



Australian Government

Workforce
Australia



**INCLUSIVE
RECRUITMENT**
Toolkit

Career
Revive



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Overview

The availability of talent and skills is one of the most critical issues facing leaders today. Despite this fact, approaches to attracting, selecting and on-boarding are rarely refreshed, with many businesses doubling down on approaches that have dominated for decades.

In 2018, the Department of Employment, Skills, Small and Family Business surveyed 14,000 Australian employers to connect job seekers to employment opportunities.¹

The Survey of Employers' Recruitment Experiences (SERE) found little year on year variance when it came to recruitment methods, with recruitment sites, jobs boards and word of mouth the most highly utilised platforms.²

While these approaches proved effective for clerical, administrative and sales roles, increasing recruitment difficulty was reported across all occupation groups.³

PwC's annual CEO survey has reinforced the crisis in confidence facing many businesses today. While 93% of CEOs recognised the need to change their strategies to attract and retain new talent, they suffered a type of paralysis when it came to addressing the issue.⁴

PURPOSE OF THIS TOOLKIT

As hiring people with critical skills becomes more competitive, businesses have reason to look outside of acquisition alone, and consider how inclusive recruitment can increase the quality and size of your candidate pool.

The toolkit supports businesses to consider more inclusive approaches to recruitment. It is not intended to be a comprehensive guide, but provides high level-advice, practical tips and resources for further inquiry.

For the purpose of this toolkit, the recruitment process can be split up into four parts:



FOOTNOTES:

¹ Department of Education, Skills and Employment, Survey of Employers Recruitment Experiences, <https://www.employment.gov.au/SERE-participants>, accessed May 2020.

² ibid

³ ibid

⁴ PwC, The talent challenge: Adapting to growth, <https://www.pwc.com/gx/en/services/people-organisation/publications/ceosurvey-talent-challenge.html>, accessed May 220

The new rules of recruitment

The table reflects how businesses are re-designing their approach to recruitment, to tap into diverse talents latent in their community and workforce.

POOR PRACTICES



- Position becomes vacant, triggering response



- Hiring manager completes job requisition and sends to HR and business group for (cursory) review and approval
- Reliance on generic competency models



- Taking a scattershot, ad hoc. approach to finding candidates
- Focusing only on external candidates
- Publish positions on multiple jobs boards or outsource to external recruitment agency



- Assess candidates against eligibility criteria
- Using unreliable filters and bureaucratic steps



- Employing unstructured and generic interviews
- Focus on charisma, likeability and track record
- 'Going with your gut'



- Assume the new hire is 'plug in and play'
- Failure to support cultural familiarisation
- Failing to review hiring practices
- 'What's done is done' mentality

BETTER PRACTICE



- Focus on ongoing and proactive analysis of future needs
- Continuous evaluation of potential talent



- Jobs are reviewed and designed with realistic requirements
- Focus on re-shape or re-classify roles for greater inclusivity



- All job openings are posted internally, tapping the talent of existing workforce.
- Focus on diversifying applicant pools and talent searches



- Using data science to reduce the role social bias plays in the selection process
- Developing systems and process that help even the playing field



- Structured interviews allow consistent questions across candidate groups
- Rigorous behavioural event interviews



- Monitor whether your practices are resulting in good hires
- Holding assessors accountable for the quality of evaluations

