Recruitment strategies

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Introduction

Recruitment and selection is a fundamental human resource function that overarches many different aspects of the organisation’s overall performance. Effective human resource planning and thorough job analysis will produce information which forms part of the corporate knowledge required to meet our objective of having the right people, with the right competencies, in the right job, when we need them. Making this happen within a framework built on firm EEO practices acknowledges the richness of diversity within the Australian workforce.

In a similar way, the range of recruitment strategies available to organisations is wide and varied and therefore different approaches are available to suit the nature of the position to be filled. This section will expose you to this diverse range and in particular, the techniques necessary to create that winning advertisement which will attract the right applicants for your particular vacancy. Regardless of the strategies adopted, you must ensure that there is equal opportunity for employment for all potential applicants. Not only does our legal system demand this but also being an equal opportunity employer further enhances the possibility of securing the best person for our job.

Learning outcome

On completion of this section you should be able to:

- develop a recruitment strategy to legally generate a pool of appropriate candidates.

Reflect on your current knowledge

In order to achieve this outcome you will need to have the following skills and knowledge as listed in the table on the next page.

- Please use the checklist to reflect on how much you know already.
- Tick the relevant boxes.
- The areas that you have checked I need to learn this or I have some knowledge of are the pages in this section that may require your special attention.
We hope you get into the habit of reflecting on (evaluating) your skills. It is a skill and attitude that you will find invaluable in your job and in your daily life.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Knowledge/skill</th>
<th>I can do this now</th>
<th>I have some knowledge of this</th>
<th>I need to learn this</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Define and distinguish between the terms <em>recruitment</em> and <em>selection</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Identify the major factors that affect the supply and demand for labour</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• List the sources and methods of recruitment and evaluate their suitability in a number of given situations</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Outline the advantages and disadvantages of recruiting internally or externally</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Write a job advertisement</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Compare the cost and effectiveness of various advertising strategies</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Design an application form for a specific position</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Recruitment strategies

Activity 1

Take a moment and think about your own recruitment and selection experiences. It is an often quoted statistic that 75% of jobs are never advertised in any formal way, they are mainly filled by word of mouth – knowing someone who could be suitable for the position. Was that the case for you?

1 In your present job, at what point did the recruitment stage begin – what were the steps in the process, how did you know that a vacancy existed?

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_________________________________________________________________________

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_________________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________________

2 If you responded to an advertisement, what attracted you to that particular job? What impression did you form about the job and the organisation even before you responded to the advertisement? What documentation did you and the employer prepare as part of the recruitment phase?

_________________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________________

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_________________________________________________________________________
Definitions and concepts

Your responses to the questions above have given you an opportunity to reflect on your own experiences with the recruitment process. As an applicant you will obviously have a different perspective to that of the employer. As a HR specialist you will have a number of roles in this area – a planner, recruiter and selector, as well as an advisor and mentor to others in your organisation who may be involved in these processes.

Making decisions about whether to recruit from within or outside the organisation will impact on the recruitment methods selected and the relative costs and benefits of each option. To a large extent the nature of the position to be filled will dictate this choice. In all dimensions of the process, however, the considerations of EEO will be paramount and will affect the eventual outcome, both for the successful and unsuccessful applicants as well as the organisation.

You may now have a better understanding of the importance of accurate job descriptions and specifications because these significantly influence key recruitment decisions. In a similar way, human resource planning sets the direction for determining the number and type of positions to be filled, by whom, when and for how long, as well as under what conditions.

A typical recruitment process may include but not be limited to the following (see Figure 1).

Figure 1: Typical recruitment process
Determining staffing needs

As you will no doubt recall from Section 1, the organisation’s human resource plans will provide the foundation for making the final decision as to your overall staffing requirements. Answers to the following questions may help you to control the recruitment process.

- Is the proposed employee necessary?
- What about costs and budgets?
- Is there a high turnover in the department?
- Is there someone in the organisation who can do the job?
- What are the award/enterprise/workplace agreement considerations?
- Is the job necessary?

What options are available to you once you have established that it is necessary to take some action to meet a staffing need? Options may include the following:

- transfers and promotions
- redesigning the job
- job sharing
- part-time staff
- casual and temporary staff
- outsourcing the work
- telecommuting
- executive leasing
- recruiting from overseas
- shift changes/overtime etc.

