

Qualification: CIPD Diploma in Applied Human Resources

Understanding Resourcing and Talent Planning

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Understanding Resourcing and Talent Planning

Introduction

Changes within the working environment are shifting; changes in the world of work, evolving employee expectations and advances in technology which are transforming the modern workforce and workplace (Fosway Group, 2017). Organisations should be prepared and able to respond to the changing demographics and as such, should be putting Resourcing and Talent Management at the forefront so they don't get 'left behind'. This will ensure the workforce has the relevant skills and abilities for the organisation's current and future needs (CIPD, 2018a).

Resource and Talent Management

Resourcing activities are a major part of the generalist HR role and focuses on six objectives; staffing, performance, administration, change management, reputation-building and promoting employee well-being (Taylor, 2018).

Resource and Talent Planning has been defined as:

"A major and fundamental objective of the HR function is the mobilisation of a workforce. Organisations can only function if they are able to assemble teams of people with the necessary skills, attitudes and experience to meet their objectives" (Taylor, 2019).

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the HR function would have played a central role in the mobilisation of the workforce by keeping the workforce engaged, productive and resilient (Deloitte, 2021).

Talent Planning

This process ensures the right people with the right skills are employed at the right time. The CIPD (2020a) define this as a process of generating information, analysing it to inform future demand for people and skills, and translating that into a set of actions that will develop and build on the existing workforce to meet demand. This process is not just focused on one area; it looks at a range of activities that could impact on the availability of talent:

Figure 1: Some factors contributing to the need for workforce planning



(Workforce Planning Practice, CIPD, 2018)

For example, globalisation, which will see organisations competing for resources or technology which is reshaping the world of work and how things are done.

Labour Market Analysis

To effectively talent plan and resource, organisations need to understand the market they are operating in. A labour market analysis will assist as it will identify the trends shaping the economy. The results will then inform methods used by an organisation to resource and recruit.

“What happens in the economy, or in individual product and labour markets, ultimately determines how many staff organisations need to recruit, retain and develop in order to meet customer demand” (CIPD, 2020b).

It is not always possible to resource and recruit the required employees as all employers are competing within the labour markets. For example, when labour markets are loose, perhaps during times of high unemployment, the resources won't be as much of an issue. The problem will arise when the labour market is tight, and the staff with the required skill set are difficult to acquire. Therefore, knowing the type of labour market will determine the recruitment method.

Sources of Labour

Job seekers: this can include the local market which is from the local area and tends to be for lower skilled jobs, national market which is from anywhere in the country and tend to be suited to companies who are seeking to fill skilled/specialist roles or the international market which is from anywhere in the world and tend to be for higher, skilled/specialist or shortage roles.

Working in other Companies: people who are not actively looking; however, will consider moving if the right package was offered.

Graduates: actively looking and are highly educated. They often want some form of structured development plan.

School or College Leavers: actively looking but will require investment from an organisation in terms of training and development.

Economically inactive: not currently either in employment or looking for employment. However, they could enter the workforce if the appropriate incentives or provisions were made available. (Taylor and Woodhams, 2016).

Factors that Affect Demand and Supply of Skills

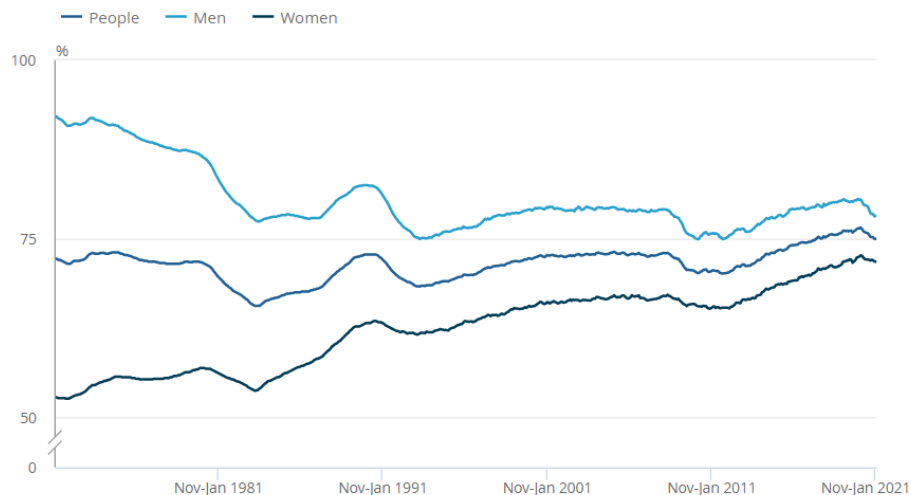
Taylor and Woodhams (2016) cite the following factors as having an impact on the labour market that will affect whether it's a tight or loose labour market:

