



WEEK 7

Recruitment, Selection and Talent Management

Aligning organisational needs with the right people

Learning outcomes (1)

By the end of the session, you should be able to...

Explain the recruitment process

Describe the main stages from identifying a vacancy to onboarding.

Compare recruitment approaches

Evaluate internal and external recruitment, including benefits and limitations.

Define job requirements

Explain how job analysis informs job descriptions and person specifications.

Learning outcomes (2)

Plan for workforce needs

Identify skills gaps and suitable ways to attract talent.

Evaluate selection methods

Compare assessment centres and psychometric tests, including ethical considerations.

Support employee success

Explain onboarding, probation and strategies to improve retention.

What makes someone suitable for a role?

Role-related capability

Relevant knowledge, qualifications, technical skills and practical experience.

Ways of working

Communication, teamwork, reliability, adaptability and professional behaviour.

Potential and role fit

Willingness to learn, ability to develop and suitability for the role's responsibilities and demands.

EXAMPLE | Customer Service Adviser

Product knowledge (capability), clear communication and patience (ways of working), and willingness to learn new systems (potential and fit).

Recruitment: from vacancy to applicants

Recruitment aims to attract a suitable pool of candidates for a vacant role.

1

Identify a vacancy

Recognise a staffing need and consider whether recruiting is the best response.

2

Carry out job analysis

Establish duties and requirements to inform the job description and person specification.

3

Advertise and attract applicants

Select suitable recruitment channels and publish a clear, accessible job advert.

Why might advertising a vacancy in the wrong place make recruitment harder?

Selection: from applicants to new starters

Selection assesses candidates against job-related criteria to identify the most suitable applicant.

1

Shortlist against criteria

Compare applications with the essential requirements in the person specification.

2

Assess, interview and make an offer

Use relevant assessments and structured interviews to evaluate candidates fairly, then make an employment offer.

3

Induct and onboard

Once the offer is accepted, introduce the new employee to their role, colleagues, systems and expectations.

Where should organisations recruit from?

Internal recruitment

Fill a vacancy using existing employees.

Examples: promotion or internal transfer.

- ✓ Benefit: existing knowledge of the organisation.
- x Limitation: smaller pool of candidates.

External recruitment

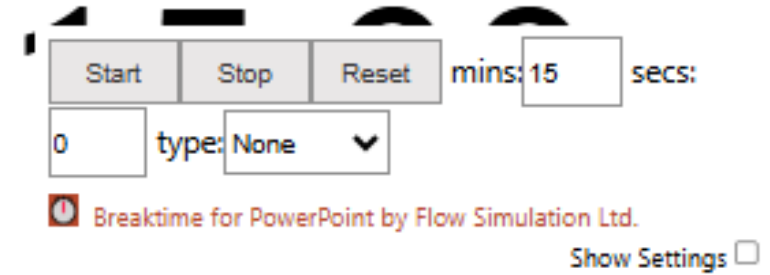
Attract applicants from outside the organisation.

Examples: online job boards, careers fairs and recruitment agencies.

- ✓ Benefit: access to new skills and perspectives.
- x Limitation: may take longer and cost more.

Key takeaway: The best approach depends on required skills, available talent, time and budget.

Recruitment decisions: three scenarios



Recruiting quickly

A retailer needs staff before a busy weekend. How can it recruit quickly without compromising checks or training?

Promoting from within

A supervisor role becomes vacant. When might promoting an existing employee be preferable to external recruitment?

Small vs large businesses

How might recruitment budgets, HR support and access to candidates influence each business's approach?

Agree on one recommendation for each scenario and explain why.

Job analysis: understanding the job

Tasks and responsibilities

What work is involved?
E.g., responding to customer enquiries and processing orders.

Skills and knowledge

What capabilities are required?
E.g., clear communication, product knowledge and accurate data entry.

Working conditions

Where, when and how is the work carried out?
E.g., hybrid working, weekend shifts and workplace demands.

Job analysis in practice: customer service adviser

What the employee does

Respond to customer enquiries, resolve complaints, update records and refer complex issues.

What the employee needs

Clear communication, active listening, product knowledge, digital skills and problem-solving.

What the role involves

Customer contact by phone or email, scheduled shifts, performance targets and ongoing training.

KEY TAKEAWAY

Job analysis findings inform the job description and person specification.