The appropriateness of each option varies as the circumstances both inside and outside your organisation change and so impact on the possible supply and demand for labour.
Activity 2

If you as the HR specialist were faced with the prospect of replacing yourself in your current position, which of the options mentioned above would you recommend?

Justify your choice in light of the prevailing circumstances both within and outside your organisation at present and in the immediate future. Make a note in the space below of the factors you considered in making your choice(s).

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Supply and demand for labour

Demand

If you don’t know what the objectives and goals of your organisation are, you can’t begin to objectively predict your human resource needs. The goals of sections of the organisation must also be in harmony with the organisation’s overall goals.

The formula that was generally true until fairly recently was that an increased demand for goods and services led to an increased demand for labour. However, one of the effects of technological change has been to make this no longer necessarily true.

In fact, the reverse is probably true—that a decrease in demand for goods and services actually leads to a decrease in the demand for labour.

Increased costs, and greater public accountability, have forced many organisations to investigate other ways of meeting increased demand while reducing staff. Remember, hiring labour is an expensive business!

The prediction of needs will probably be on the basis of objectives which may themselves vary over time. Therefore you can (and should) have short-term, medium-term and long-term goals, and plans that reflect these. The longer into the future you predict, the more indeterminate the plans should be, but it is a bad plan that permits no deviation.
Supply

You must know the characteristics of your current workforce, in terms of age distribution, skills, patterns of movement within the organisation, as well as flow into and out of the organisation.

People may stay in the same job, be transferred, be promoted, be sacked, resign, etc. You must also know the details of the terms of employment of staff—permanent, casual, limited term etc—and their patterns. Someone has to put all this together and also take into account societal trends and demographic data where relevant.

Comparing demand and supply

Comparing demand with supply is not as simple as it sounds. Whether you have a surplus, a shortfall or a balance, the distribution of employees may be wrong in terms of their skills, experience and a whole host of other factors. It’s no good just having the right number of employees.

There are basically five ways of overcoming shortages:

- transfers
- retraining
- overtime
- increased productivity
- recruitment (full-time/part-time/permanent/temporary).

You must consider the possibility of redesigning work, increasing staff skills and finding better ways to do things. As someone said, ‘We must work smarter, not harder!’
Recruitment options: internal or external?

**Activity 3**

Do you know the policies, if any, that apply to internal as against external recruitment in your organisation? It would be useful for you to take the time to find out the extent that internal/external recruitment is used – an understanding of the statistics for your own organisation could have implications for your career management. Make notes on what you found out.

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________________________________

**Staffing requisition form**

Regardless of the approach taken, most organisations will have a process either formal (written) or informal (verbal) for requesting additional staff. As mentioned previously, this is an excellent opportunity to carefully review the position, update the job description and specification before action is taken to fill the vacancy.
Talk to the HR unit in your organisation, if you are not already working in the area, and find out what type of staffing requisition process takes place.

1. What controls are in place for the recruitment process?

_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________

2. What part does the job description and specification play in gaining approval to proceed to recruiting?

_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________

3. What level of *sign-off* is required before this action takes place?

_________________________________________________________________
4 How are options, other than to simply fill the vacancy with additional staff, considered?

Internal recruiting

Many organisations choose to fill vacancies from within, resulting in the final vacancy falling to an entry-type position. In many instances this results in a multiplier effect for promotions and as such can have significant motivation benefits. Part of the human resource planning strategies incorporate this technique and, although it may be a case of those involved not actually receiving a promotion but rather a transfer at their existing level, the result is increased multiskilling and the avoidance of possible redundancies.

With internal recruitment activities of this type, it is essential that the HR unit has immediate access to relevant staff information – this is best achieved by using an effective human resource management information system (HRMIS). By the use of vacancy bulletins, career opportunity newsletters, direct mail and special announcements, staff can be kept informed of these internal opportunities. As with any other recruitment strategy, you will need to be clear about the competencies sought, the job notice content details and reply periods, as well as assurance that all employees are aware of the process and the procedures to be followed. There is obviously potential for EEO-related issues to arise here!

External recruitment

Some external recruitment methods are summarised below.

Using the Job Network

Job Network is a national network of more than 300 private, community and government employment agencies. People looking for employment can
choose which and how many Job Network members they will register with. There may be fees involved if using this option.