- The economic context: the slowdown in economic activity over a sustained period can result in companies being forced to close or downsize resulting in a loose labour market. This is potentially the current situation due to the COVID-19 pandemic whereby more than 17,500 chain store outlets have closed (The Guardian, 2021).
- Demographic changes: the number of births and deaths, inward and outward migration from the country and an aging population. Since the 1960's the birth rate within the UK has fallen from 17.5 per 1,000 to just 11 per thousand so fewer people entering the market (Statista, 2020).
- Political changes: Immigration policies and investment in national skills development influence the number of people in the labour market and their usefulness to employing organisations.
- Legislative changes: The Equality Act has opened the labour market to groups who traditionally would have perhaps have previously been excluded, for example, those who are disabled or past retirement age.
- Technological developments: because of new technology developments, jobs are being created that will require technical skills; technological change has reduced the need for routine mechanized work and increased both the demand and pay for high-skilled technical and analytic work (Urban Institute, 2018).
- Natural Disasters: Epidemics or international events such as war can wipe out or divert labour force.

Contemporary Trends in the UK and Australia

Over the last few years, the UK's labour market performance has been remarkably strong. The figures from the Office of National Statistics, Labour Market Overview UK, March 2021, show that employment rates for 16-64-year-olds has gradually been increasing:

UK employment rates (aged 16 to 64 years), seasonally adjusted, between January to March 1971 and November 2020 to January 2021



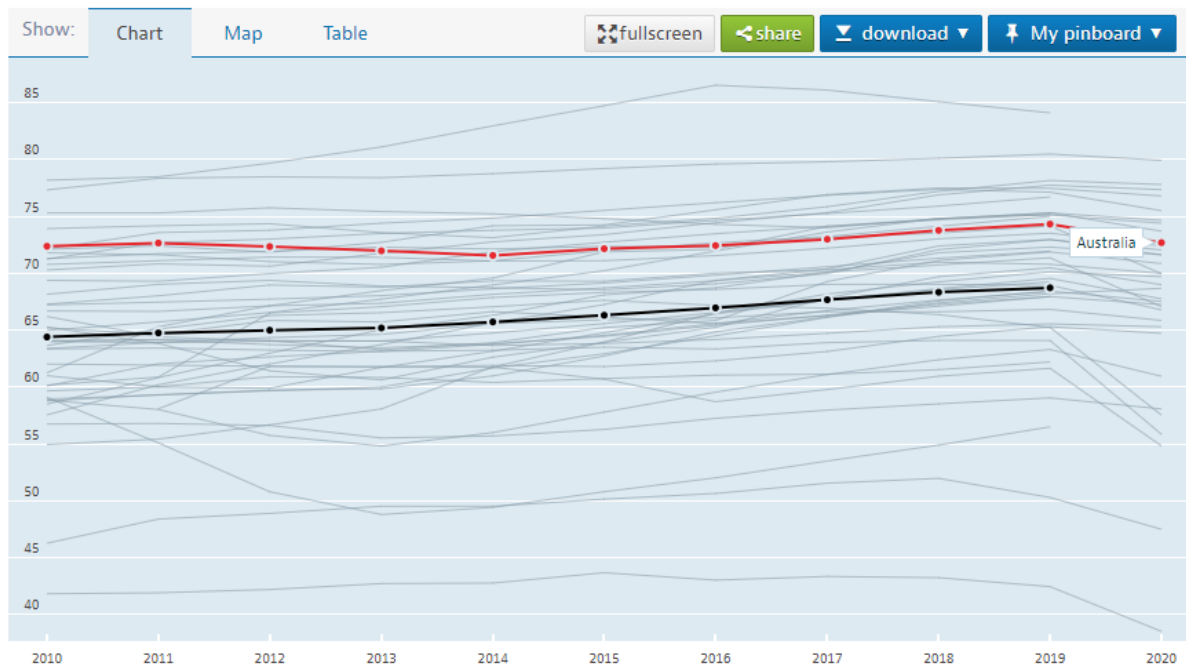
(ONS, 2021).

