



VICKY STANTON IS DIRECTOR OF HR 4 YOUR NURSERY.

INTERVIEWING STAFF *Get it right*



After you have advertised a job and hopefully got some applicants, the process of deciding who to invite for the next stages of the recruitment begins. Check the applicants against the person specification. Ideally you want invite those who most closely match the skills, experience, competencies and qualifications you have previously identified as important. There may be some applicants who do not possess everything listed but you may consider them suitable to invite.

The interview

The interview is a two-way process so it is important to get the basics right. Remember you are seeking to recruit the best person for the job, not the best interviewee on the day, so the more relaxed you can make the applicant the more you will be able to learn about their skills and abilities. They are deciding if they want to work for you.

Here's what you need to think about:

1 LOCATION. Interviews should take place somewhere quiet, clean and comfortable where you will not be disturbed.

2 WHO WILL INTERVIEW. It is advisable to have two people interviewing if this is possible and one should be the line manager. They need to have a clear understanding of the job description and the requirements of the person specification.

3 KEEP TO TIME. The process of attending for interview is a nerve-racking one. Most applicants don't interview well due to nerves and this is made worse if they are kept waiting.

4 PREPARATION. Consider the questions you want to ask. Ask the same main questions to each applicant so you can compare information. Read through the

applicant's CV or application form and note anything specific you want to ask about their experience. Think about which areas of the job are most critical to ensure you obtain all the relevant information from the applicants.

5 INTRODUCTION. Start each interview with an informal chat. This will break the ice and hopefully relax the applicant. Explain the process and format of the interview.

6 QUESTIONS. You are seeking to find out if the person has the right skills, abilities, competencies and qualifications to undertake the role. Ask open-ended questions – questions starting with Who? When? Which? Why? What? How? So that a simple yes or no answer cannot be given. You may also want to ask questions based on a scenario: "Can you give me an example of when you...?" Do take notes during the interview so you have something to refer back to. Do not write anything

inappropriate in the notes as you never know when these notes may come into the applicant's hands or the hands of an employment tribunal!

7 CANDIDATES' QUESTIONS. It is appropriate for candidates to be asked if they have any questions. Be prepared to answer questions on training and development, promotion prospects, culture from good candidates. Others may ask about pay, holidays, time off arrangements.

8 CLOSING THE INTERVIEW. Give the candidate all the information they require. Explain the next steps of the process and the time-scale.

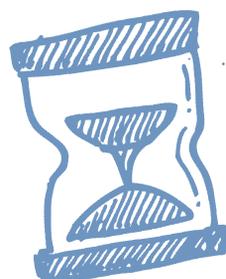
Note: You may wish to get the candidates to undertake some other form of assessment and I will cover some of these options next time.

Successful applicants

Once you have completed your process and come to a decision as to the chosen applicant it is good practice to notify all those who took part, successful or not. It is worth waiting until you have made contact with the successful applicant and they have verbally accepted the job.

Put the offer of employment into writing but make it subject to the receipt of satisfactory references and DBS checks. If anything comes back that you are not happy about, you have a legitimate and lawful 'get out clause'.

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Bosses who know within 90 seconds whether they will hire an interviewee

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