**Schools and colleges**

You could recruit by contacting the careers advisers of schools in close proximity to your business. In addition, you could contact the head teacher of the TAFE faculty your potential recruit would be studying with—for example, Business Services, Information Technology. You would need to provide them with your job description and person specification. This method may be particularly helpful if you are looking for specific skills or knowledge and the institution in question has courses in that skill or knowledge. For example, many computer and marketing businesses recruit directly from TAFE or universities.

**Advertising**

One of the most popular recruitment methods is advertising in local, state or national newspapers, or in professional or trade journals. Local, metropolitan and national newspapers are the most common form of external recruitment advertising in Australia. Their main advantage is in having a specialised section for employment. If you decide to use this method, it is important to make your advertisement very clear. As unemployment levels are still relatively high, your position may well attract in excess of 100 applications. Accordingly, you want potential applicants to screen themselves out (that is, not apply) with a well thought-out and clearly worded advertisement which effectively targets the required audience. This means clearly presented essential and desirable job and person specifications. We will look at advertising in more detail later.

**Employment agencies**

There are a great many employment agencies offering their services nowadays. Such agencies usually specialise in a specific area of expertise. For example, some agencies specialise in office staff, computer technicians, labourers or the legal profession and usually have a good supply of candidates on their books.

As a potential employer, you could register with the agency and ask them to do the preliminary recruitment work for you. The agency would then advertise the position, sort through all applicants and provide you with a shortlist of candidates (against your job description and person specification) ready for interview.

In return, agencies will require a fee from you upon the successful placement of an applicant. This could equate to 5–15% of the annual starting
salaries of the successful applicant plus expenses. Although this seems an expensive way to recruit, it can save you time and resources.

Further, many of the more reputable agencies offer a guarantee, such as if the new employee leaves within a certain length of time, usually six to 12 months, the agency will recruit someone else free, or return the original fee.

**Networking**

This can provide a highly effective source of information on potential candidates and is especially beneficial if you have an extensive network of contacts. Contacts could include suppliers, competitors, associations, unions, business or academic acquaintances, clubs and friends.

**The Internet**

The internet is fundamentally changing the way we do business. E-business and e-commerce are becoming the norm rather than the exception and recruitment is not immune to this change. Recruitment via the Internet, or e-recruiting as it is sometimes labelled, involves employers or applicants or both going on-line in pursuit of an employment relationship. In the December 2000 issue of the *HR Monthly*, it was suggested that there are already a million Australians using the Internet employment classifieds and more than 20% of them do not read print classifieds any more.

The turnaround time for a response to a vacancy on the Net can be as little as fifteen minutes from the initial posting. The main attraction is that candidates can find vacancies faster and access a range of services easily, quickly and at no cost. For employers the Internet is relatively inexpensive giving wide coverage and instant ongoing access. The main drawback can be attracting the right person due to the large amount of information on the Net – large search engines such as seek.com provide a user-friendly interface.

Applicants can have jobs emailed to them directly with services such as Job Alert on [www.mycareer.com.au](http://www.mycareer.com.au). Various job boards exist as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Job Board</th>
<th>Web address</th>
<th>Monthly average job vacancies in past 12 months</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Career One</td>
<td><a href="http://www.careerone.com.au">www.careerone.com.au</a></td>
<td>38 000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job Search</td>
<td><a href="http://www.jobsearch.com.au">www.jobsearch.com.au</a></td>
<td>50 000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seek</td>
<td><a href="http://www.seek.com.au">www.seek.com.au</a></td>
<td>31 454</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Byron Employment</td>
<td><a href="http://www.employment.byron.com.au">www.employment.byron.com.au</a></td>
<td>38 000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job Net</td>
<td><a href="http://www.jobnet.com.au">www.jobnet.com.au</a></td>
<td>22 000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Activity 5

You may now be in a better position to evaluate the effectiveness of internal as against external recruitment for your own organisation. Imagine that your manager has asked you to do just that—in the space below list the advantages and disadvantages of each approach.

_________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________
Once you have decided to proceed to fill a vacancy, advertising is the most common means of attracting a suitable pool of applicants. A well-written advertisement can also positively promote the organisation to the extent that people who are not actively looking to change jobs will be stimulated enough to make some initial enquiries about the vacancy.