Employment rates are currently reaching highs of around 75% with the female employment rate being 71.8% whilst the male employment rate is 78.2%. The recent rise within UK employment could be attributed to that fact that employers are encouraging people to remain in the workforce for longer along with the State Pension Age which has gradually been increasing. In terms of part-time employment, based on working less than 35 hours per week, women accounted for most of this area at a rate of 38% in comparison to just 13% of men (Devine, Foley and Ward, 2020). The unemployment rate, which measures the economically active population, had previously been falling since late 2013. However, this has since increased and currently stands at 5%. The CIPD's Labour Market Outlook survey (2021) shows the employment sectors are currently highest within Healthcare, ICT or Business Services. The average salary earned per annum within the UK is £29,600 (JobTed, UK, 2021).

In comparison, the OECD data shows that employment rates for Australia have been steady for 15-64-year olds since 2010 and has always been comfortably within the 70% mark:

Employment rate Total, % of working age population, 2010 – 2020

Source: Labour: Labour market statistics

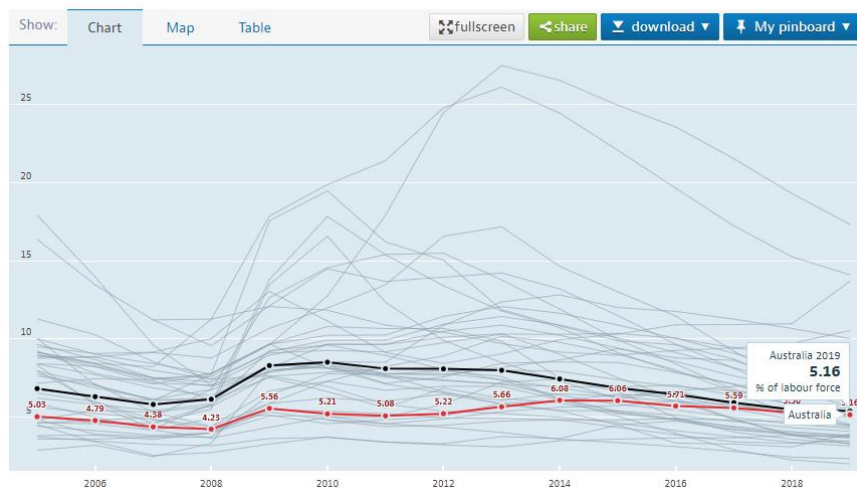


(theOECD, 2021)

However, the overall employment rate falls behind the UK and stands at 73.5% of the working age population, with the female employment rate being 61% and male employment rate at 71.2%. However, unlike the UK, the employment rates within Australia are sensitive to the economic cycle, and significantly affected by their government's higher education and income support policies. In terms of part-time employment, which is based on working less than 30 hours per week, the results are more or less similar to that of the UK whereby women account for most of this area at an employment rate of 37.1% where as men only account for 15.3%. The unemployment rate, which is measured against people of working age who are without work has slightly decreased to 5.16%. This is the lowest that it has been since 2012:

Unemployment rate Total, % of labour force, 2005 – 2019

Source: Labour: Labour market statistics



(theOECD, 2021).

The employment sectors which are currently at their highest include Healthcare, ICT or Business Services. The average salary earned per annum is higher than the UK and equates to £54.4k.

Workforce Planning

“The aim of workforce planning is to ensure that your organisation has the workforce it needs to achieve its business objectives. It also helps managers share and respond to their assumptions about the future, using an evidence-based approach” (XpertHR, 2020).