Introduction to job design

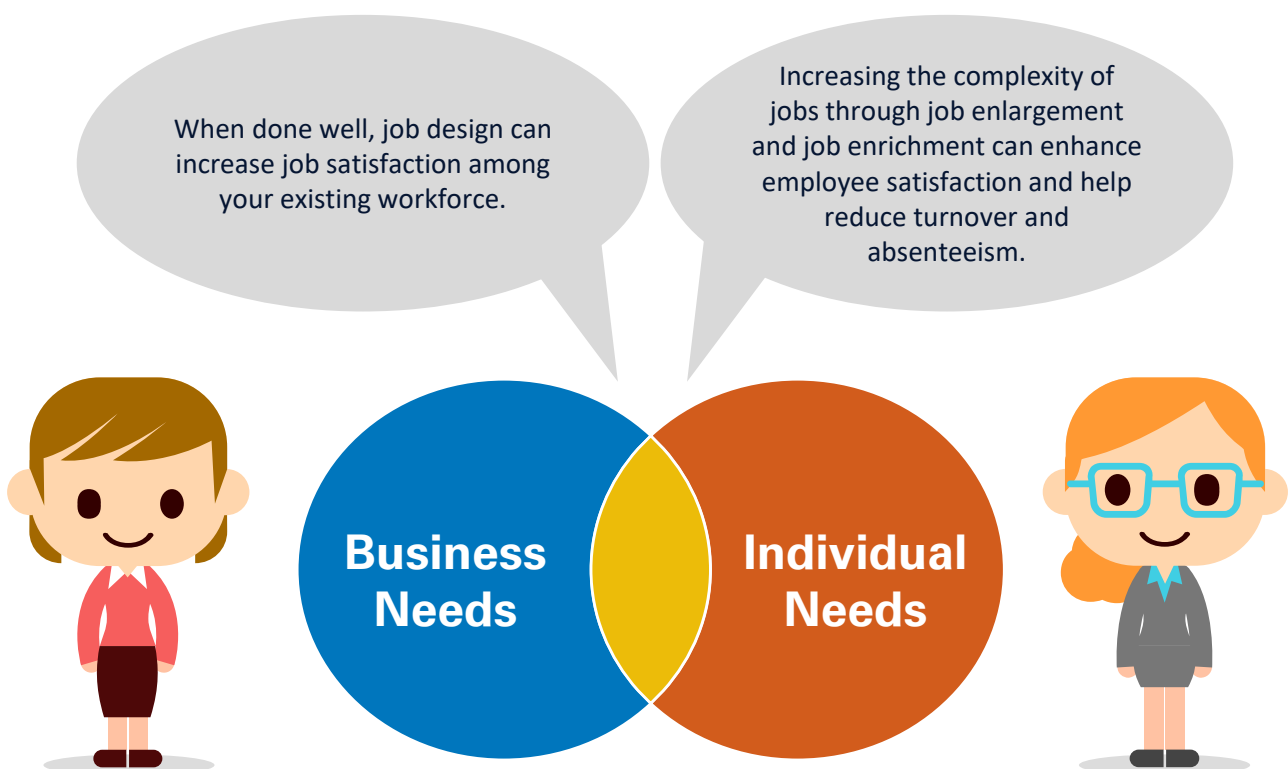
Job design is the earliest stage in the recruitment process and often the most overlooked.

Inclusive job design can support new and current employees to work in a way that values their difference, leverages skills and helps them to their best work.

While managers are best placed to enable this, research shows that they give little consideration to how the job description and placement influences who applies for the role and how hired employees will allocate their time.⁵

Common pitfalls include:

- Over-reliance on past practice
- Using vague criteria that could lead to discrimination or bias
- Defaulting to full-time work without considering whether flexibility can be built into the position
- Inadvertent use of gendered language.



Ultimately, job design must consider the goals and work plans of teams, individuals and the business.

FOOTNOTES:

⁵ Why managers design jobs to be more boring than they need to be, <https://hbr.org/2019/06/why-managers-design-jobs-to-be-more-boring-than-they-need-to-be> accessed May 2020.

Factors to consider when designing roles

The University of Cambridge Human Resource area suggests that the following factors are considered when designing or re-designing roles:

VARIETY

Greater variety can improve the interest in a job. This could mean adding additional challenges to roles or incorporating new tasks.

RESPONSIBILITY

Staff should feel personally responsible for the work they produce (both the successes and failures) and understand the significance of their work within the broader business.

AUTONOMY

It is best to give staff a degree of flexibility of how, when or where a job is done, within the parameters of the job.

TASK IDENTITY

Staff often gain more satisfaction from undertaking a job from beginning to end.

FEEDBACK

Regular feedback, both positive and constructive, helps to develop employees and build motivation.

PARTICIPATION IN DECISION MAKING

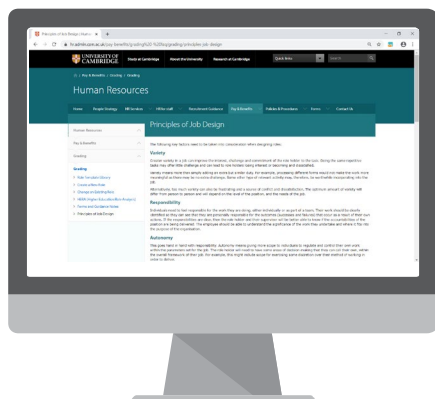
People like to participate in decisions that affect them and are more likely to support changes that they have played a part in.