Preparing a job advertisement

The information you have accumulated to date (your job’s description and its person specification) is used when preparing your job advertisement.

Critical factors

You have now reached one of the most vital steps to date, which in many respects is the key to the selection process. This is the identification of the critical factors against which you will assess your candidates. Remember to firstly consider how each factor may be demonstrated or assessed. These will become your essentials and desirables. For example:

*Problem-solving*

This may be demonstrated or assessed by:

- identifying and assessing relevant information objectively
- distinguishing between symptoms and causes
- using appropriate techniques and tools
- generation and evaluation of a range of options.
**Communication**

This may be demonstrated or assessed by:

- expressing facts and ideas clearly and concisely
- effective listening
- demonstrating prepared reports which are clear, complete, correctly formatted
- demonstrating an ability to communicate with all levels of target groups.

Check also that you have an appropriate balance between technical, people and conceptual skills and that you group critical factors logically to facilitate interviewing and assessment. For example:

- knowledge, experience and skill requirements
- behavioural factors
- motivation
- personality factors.

An example would be:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Customer service team leader</th>
<th>Production supervisor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Planning and organising</td>
<td>Scheduling and control</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Written and oral communication</td>
<td>Problem-solving ability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Product knowledge</td>
<td>Initiative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Possessing innovative and creative ideas</td>
<td>Maintain performance and service standards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to create and maintain friendly team environment</td>
<td>Motivate and energise staff</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The job description and specification capture the critical factors or criteria that form the task and competency profile for the job. The critical skills, knowledge and attitudes or attributes needed by the potential employee are often divided into essential (*must haves*) and desirable (*nice to have*) characteristics. An example for a phone-a-loan customer service team leader is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tasks</th>
<th>Competency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lead and motivate a team of customer service operators</td>
<td>Team-based management of large diverse group of staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monitor the performance of the team for accuracy and service standards levels</td>
<td>Commitment and capacity to implement quality improvement programs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Induct new operators</td>
<td>Highly developed interpersonal skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Handle escalation of customer problems and difficult calls</td>
<td>Analysis and problem-solving skills</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
These critical factors or criteria now become the basis of your employment advertisement and the selection interview.

The type of advertisement you write depends on the job and level you are writing it for. For example a large advertisement in a national paper is probably not warranted for a Grade 4 Clerk. Similarly, advertising for a National Sales Manager may warrant targeted international as well as national coverage, in conjunction with targeted journal advertising.

The cost of advertising will largely depend on its size, placement and frequency however its effectiveness will be measured by its ability to quickly target and attract a pool of applicants that potentially fit both the job and the organisation.

Writing the advertisement

Your advertisement is intended to attract the most appropriate people. It should therefore be physically appealing, well-placed and interesting or amusing (if appropriate) to read.

What makes a good job advertisement?

- The applicant should recognise what the job is, especially its basic functions.
- The advertisement should attract and maintain the reader’s interest and present a favourable image of the organisation.
- It should be clear what the requirements are, so that unsuitable applicants will not apply.
- Applicants should see the job as an improvement on their present position.

What should advertisements contain?

You should consider inclusion of the following:

- name of the business
- brief description of the business
- location of the business
- job title
- brief job description
- reporting relationship of job
- minimum experience, knowledge and qualifications required
• any unusual features of the job
• clear instructions on how to apply (ie by phone, written application, personal visit)
• whom the response should come to (contact person) and by when
• inclusion of relevant phone numbers, addresses etc.

Tips for successful advertising
• Seek candidates that really exist.
• Write attractive advertising copy.
• Place your advertisement in the most suitable media.
• Make your advertisement look attractive.
• Choose the best time.
• Make contact easy.
• Choose a style of communication that will appeal to the target group.
• Use short sentences.
• Use plain language.
• Be accurate and honest.
• Use positive-sounding words.
• Balance the layout.
• Give an assurance of confidentiality.
• Use the AIDA technique:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Attention (gain the applicant’s attention)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>Interest (arouse interest)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>Desire (stimulate desire by convincing that you can satisfy needs)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Action (stimulate reply action).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Activity 6

Consider the advertisements you collected previously. List your impressions of each in terms of the points under the headings *What should advertisements contain?* and *Tips for successful advertising* from the preceding page. Could these ads be improved? How?