To plan effectively, an organisation will look at their mission, goals and strategic plan over the next few years to determine what resources will be required. This involves analysing the workforce and identifying competencies needed to build the workforce for the future. By having this in place it can help an organisation to:

- Control the employee costs
- Assess the talent needs
- Assess risk towards the organisation
- Improve efficiency of employees

Workforce Planning Process

This will flow from an organisation’s strategy as this links people management into the operational business. As such, input will be required from a variety of stakeholders to provide information both internally and externally to form the context of the plan.

The CIPD (2020a) identified six main stages of workforce planning:



Firstly, it is important to understand how the organisation is operating to compare with what it needs to look like in the future. This can be accomplished by analysing current processes, technology, and structure. Secondly, an analysis of the current workforce to establish competencies along with other employment information, for example, having conversations with managers to gauge workforce issues or concerns. Thirdly, an estimation of what the future workforce demand and supply looks like by determining the number and skill set of people within different workforce groups that the organisation will require. For example, are there people within the organisation that could be developed to meet the future demand or will a recruitment exercise be required to source people outside of the organisation. This data will enable gaps within the workforce to be identified to enable an action plan to be created. For instance, future roles are likely to need greater technological awareness, so perhaps building processes in to staff development programmes can prepare employees for what lies ahead. By categorising all actions that need to be taken forward, key areas will be identified that will provide more clarity as to how these will be achieved and provide specific details such as who will be accountable for this. The plan will need to be monitored and evaluated so it can be adjusted based on workforce analytics.

Importance of Workforce Planning

Workforce planning provides a framework for making critical staffing decisions by making sure the 'talent' is in place to deliver an organisation's goals. Organisations who do not carry out workforce planning pose a real risk to themselves and their business. The CIPD warns that *employers need to assign greater urgency to undertake strategic workforce planning that will help identify the skills and knowledge required now and for the future, which in turn will help to narrow down the focus of the learning and development required* (CIPD n.d, Workforce Trends). An example of poor workforce planning was made evident by Ryanair who failed to plan for their pilots' holidays, meaning there were not enough pilots to fly the planes. As a result, Ryanair had to cancel 18,000 flights and £320m was wiped off Ryanair's stock market value (Faragher, 2017).

Succession Planning

The CIPD (2020c) define this as "*The process of identifying and developing future leaders and senior managers, as well as individuals, to fill business-critical roles. The aim is to fill key roles effectively if a current post holder leaves the organisation*". Unlike workforce planning, which looks at the organisation's long-term goals, succession planning provides insight into who has the skills to grow and develop into senior positions within the organisation when they become vacant to enable a smooth transition. This has increased in popularity given recruitment freezes and the potential of skill shortages. Organisations are upskilling current employees to enable them to fill business critical roles, which are not always 'top level' roles.

Approaches to Succession Planning

Succession planning consists of assessing the capabilities of potential leaders and looking at how they will be developed to fill key roles in the future. Traditionally, large organisations ran highly structured, confidential, and top-down succession schemes aimed at identifying successors for key posts and would plan their career paths accordingly. However, this approach is subjective; the decision is based on managerial judgement and other employees who have the skills may miss out simply because they are not known to a manager, and it is secretive; it is discussed at board level and individuals will not know they are on the list or being considered. In comparison, the modern succession scheme is far more open and fairer. This is because the roles available are communicated to the workforce, the process is devolved to line managers who work with their team and will know their skill set / experience, it's a fairer process as each employee would have gone through some form of internal process and most importantly it incorporates all employees not just a select few.

Identifying Successors

Successors are primarily identified by an appraisal. The aspirations of an employee are discussed, along with an assessment of their skills, which will form a development plan based on the skills they will require for the next level. Development activities identified by Taylor (2016) include formal training programmes, coaching, mentoring, work shadowing, supervised 'acting up' ownership of projects or experience in different departments. Elements of these activities will enable the employee to gain exposure and provide them with a more rounded view of the organisation as a whole and widen their opportunities throughout the company.

Fair Access to Opportunity

Employers have a duty to provide all employees with fair access to the opportunities available and this can be achieved by:

- Communication to all employees not just to individuals identified.
- Transparency with opportunities by advertising for senior roles.
- Regular employee appraisals to ensure there is always an opportunity to discuss wants and aspirations.
- Fairness in the selection process to show how an individual has met the criteria, i.e. to show it has been an objective selection process as opposed to management discretion.
- 360-degree development feedback from all who they have worked with.