RECOGNITION AND SUPPORT

A supportive environment will allow employees to perform at their best. Employee's value reward and recognition, however this can come in different forms for different employees.

WORKING ENVIRONMENT

The working environment should support employees and be free from harassment, discrimination and safety hazards.



For more info, visit the University of Cambridge HR website below



University of Cambridge, Human Resources' - Principles of Job Design'

Resourcing request template

The Resourcing Request Template (Page 8) may prompt managers to think more critically about inclusive job design. It will also provide HR with useful workforce insights to support more active management of existing and expected shortages.

A guide to using the template is provided below:

STEP 1

JOB DIAGNOSIS

Managers can begin by engaging the broader team in a dialogue about the new role. This is an opportunity to ascertain if there are opportunities to re-shape the role for the benefit of the team, business and individuals.

Guiding questions might include:

- Can the work be distributed to other roles that do not have a full workload?
- Can we enhance other roles and recruit for a different position?
- Does the current job structure provide a development pathway for employees?
- Are any of these responsibilities already carried out by other roles? Is there an overlap? How might this be resolved?
- What attributes and skills have been important for success in these roles in the past?
- Is there an opportunity for job rotation or enrichment?
- Are there elements of this role that will lend themselves to time and place flexibility?
- How much does this role overlap and interact with others?

STEP 2

MANAGERS TO COMPLETE RESOURCING REQUEST

Following discussion with the team, the manager completes the resourcing request and sends to the HR team for review and action.

STEP 3

REVIEW AND ACTION

Before finalising the job advertisements, it is recommended that the HR team do a thorough review of criteria, language and the narrative in the job advertisement.

Consider whether managers have treated the resourcing request as 'tick and flick' exercise. If there is scope to update, re-profile or re-identifying the position, the HR team could follow up with the hiring manager.

Job design can be difficult, and it may be that managers require a deeper level of expertise to support them in the first instance.

Principles to remember:

When developing the job advertisement, do:

- Look for vague criteria that could lead to discrimination or bias (P10)
- Experiment with wording to remove gendered language (P11)
- Focus on articulating a clear employee value proposition (P12)

Resourcing request template

ROLE REQUIRED

Team / Unit / Area

Owner/ contact person

Proposal [Proposal should address the following questions]

How many are required?
(FTE estimates)

Job tasks:

1. X
2. X
3. X
4. X
5. X

Mindset necessary for candidate
to succeed:

Desirable skills and qualifications:

Time and place flexibility:

- Yes
 No

If yes – please specify: (Part time, job share, telecommuting, compressed work)

Is demand for this role
increasing, stable or
cyclical?

Drivers of shortage?

Evidence of level of
shortage
(Regional / National /
Global)?

Why is this preferred
over the alternative
options below?

[What is the
role required]

[Name of the
requesting Team
/ Unit / Area]

[Manager
requesting the
proposed
action]

[Between five and six
key points. A role with
more than ten
responsibilities
requires a re-think]

[Reduce the
focus on formal
qualifications]

[Are there
elements of the
role that lend
themselves to
time and place
flexibility?]

[Information to
support ongoing and
proactive analysis of
future workforce
needs]

Resourcing request template (cont.)

ROLE REQUIRED (CONT.)

Alternative Options considered

[E.g. Re-distribution for roles without a full workload, enhance other roles and recruit different positions, job rotation, return to work program]

Transferrable Skills

Proposed recruitment (check all appropriate)

- Advertise internally (including individuals on parental, long term or sick leave)
 - Advertise locally
 - Advertise nationally
 - Partner with training providers
 - Partner with diversity recruiters

 - Supported returner program
-

Is a Business Case required?

[Include if it is a specifically funded position (how), if there is ongoing funding or if this is backfilling an existing position(s)? Would funding be for a specific period or ongoing?]

[Does this capability or function exist in another area of the organisation? Is there a possibility to include candidates with strong, transferable skills?]

Simplifying criteria

Research shows that men will apply for a job if they meet 60% of the qualifications, while women will apply when they meet 100%.

Job ads that require specific qualifications or years of experience can deter candidates with equivalent capabilities or experience, as well as candidates who may have taken time out of the workforce for personal reasons. To encourage more females to apply for roles, separate the ‘nice to haves’ from the necessities.