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**Discrimination in advertising**

Remember when writing and displaying your advertisement not to breach existing EEO/anti-discrimination legislation. For example, you should consider the following general principles:

- Advertisements should be worded so that they do not openly, or by implication, discourage persons from applying because of their age, gender, race, religion, political opinions, sexual orientation etc.
- Qualities and qualifications that are unnecessary in order to perform the work should not be included.
- Exemptions exercised under the *Anti-Discrimination Act* should be clearly displayed.—for example, positive discrimination towards Aboriginal/Torres Strait Islander people or a particular gender (see sample job advertisements in Figure 2).
Wording to avoid discrimination

The most common form of discrimination in job advertisements in Australia is in relation to gender. Therefore you should be particularly careful to:

- use words which have no specific gender ie person, applicant, operator, sales representative etc
- avoid using the pronouns he/his/him or she/her, by instead using they/their/them.

Exemptions: legally accepted discrimination

Earlier in this module you investigated positive discrimination and exemptions under various sections of the Anti Discrimination Act. The following advertisements demonstrate legally accepted discrimination.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CO-ORDINATOR Aboriginal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FAIRSIDES COMMUNITY RESOURCE CENTRE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fairfides Community Resource Centre is a non-profit organisation sponsoring a range of projects in the areas Youth, Children, Community Development Services and the Arts. Applications are sought for the above position to be based at the Centre.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESSENTIAL:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Application must be of Aboriginal/Torres Strait Islander descent: Qualifications or extensive experience in Community Work, Social Sciences or equivalent; Extensive experience in co-ordinating, developing, planning, implementing and evaluating programs; Demonstrated understanding of issues effecting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people; Experience in preparing and monitoring budgets, keeping financial records and accounts; Experience preparing program reports and applications for funding; Ability to work under a community development plan; Commitment to Social Justice; Knowledge of EEO. OH&amp;S policies and procedures; Own car and licence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DESIRABLE:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In this position, being Aboriginal/Torres Strait Islander descent is a genuine occupational requirement and it is authorised by Section 24 of the Anti-Discrimination Act of 1977. Conditions and pay in accordance with SACS Award, Category 3 level, dependent on experience and qualifications. For job description and package phone Fazzard on (02) 9122 3334. Closing Date: 17/7/81. Applications in writing including 2 referees to : The Director Fairfides Community Research Centre PO Box 90 Fairfides 9623.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BRIGHTSIDE COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTRE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SEXUAL ASSAULT WORKER</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Position Number: AB01/123</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Readvertised)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feminine gender is a genuine occupational requirement of the position (General Exemption section 32, Anti-Discrimination Act 1977). A permanent full-time vacancy exists at the Brightside Sexual Assault Service for a sexual assault worker and a two-day per week group facilitator. Terms and Conditions of employment are in accordance with the Public Hospital Professional &amp; Associated (State) Award for a Sexual Assault Worker ($29,646-$36,911 pa). Contact Officer: Margaret Blank on (02) 5821 3913. Closing Date: 26 November 1997.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WESTERN SYDNEY AREA HEALTH SERVICE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ethics Review Committee Lay Man</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This position does not attract any remuneration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applications are sought from men not closely involved in medical, scientific or legal work who are interested in becoming a member of the Ethics Review Committee.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Because of the nature of this role, being male is an essential qualification as defined under section 31C(2) of the Anti-Discrimination Act. The Committee is convened in accordance with the guidelines set out by the National Health and Medical Research Council. Its role is to consider the ethical implications of research involving human subjects, which is undertaken within the Area Health Service.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The successful applicant will be required to attend Committee meetings at the Princess Royal Hospital on the second Wednesday of each month (February—December) from 2.00pm to approximately 7.00pm. Prospective applicants should be aware that the workload of the Committee is heavy, and approximately eight hours of preparatory reading would be required before each meeting. Further details can be obtained from the Secretary on (02) 9311 1111, and written applications can be forwarded to her subsequently at the Research Development Office, Princess Royal Hospital, Mary Avenue, Concord NSW 2138.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Appointments are subject to a satisfactory relevant criminal record check. An Equal Opportunity Employer promoting a Smoke-Free Working Environment.*
Figure 2: Legally accepted discrimination in job advertisements
Activity 7: Write an ad!