Attracting and Retaining Talent

The development of a resourcing strategy will ensure that an organisation obtains and retains the people it needs by finding the most suitable workforce based on organisational needs.

Competitor Analysis

Prior to forming the strategy, it is important to have awareness of what others are doing. A competitor analysis will identify businesses in the market that offer similar products or services that can be evaluated based on a set of predetermined criteria (Schooley, 2020). It will establish the strengths and weaknesses of the employment deals offered by a competitor such as salary, benefits and employment security and look at how you can offer potential employees a better package and be the employer of choice.

Organisation Positioning

The way an organisation presents itself can also have an immediate impact on its success. Higgs (2004) offers a useful model based on two factors, reward (the amount of money paid to employees) and culture (the extent to which employees are respected and treated ethically).

Overall, there are four types of employers:

- Employer of cash: treat employee's harshly but pays well.
- Employer of values: cannot pay market rate but treats employees very well.
- Employer of churn: tends to both pay and treat employees harshly.
- Employer of choice: pays well and treats employee's fairly.

An organisation should categorise into one of the four types of employers as this can determine who the competitors are and the strategy that's taken for recruitment.

Employer Branding

This is unique to organisations and ultimately looks at how they differentiate themselves within the labour market, enabling them to be the 'employer of choice'. Its defined as a *"strategic process that involves creating a unique place of work that attracts the talent whose knowledge and skills are needed to meet the organisation's goals and objectives"* (Employer Branding, 2019).

It is crucial the brand message is strong and reflects current values. The message must reflect the reality of working for the organisation and not incorporate any false claims. Otherwise, the organisation runs the risk of new recruits leaving, current employees being disgruntled, and the reputation of the organisation will suffer.

Attraction Strategies

The Resourcing and Talent Planning Survey 2020 provided useful insight into the current attraction strategies used by organisations:

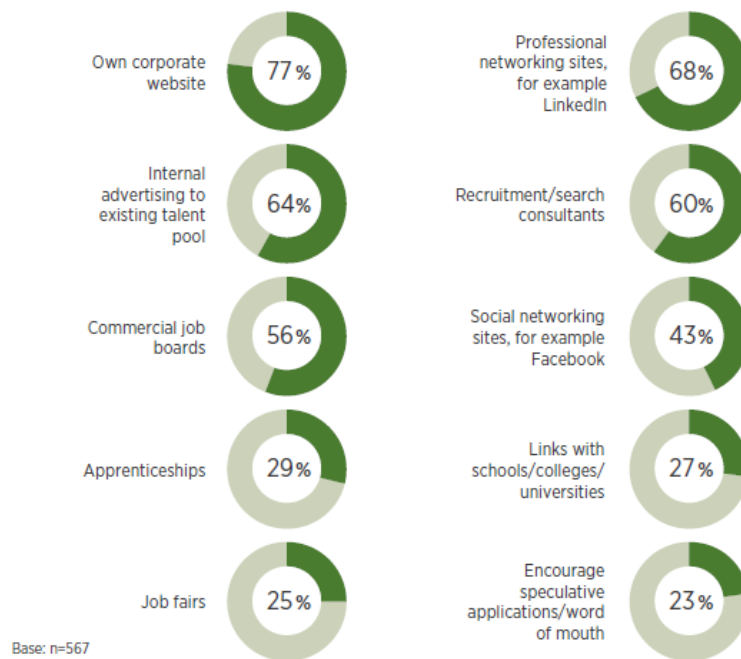
Figure 7: Top 5 most important elements of employer brand for attracting candidates (%)



(CIPD, 2020d)

Organisational values are considered the most important as employers are promoting their values through their branding and making sure it's consistent with their organisation. In terms of effective method, the use of a corporate website was ranked highest as this will provide a true reflection of the organisation, followed by professional networking sites such as LinkedIn which may target candidates who perhaps previously wouldn't have considered the organisation:

Figure 8: Top 10 effective attraction methods in the last 12 months (%)



(CIPD, 2020d)

Retaining Talent

Employee turnover can have a negative impact on an organisation's performance, so it is crucial that an organisation understands the extent of the problem and why it is occurring.