Below, is an example of listed skills for a project manager role at an engineering firm.

The candidate was required to:

- Provide direction and leadership to a diverse team
- Facilitate the development and delivery of strategies to maintain technical performance
- Be accountable for the management, technical specification and tendering of all contracts
- Deliver value enhancing improvement projects using project management philosophies

ACTION: To increase the number of female applicants, the business reviewed its advertisements, identifying and remove the ‘nice to have’ elements , focusing instead on role essentials.

The ‘position description template’ on pages 8 and 9 can help your managers and recruiters simplify the criteria when they are writing job advertisements.

BEFORE

REQUIRED EXPERIENCE

- Experience working in engineering or technical services businesses
- Strong, effective oral and written communication skills and influencing capability
- Exceptional attention to detail as well as ability to executive efficiently and manage tight deadlines.
- The ability to work across several different business units at multiple levels, including travel to various geographies if required.
- Exceptional Excel, Microsoft Word and data management skills
- Qualifications in Business, Commerce or Engineering
- Strong leadership skills
- Strong track record achieving sales targets individuals and as a team

AFTER

WHAT WE ARE LOOKING FOR

- Prior experience in a professional environment where you gained project management skills and a passion for working with others
- The ability to communicate and work within a diverse team, in a conscientious and inclusive way
- The ability to support cross functional teams and lead from the front when it comes to data management, so data knowledge is a big bonus

WHAT MAKES THIS BETTER PRACTICE?

- Shorter list of requirements
- Removed the “nice to have” including the requirement of a degree
- Focus on soft skills, such as ability to work with others

FOOTNOTES:

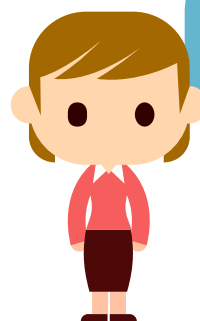
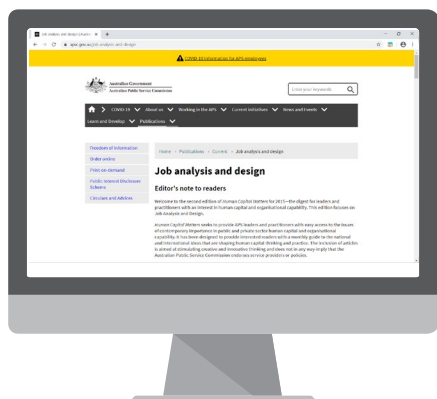
⁶ Mohr, Tara Sophia, Harvard Business Review, Why women won't apply for jobs unless they are 100% qualified, <https://hbr.org/2014/08/why-women-dont-apply-for-jobs-unless-theyre-100-qualified>. Accessed May 2020.

Language review

Research shows that the language used in job advertisements can influence an individual's decision to apply for positions. Intense jargon or stereotypically male language may deter applicants.

Words such as 'competitive', 'analytical', and 'objective' are often interpreted as masculine, whereas words such as 'interpersonal', 'support', 'together' and 'connected' are perceived as more feminine. Online tools, such as gender decoder can help you to determine if your language skews towards a certain gender bias.

MASCULINE WORDS	GENDER NETURAL ALTERNATIVE WORDS
<input type="checkbox"/> Strong	<input type="checkbox"/> Sound, steady, excellent, solid
<input type="checkbox"/> Drive	<input type="checkbox"/> Energy, inspiration, guide, steer, deliver, energise, inspire
<input type="checkbox"/> Lead	<input type="checkbox"/> Head, top person, manager, run head up, manage, steer, grow, pioneer
<input type="checkbox"/> Analysis	<input type="checkbox"/> Investigation, study, test research, data
<input type="checkbox"/> Analytical	<input type="checkbox"/> Systematic, thorough, thoughtful, deductive
<input type="checkbox"/> Driving	<input type="checkbox"/> Motivating, energizing, inspiring guiding, steering, delivering
<input type="checkbox"/> Individuals	<input type="checkbox"/> People
<input type="checkbox"/> Proven	<input type="checkbox"/> Established, known, demonstrated, reliable, successful, trusted, tested
<input type="checkbox"/> Workforce	<input type="checkbox"/> Teams, workers, members
<input type="checkbox"/> Decisions	<input type="checkbox"/> Choices, conclusions, judgements, moves, outcomes, steps, actions