1. Using the following advertisement, design an advertisement that would be more effective in attracting the right person for the vacancy—make any additions and changes you feel are necessary.

   The Buttaba Healthcare Company distributes health care products and has an opportunity for a sales representative for its Central Coast region. The company is a market leader and had just completed its fifth year of continued growth and intends to continue this performance by continuing to employ quality staff. If you have experience, done cold calling and are good with people, this could be you joining our team. Competitive compensation package available. Call us on 123 456789.

   Write the ad in the box provided.

2. Evaluate your version of the advertisement using the checklist suggested above and ideas contained in your text.
As you can see from our earlier discussions, advertisements are designed to bring about action (AIDA), so we need to plan and prepare for the responses that will flow from our advertisements. Just as the selection process starts from the first contact with the applicant, so too does the applicant begin a process of forming an opinion about the organisation, from the advertisement and the subsequent response to their enquiries.

This is an important stage in the process and requires planning to ensure that all those involved are aware that the advertisement has been placed and that they then respond in a courteous and professional manner. If your advertisement asks applicants to phone a person after a certain date and time, make sure that the contact person is available and well-informed to deal with the enquiry. All applications should be acknowledged promptly and courteously and a proforma may be used for this purpose.

Applicant information package

Some organisations find it useful to prepare an information package for applicants. This might include an application form, a copy of the duty statement and specification, as well as relevant background information about the organisation. As one objective of recruitment and selection is to match people to jobs and jobs to people, it is in everyone’s interests for potential employees to be well-informed about the job and the organisation. Again, this is an excellent public relations opportunity to promote the organisation as professional and courteous. Although only one applicant can be successful in gaining the position, all applicants will form a positive or negative impression of the organisation at each stage of the recruitment and selection process.

Cost/benefit of advertising strategies

Since the cost will vary depending on the newspaper chosen, span of coverage, placement within the paper as well as size of the advertisement, it is obviously important to map the response rates.

- Did the advertisement reach the right target audience?
• If not, what needs to be changed? Day of week? Page/section of the paper?
• National rather than a state-based or local paper?

Decisions about these options will depend on the accuracy of the feedback available from your current strategies.

The ultimate measure of the effectiveness of your advertisement will be how well the person chosen performs on the job and whether they stay in the position!

This aspect is covered later.

Application forms

Some organisations use application forms as a way of capturing all the initial essential information needed to make a decision about whether to take the applicant to the next phase of the recruitment or selection phase.

The application form makes it easier to compare applicants across a selected range of criteria that the applicant may not otherwise address in their resume or letter of application. These forms also provide the basic bio-data necessary for later action if the person is appointed and has a legal foundation for verifying information provided by the applicant.

There are important EEO and privacy considerations with application forms. These concern the type of information organisations can legally seek from applicants and what they can do with such information. It is strongly suggested that you make yourself familiar with these provisions, because the application form is often used as the initial sorting tool for short-listing applicants against selection criteria. If you have a particular position that requires some specific details about applicants, and you feel this constitutes a genuine reason for asking for particularly private information, the NSW Privacy Committee encourages employers to discuss such cases directly with one of its consultants.

An application form would generally contain such information as:
• personal details (eg name, address)
• education, qualifications, training
• employment history, past and present
• reference details
• specific claims to the position.
Activity 8

1 Using your text, and any other sources of information (including workplaces), locate at least two job application forms. Compare and evaluate their design in terms of EEO and Privacy Guidelines and their ability to provide the essential information efficiently.

2 Using your research findings and knowledge, design an application form which would be suitable for applicants applying for your own position. Use your own paper and computer to do this.
Check your progress

To assist you in reviewing your understanding of this section, go through the following checklist. Those competencies that you ticked No to or I need to review should be studied again. You can contact your teacher if you need clarification.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I can</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>I need to review</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Define and distinguish between the terms recruitment and selection</td>
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<td>• Identify the major factors that affect the supply and demand for labour</td>
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<td>• List the sources and methods of recruitment and evaluate their suitability in a number of given situations</td>
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<td>• Outline the advantages and disadvantages of recruiting internally or externally</td>
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<td>• Write a job advertisement</td>
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<td>• Compare the cost and effectiveness of various advertising strategies</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Design an application form for a specific position</td>
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