There are two types of employee turnover; Functional whereby low performing employees are terminated or leave of their own will and Dysfunctional which can have a negative impact on the organisation in terms of cost to replace employees, exit of high performers or exit of employees with hard to replace skill set. To understand the overall cost, the following issues must be considered:

Direct costs	Indirect costs
• HR administration time re the leaver • Costs of advertising the vacancy • HR administration time re the recruitment and selection process (sifting CVs, etc) • Selection expenses • Costs of covering the role while it is vacant (paying overtime to other staff or employing a temp) • HR administration time re the new starter • New starter costs • Induction and basic training costs	• Departing employee is less productive in final weeks • New employee is less productive in first few weeks • Loss of morale and productivity in colleagues if sad at departure or annoyed at increased workload • Possible damage to client relationships • Lack of return on investment in relation to any training and development that the departing employee was given • Company information could be used to the advantage of a competitor • Damage to company reputation (if individual leaves on bad terms or turnover level is high)

(Taylor and Woodhams,2016)

The Resourcing and Talent planning survey 2020 revealed that only 18% calculate the cost of labour turnover.

Improve Employee Retention

To reduce dysfunctional turnover, it is important to consider the reasons so that appropriate interventions can be put in place to prevent it. Common sources of data include:

- Exit Interviews: A representative will “interview” the employee to look at their reasons for leaving, factors that may have encouraged them to stay and what improvements could be made moving forward. However, this may not provide a true reflection of their reason for leaving as individuals may be reluctant to voice any criticism.
- Staff Surveys: target the current workforce and gather data which could contribute to retention strategies as it will identify areas of dissatisfaction which require improvement and could prevent employees leaving.
- Survey of Ex-Employees: Issue after a set period after departure as it could provide further clarity on their reason for leaving which they did not divulge previously.

The above data can be analysed and used to formulate retention initiatives that focuses on the causes of turnover. Taylor and Woodhams (2016) provided common reasons for leaving along with retention initiatives:

Table 3.2 Reasons for leaving, with associated retention initiatives

Reason for leaving	Retention initiatives
Lack of development opportunities	Regular employee appraisals Investment in training and development (various forms) Skills development programmes (linked to succession planning) Lateral as well as vertical moves
Bad relationships with supervisors or colleagues	Investment in management training Developing an internal mediation scheme Communication and teambuilding activities Opportunities for internal transfers
Negative opinion of the company in general	Transparency in policies and procedures Communication initiatives Consultation and involvement initiatives A focus on equal opportunities and diversity Investment in ethics and corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives
Dissatisfaction with reward	External benchmarking with other companies to ensure that salaries are competitive An internal job evaluation procedure to ensure that reward is equitably distributed A flexible benefits scheme from which each employee can select the package that best suits their needs A focus on intrinsic rewards – job variety, autonomy, etc
Incompatibility of work with other commitments	Flexible working arrangements (hours/location) Assistance for working mothers (investing in a crèche or childcare vouchers, etc) Sabbaticals
Dissatisfaction with the working environment	Investment in maintenance and equipment

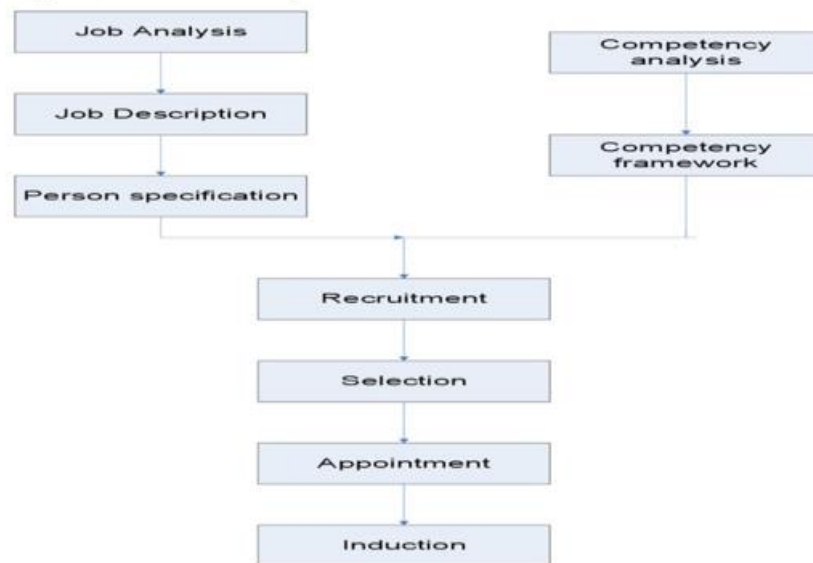
Recruitment and Selection (R&S)