Websites like gender decoder can help you to determine whether a job advert is gender coded:

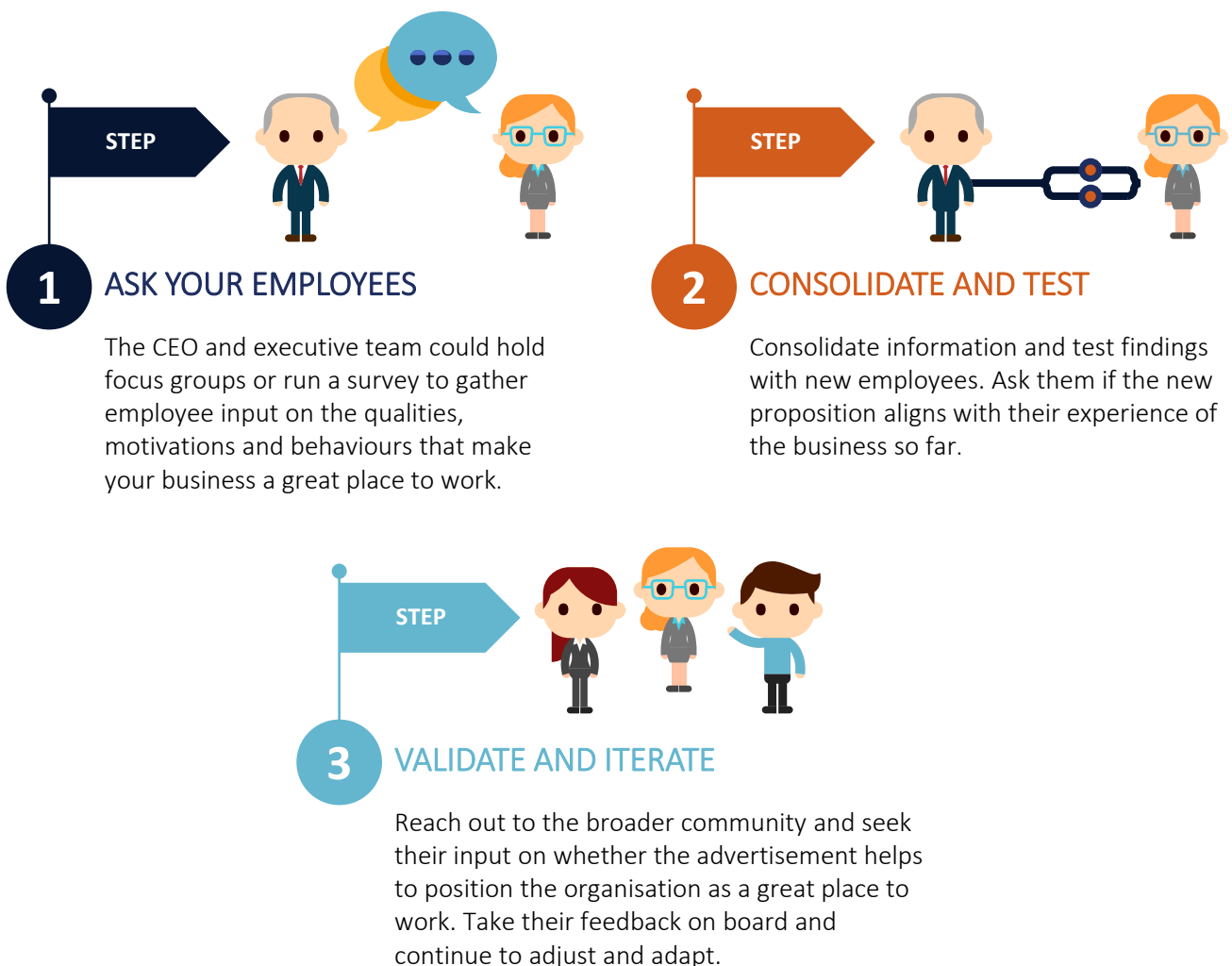
Employee value proposition

A strong employer brand is an important asset in helping you to attract, engage and retain staff. It tells applicants why they should choose your business over one of your competitors, and makes a promise about the future employee experience.

