

You should structure your letter outlining -

- Why the position interests you.
- Background information on what you know about the company or why you want to work there.
- The key skills you would bring to the role.
- Any other information that supports your CV or you haven't put in your CV which is relevant to the role.

A typical cover letter should be no more than a page long so be specific and succinct. Try to address your letter to a specific person rather than Dear Sir/Madam. If you don't know who to address it to then call and find out.

Send in the best cover letter you can with no spelling or grammatical mistakes. The cover letter also acts as an example of your writing skills and attention to detail. Try not to cut and paste as this is where you can slip up with Dear Paul when it is meant to be Dear Steve.

#### Hints

- Get someone else to proof read your cover letter before you send it out.
- Keep copies of the cover letters you send out so if you get an interview you know what you have written, especially if applying for a few roles at a time.

This will make the next letter easier to write.

## INTERVIEW PREPARATION

- Put some time and effort into planning your trip to the interview and the interview itself.
- Know the exact place and time of the interview and who to ask for.
- Have a trail run to see how long it takes you to get there.
- Familiarise yourself with who is going to be on the interview panel.
- Research the company.
- Refresh your memory regarding your work history.
- Think about some achievements or highlights in previous roles you may want to talk about, relevant to the role you are being interviewed for.
- Try to predetermine some questions they may ask. Some example interview questions follow.
- Take physical evidence of what you have done, e.g., a professional portfolio, written work, qualifications. In some cases employers will request certain documentation to view.
- Think of some questions you can ask them, (write them down and take them with you). It is also ok to take memory jogging notes with you -
  - Why is the position available?
  - What is the managers management style?
  - Will there be a handover and what sort of orientation program is there?
- Turn your cellphone off or onto silent.
- Dress professionally and pay attention to hygiene.



## QUESTIONS WHICH MAY BE ASKED

- Can you tell us a bit about yourself?
- What about this position motivated you to apply?
- What do you see as your strengths/weaknesses?
- What style of management gets the best from you?
- Why are you the best candidate for the job?
- Tell us about a time when you took a leadership role within a group? (Think about it and describe a specific time and situation, what you did and what the result was.)
- Can you give me an example of something that didn't go quite as planned? What it was, what you did and what the outcome was.
- Within this role there is a lot of people contact. How in the past have you gone about developing positive relationships with people you work with or come in contact with?
- What approach do you take to planning your work on a daily basis? And over a longer period of time?
- Can you tell me about a time when you felt under pressure and had looming conflicting priorities? How did you decide what took high priority and how did you manage the others?

## THE INTERVIEW

At the interview try to be confident and in control, here are some tips for the interview itself -

- Arrive on time
- Shake hands
- Be alert and interested
- Concentrate, if you have something on your mind, leave it at the door
- Smile
- Talk about things relevant to the interview. Don't just say yes or no but also don't waffle
- Listen to questions properly if you don't understand the question ask them to repeat it
- Be positive about the skills you have, if you haven't had experience of the whole skill tell them what experience you do have
- Don't put previous employers down
- Understand that its inappropriate to ask about salary, benefits, etc., too early in the interview.

## THINGS YOU MAY BE ASKED TO DO

There are various tools employers may use when selecting the right employee for their company and the vacant position. Within the recruitment process you could be asked to do any of the following as well as attend one or two interviews -

- Take a test, this could be an aptitude test (generally timed), personality tests or a test of your skills doing a particular task.
- Give a presentation. Generally if you are asked to give a presentation you will be given the topic and the length of time it should be. Check to make sure they have the equipment that you require available e.g. data show, whiteboard etc.
- Take part in a group activity with other applicants to test your abilities in teamwork and leadership.
- Write an essay or a project plan.



You may also need to complete a police check or take an alcohol and drug test.

## TIPS FOR OVERCOMING THE INTERVIEW NERVES

- Do your homework and be prepared
- Practice your questions and answers
- Call people by their names
- Use eye contact to establish rapport
- Establish your credibility early
- Make sure you have background information on the company
- Make sure you know who the interview panel are and their titles
- Relax, breathe deeply, recognise that some nerves are good
- Manage your appearance, feel confident and comfortable
- Rest up so you are physically and mentally alert
- Avoid over-talking, don't waffle
- They are on your side, they want you to succeed!

## WHAT THE EMPLOYER WILL BE LOOKING FOR IN YOU



The main attributes and interviewer or the interviewing panel will be looking for in you are:

- Do you have the skills to do the job
- Do you fit with the companies visions and values
- Will you fit with the team
- Can you add value to the company
- Are you willing to improve your skills or do training
- Do you have the right attitude.

## HINTS REGARDING REFEREES

- Make sure you let your referees know they may be approached, who is likely to contact them and something about the job.
- Make sure your referees are going to give you a good reference.
- Make sure the referee is the right person to give you a reference for the role.

## IF YOU ARE OFFERED THE JOB

Don't say yes straightaway make sure you get all the details first.

Ask for the job offer in writing, employers are normally happy to send through a draft employment agreement for you to look at and then have a discussion around what the final terms and conditions will look like.

Make sure you cover off -

- Pay or salary, make sure you both agree.
- Start date.
- Conditions to employment (police checks, drug testing).
- Trial periods.
- Duties.
- Other, relocation costs, expenses etc.

Things to consider-

- Is this the organisation you want to work for?
- Does it match your goals and beliefs?
- Is there a supportive team?
- Does the job make good use of your skills?
- Does the job match your interests?
- Location, transport, hours.
- Will there be a chance to learn new skills?
- Are there opportunities for promotion?
- What training programmes are in place?
- Are the pay and benefits right for you?

## WHAT IF IT'S JUST NOT GOING TO PLAN?

### What if you don't get the job?

Ask the employer or recruitment agency for feedback. Don't be afraid of what the feedback might be because it will help you next time.

### What if you are not getting the interviews?

- Are you applying for jobs that you have the skills and qualifications for?
- Are you tailoring your CV to the job requirements listed in the job advert or job description?
- Was your application presented nicely, no spelling mistakes, was the formatting consistent?

### What if you are getting the interviews but not the job?

- It may be the person who got the job had more of a skill set and mix for the role than you did.
- Get feedback.
- Did you have trouble answering questions? Prepare for the questions you had difficulty with and think of examples for your response.
- Nervous and unconfident? Work with a friend or family member and practice interviewing.
- Had you done enough research before the interview about the role and the company?

*"Choose a job you love and you will never have to work a day in your life"*

*Confucius*