

The YEBDC Small Business Information Column

by Sue Gingerich, Business Advisor

"Hiring Employees, Ten Easy Steps To Get The Best"

The day has finally arrived, you are ready to hire your first employee! But where to start? How do you make sure you get the absolute best person for the job? You think back to all those painful interviews you went to when you were still an employee, ouch! You don't want to be intimidating, yet... hiring the right person, is important. You don't want to waste valuable time by having to possibly work harder at training than you should, or heaven forbid, have to fire this person and start all over again!

Below are some simple steps that you can use when hiring a new employee:

1. First evaluate thoroughly the needs of the company. What tasks need to be completed? What skills will it take to accomplish these tasks?
2. Write a job description. Include all tasks this person will be expected to perform. Also include all the skills needed to perform these tasks, or previous training that would be beneficial to this position.
3. Search for the right candidate, based on your job description. Some places you might try using in your search: newspapers, teachers and instructors at schools (Colleges, Universities, High Schools), school placement offices, Alberta Service Centres, local employment offices (BREC, YEBDC, Alberta Human Resources and Employment, Career and Employment Centres), your own files, private employment agencies, referrals: from other businesses and employees.
4. Screen applicants. Start by reviewing all applications. Compare applications or resumes to your job description. One system is to group by; A) Most desirable, best matching the job description, B) Good, but not qualified in all areas, C) Not qualified or suitable for the position.
5. Interview applicants. Start by interviewing all in group A. If no one in group A seems right or is available, go to group B. If no one suitable is found in group B, do not resort to group C. In most cases it would be a better use of your time to recruit new applicants. The interview is the time to uncover their suitability to your organization. Use a mixture of open and closed questions:
 - What skills do they feel they have to offer your company?
 - What did they like most/least about their last job?
 - What are their career ambitions?
 - What are three adjectives their friends would use to describe them? One very important question technique is to use a hypothetical situation. Sometimes a second interview may be appropriate, if there were a large number of initial candidates. If someone other than yourself will have direct supervision over this person, they could be included in the first or second interview.
6. Reference checks can be done at the point you have actually selected a candidate. There is no need to call several people's references if ultimately they don't get the job, unless of course you are having trouble deciding who to hire. Then checking references may help you to make your selection.
7. Call and offer the position, be sure to include the start date, remuneration and job expectations. (Although these should have been made clear in the interview).
8. Next is the orientation. How do things work around the office/shop? Where will they find things, who can they ask for help? What are the unwritten rules of the company. Where can they look up things if no one is around to ask?

9. Training. Do not confuse this with the orientation. Always allow new employees to feel oriented before you start their training. If training is started too soon, it won't stick; everything may be too new and too confusing. Depending on the job it could be several hours or several days before they are ready to actually start training.
10. Always follow up on new employees. What are they enjoying about the job? What are they finding more difficult than they thought they would? How are they doing compared to your job expectations?

Don't think that once you have hired the absolute best employee, you never have to worry about them again. Every type of employee needs different management techniques. So, understand your employees and their level of enthusiasm and ability before leaving them totally on their own.

If you have a small business and have a question or problem that you think The YEBDC could help you with please call or write to: The Yellowhead East Business Development Corporation, Box 249, Sangudo, Alberta, T0E 2A0
1-800-556-0328 or 1-780-785-2900, e mail: yebdc@yebdc.ab.ca, or access our Website at: www.yebdc.ab.ca

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