When it comes to the Employee Value Proposition (EVP), business can fall into one of two common traps:

- Under-selling the qualities, behaviours and experiences that differentiate them as an employer
- Selling an experience that is not aligned with reality

If you are unsure what differentiates you as a business – why not ask your employees? We recommend a three step approach:



Employee value proposition

BETTER PRACTICE

Below is an example of an advertisement that effectively outlines the benefits of working with that business, positioning them as an employer of choice.

WHY JOIN US

We are a family-owned and run business that has been delivering quality products to Australians for over 30 years. We pride ourselves on quality craftsmanship and adding charm to the lives of our customers.

We believe in fostering environments that support our staff to thrive personally and professionally. If you want your next professional experience to help you master new skills, build meaningful relationships, and access limitless growth opportunities consider joining our family. We cannot wait to meet you.

Perks our employees enjoy include:

- ✓ 13% superannuation
- ✓ New hire training and onboarding programs
- ✓ Weekly lunch-and-learn sessions
- ✓ Access to employee assistance
- ✓ Flexible working arrangements to help you balance work and home responsibilities
- ✓ Mentoring for new managers
- ✓ Paid parental leave
- ✓ Social clubs

WHAT MAKES THIS BETTER PRACTICE?

- ✓ Clearly demonstrates the opportunities an employer can offer a candidate
- ✓ Highlights the skills, experience and personality that would thrive in your business
- ✓ Comprehensive list of employee benefits
- ✓ Details the type of flexible working arrangements

Bringing it all together

The advertisement below brings together the better practice elements, showing you what a gender inclusive job advertisement looks like for the hypothetical firm KN.



Clear role title

Team Leader – KN Design

An opportunity to work with enthusiastic and diverse thinkers.

AT A GLANCE

Reference number: 12345
Employment type: Permanent
Working hours: part-time or full-time
Start date: ASAP
Salary: \$80,000 – \$95,000
Location: Mackay

Summary of employer

ABOUT US

We are a family-owned and family-run business that has been delivering quality products to Australian’s for over 30 years. We pride ourselves on quality craftsmanship and adding charm to the lives of our customers.

ABOUT THE JOB

- Create and oversee all brand identity and design collateral
- Collaborate with team members on new ideas for design, visuals and content
- Research new technologies to get the most out of web performance
- Research visual trends and themes aligned with brand identify and target market

Focus on tasks

WHAT WE ARE LOOKING FOR

- ✓ A keen eye for detail
- ✓ Boundless curiosity
- ✓ Desire to keep on learning

The mindset you are looking for

OUR COMMITMENT TO DIVERSITY

Design does not discriminate. When it comes to choosing talent – we are colour blind, gender blind, age, sex and identity agnostic. Our sole focus is talent.

KN is proud to be an equal opportunity employer. We have a clear vision: to be the place where talents of all types can thrive and do their best work and help to enrich one another.

Diversity statement

WHAT WE OFFER

We believe in fostering environments that support our staff to thrive personally and professionally.

If you want your next professional experience to help you master new skills, build meaningful relationships, and access limitless growth opportunities consider joining our family. We cannot wait to meet you.

We offer a range of benefits to our employees, including:

- 13% superannuation
- New hire training and onboarding programs
- Weekly lunch-and-learn sessions
- Access to employee assistance
- Flexible working arrangements to help you balance work and home responsibilities
- Mentoring for new managers
- Paid parental leave

Unique value proposition

Selection

A vast body of research shows that the selection is where biases are most likely to impact on hiring decisions. There are steps businesses can take to recognise and reduce these biases.⁷

ACCEPT THAT YOU HAVE BIAS

- While we like to think that we are open minded and objective, this is not always the case.
- We judge and assess others automatically and often subconsciously. Our thinking is heavily influenced by our background and personal experience.
- When we accept that our decision making is impacted by subconscious mental shortcuts, we are better able to assess if unconscious bias is impacting our hiring processes.
- **Tip: Research affinity bias, confirmation bias, contrasting, halo and homes effect and stereotyping. Consider whether these are present in your processes.**

EXPERIMENT WITH YOUR ADVERTISING

- The definition of insanity is doing the same thing again and again and expecting different results. If you have been using the same avenues with little success, experiment with some new ones.
- **Tip: Consider your local Facebook jobs board as a potential source of talent.**
- **Change the search parameters on LinkedIn and Seek to include candidates who may possess strong, transferable skills.**
- **Ensure that staff on parental, long term or sick leave are informed of opportunities.**
- **Ask recruiters to actively seek diverse candidates or partner directly with diversity recruiters such as Work180.**
- **Introduce a supported returner program to help skilled women return to work after an extended period of leave, while also giving you access to untapped sources of talent.**

USE ALTERNATIVE APPLICATION METHODS

- CVs and written job applications make the gender, background and education of the candidate a focal point, and may influence assessment as a result.
- Try structured application forms, which tap into the specific skills of candidates. Gamification or simulation based assessment can provide practical and hands on approaches that look at skills and competencies required in a role.