‘The terms ‘recruitment’ and ‘selection’ are often considered together, but they are in fact **distinct** activities. Recruitment involves actively soliciting applications from potential employees, selection techniques are used to decide which of the applicants is best suited to fill the vacancy’ (Taylor, 2005).

Stages of Good Practice R&S

Taylor (2005) identified stages that should be undertaken prior to recruitment activities:

Stages in 'good practice' R&S (Taylor, 2005:145)



Traditional 'best practice' would require a job analysis to identify the nature of the job along with the personal qualities that will be required by the job holder. The alternative approach is based on 'competencies' which focuses on the person rather than the job. On completion of the analysis a job description and person specification can be formulated, which will then form the basis of the job advert and how the post will be recruited and selected for.

Job Description

Foot and Hook (2005) identified the following elements that should be disclosed:

- Job Title
- Reporting Structure (supervisor's name/post and the details of any workers for whom they would be responsible for)
- Purpose of Post
- Description of duties

The above should provide clarity of what the job entails.

Person Specification

The specification focuses on human attributes that are considered necessary for an individual performing the role and normally include qualifications, skills and knowledge, experience, and personal attributes (Taylor and Woodhams, 2016). This can assist with producing a set of criteria that can be used to assess candidates against as it is matching their abilities and attributes to the specification.

Methods of Recruitment

There are multiple ways in which an employer can advertise a vacancy such as through company websites, agencies, job centres or via social and professional networking. The key is to select the channel that ensures you reach potential candidates most likely to reflect the qualities and abilities outlined in job and person specification (Price, 2007).

Methods of Selection

The following techniques could be used during the selection process to find the most suitable candidate for the role:

- Application: the candidate submits a CV or completes an application form.
- Interviews: conducted via telephone, face to face, panel, or group.
- Ability and Personality Test: IQ, literacy and numeracy or personality questionnaires.
- Assessment Centres: candidate presentation, role-playing or work samples.

The method used will be dependent on the number of applications received, the role advertised and the budget of the organisation to carry out one of the above methods.

Legal Requirements

The Equality Act 2010 makes it unlawful for employers to discriminate against job applicants (and existing workers) due to one of the following 'protected characteristics' –

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual Orientation
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity (CIPD, 2017)

Failure to provide applicants with an equal chance during the recruitment process will breach the discrimination provisions of the Equality Act 2010.

Retirement

Previously, an employee would depart from an organisation once they attained their set age for departure set by the workforce. However, it is no longer lawful for organisations to compulsorily retire employees unless there was a justified reason to do so. Good practice suggests for employers to have ongoing discussions with all employees to determine their future intentions and provide a range of options once retirement is being considered such as reducing hours, moving into a role with less responsibility to enable them to “wind down”.

Dismissal

This refers to involuntary employee turnover whereby a contract of employment is terminated by the employer, for example, if an employee has failed to meet the requirements of their job role. When managing dismissal, it is crucial that there is a valid reason to do so and that a procedure has been followed correctly. ACAS code of practice sets out the minimum an organisation must follow.

Redundancy

This tends to involuntary and occurs due to business or workplace closure or the role that an employee was undertaking is no longer viable. Good practice suggests for employees to find alternative to compulsory redundancy such as recruitment freeze, pay cuts or reduced hours. However, if all options have been exhausted and redundancy is the only option left, it is vital the employer clearly communicates and shows transparency throughout and that the correct procedures are followed for this process.

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