DEVELOP APPLICATION GUIDES

- It can be difficult for some job seekers to sell their skills and potential effectively. Provide applicants with examples of response formats and tips to help them to improve their submissions.

BLIND RECRUITMENT

- Avoid unconscious bias by removing identifying personal information such as gender, background and education from candidate CVs.

Tip: Investigate software programs that can blind the process for you.

STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS

- Interviews that rely on the candidate experience to unfold organically through conversation alone can be unreliable predictors of job success.
- Bias towards 'natural chemistry' or 'common interest' can also hurt candidates.
- To minimise bias, candidates should be asked the same set of defined questions, with responses to each question graded on a pre-determined scale.

Tip: For structured interviews, use our behavioural guide on Page 16

REVIEW YOUR PROCESSES

- Monitor whether your practices are resulting in good hires. Knowing what channels produce the best candidates at the lowest cost can help improve outcomes.

Tip: After a period of time, reach out to managers and supervisors and ask them a simple question: Do you regret hiring this individual? Would you hire them again? Analysing employee data can also provide useful clues. Do a lot of employees leave around the six month mark? Find out why.

FOOTNOTES:

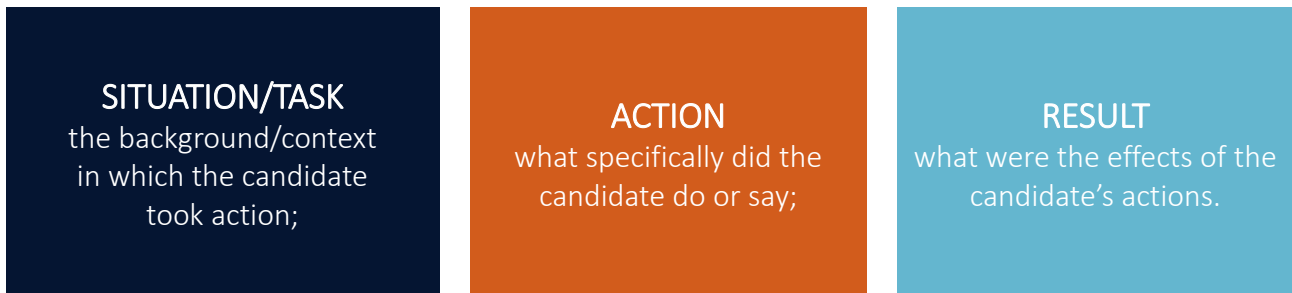
⁷Knight, Rebecca, 7 Practical Ways to Reduce Bias in Your Hiring Process, <https://hbr.org/2017/06/7-practical-ways-to-reduce-bias-in-your-hiring-process>. Accessed: May 2020.

Interviewing employees

Best practice interviewing involves structured interviews with ‘behavioural questions’. These are questions, which ask that the applicant draws on their prior experience to demonstrate capability in a particular area. This has been shown to be the most effective way to assess an applicant’s capabilities, experience and knowledge against those required for the position.

Behaviourally-oriented competency interviews ask applicants to draw on past behaviour that has demonstrated the particular competency in question. For example, it might be asking a candidate to describe their behaviour when working with a difficult colleague.

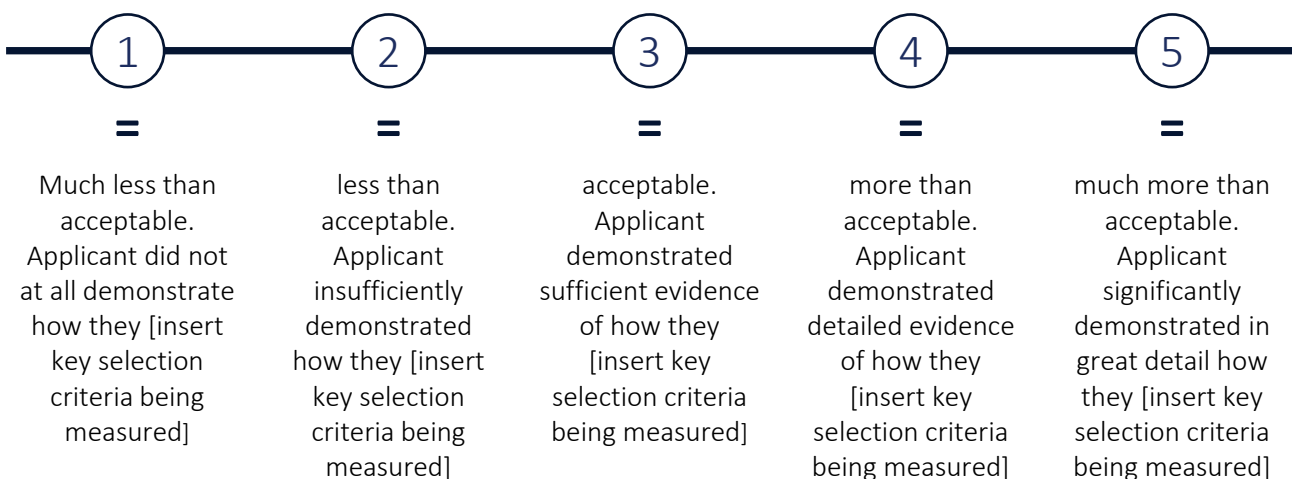
An easy way to use behavioural based questions is to use the STAR Method. When using the STAR method, interviews should look for specific examples in response to the suggested questions that outline:



SCORING BEHAVIOURAL RESPONSES

Interviewers should assess applicant responses using a descriptively anchored rating scale. This helps align interviewers’ scores and removes some of the subjectivity of rating.

RATING



Onboarding

Research shows that up to 20% of staff turnover occurs within the first 45 days of employment. This number is significant when we consider the cost of the end to end recruitment process and the difficulties businesses encounter finding talented staff.

A positive onboarding experience has a significant impact on employee productivity, retention and safety.

The onboarding process begins before the employee commences, with clear communication about arrival times, points of contact and parking tips (if relevant).

As well as the onboarding basics (documentation, compliance training and technology) - why not also consider:

ACCELERATING LEARNINGS

In addition to business fundamentals (systems, technologies and people) managers should help new starters navigate the organisations decision making system. This can be achieved by connecting new starters to people of influence within the business, and sharing inside knowledge about how decisions get made.

Tip: Create a checklist of activities for new employees to 'tick off' on their first day, week and first 90 days at your business. Include a list of people who will be critical to their learning and success on the job and encourage them to make contact with them.

A BUDDY SYSTEM

A buddy system can be a great way to support a new employee. Ideally, the buddy will be a similar classification or role and should be adequately resourced to be a buddy (i.e. they should be given time to undertake the task).

Tip: Make sure that the buddy is easily accessible to the new employee early in the onboarding process. Formally acknowledge this role and support the buddy to allocate time to fulfil these duties.

MANAGE EXPECTATIONS

Without clear expectations about behavioural standards and performance expectations, it will be difficult for the employees to transition into new roles.

Managers should make time to have an in depth conversation about employee goals, tasks required of them and the role the individual plays in achieving business outcomes.

Tip: Provide a written job description (or ask staff to co-design these with their manager) to ensure expectations are clear and unambiguous.

GAIN FEEDBACK

Seeking feedback from employees will help you ensure that the onboarding process is the best it can be for both employees and the business.

Questions about the employee experience should focus on perceptions of the onboarding process, including the strengths and weaknesses. It is recommended that this occurs through informal and formal channels.

Tip: Create a short survey for new employees. This should be issued 1 week, 1 month and 6 months into starting their new role.

The survey can cover questions such as:

- What was the best/worst thing about the orientation program?
- Were there any expectations that were not met?
- What do you know now that you wish you knew earlier?

FOOTNOTES:

⁸ Carucci, Ron. Harvard Business Review. To retain new hires, spend more time onboarding them, <https://hbr.org/2018/12/to-retain-new-hires-spend-more-time-onboarding-them>. Accessed May 2020.