Job analysis vs job description

Job analysis = investigation

The process of gathering evidence about a role's tasks, responsibilities, requirements and working conditions.

Job description = document

A written summary of the role's purpose, key duties, reporting arrangements and working conditions.

Example: Customer service adviser

Analysis identifies complaint handling as essential → Description lists resolving customer complaints as a key duty.

What belongs in a job description?

Job title and purpose

Identify the role and explain why it exists.

Example: Customer Service Adviser – support customers and resolve enquiries.

Main responsibilities

Describe the principal duties and expected outcomes.

Example: Respond to enquiries, resolve complaints and maintain accurate records.

Reporting and employment details

Outline reporting arrangements, location, working hours and relevant employment terms.

Example: Reports to the Customer Service Team Leader.

REMEMBER: A job description describes the JOB — not the ideal applicant.

Would “excellent communication skills” belong in a job description or a person specification?

It belongs primarily in the person specification because....

...it is a capability required of the applicant.

A job description might instead say “**communicate with customers by telephone and email**”.

What belongs in a person specification?

Essential criteria

Requirements necessary to perform the role effectively, such as clear communication and active listening.

Desirable criteria

Additional attributes that are helpful but not essential, such as experience using a particular system.

Evidence of suitability

Criteria should be measurable and assessed fairly through applications, interviews or relevant tests.

KEY TAKEAWAY A person specification describes the person needed to do the job—not the job duties.

Example person specification: customer service adviser

Essential criteria

Clear verbal and written communication; basic digital skills; ability to handle customer enquiries and work reliably with others.

Desirable criteria

Previous customer-facing experience; familiarity with CRM systems; additional language skills where relevant to the role.

How to assess

Application: relevant experience and examples.
Interview: structured questions.
Role-play: responding to a customer enquiry.

Why might an employer use a customer service role-play rather than relying entirely on an interview?

Knowledge, skills, behaviours and competencies

A strong person specification can assess all four criteria.

1. Knowledge

What someone knows.

Example: understanding a company's returns policy.

2. Skills

What someone can do.

Example: accurately processing a refund.

3. Behaviours

How someone acts.

Example: remaining calm with an upset customer.

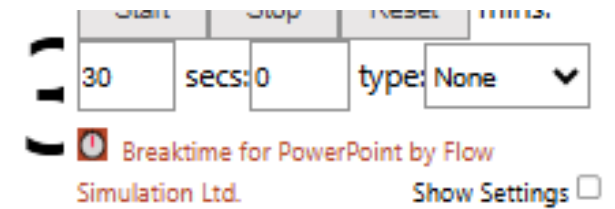
4. Competencies

How someone applies knowledge, skills and behaviours effectively.

Example: resolving a complaint fairly and professionally.

Practical activity: create a job advertisement

Work individually or in pairs • 30 minutes



- 1. Choose a role** Marketing assistant, customer service adviser, business administrator, social media coordinator (or a job role of your choice).
- 2. Write the job description** Give the job title, role purpose and 3–4 main responsibilities.
- 3. Create a person specification** Identify 3 essential criteria and 2 desirable criteria
- 4. Produce the advert** Combine the documents into an appealing advert with clear role details and an inclusive tone.

Hiring on a small-business budget

Use affordable channels

Advertise through local networks, relevant social media, colleges and low-cost job boards.

Focus on what matters most

Prioritise essential skills and reliability. Consider applicants who can develop through training.

Give candidates a reason to join

Highlight realistic benefits, supportive management, development opportunities and the role itself.

Example A new café may prioritise reliability, customer service skills and willingness to learn over years of experience.

Workforce planning: preparing for future staffing needs

How many people will we need?

Forecast staffing demand using business growth, workload, seasonal peaks and expected employee turnover.

What skills will we need?

Compare existing workforce capabilities with future tasks, technology and customer expectations.

How will we close the gaps?

Consider training, succession planning and recruiting new employees.

KEY TAKEAWAY Workforce planning links future business goals with the people and skills needed to achieve them.

How can businesses attract the talent they need?

Professional networks and social media

Reach relevant candidates through professional contacts, online communities and targeted job adverts.

Best for: building connections and reaching specialist talent.

Graduate and apprenticeship routes

Recruit emerging talent and develop the skills the business needs over time.

Best for: long-term workforce development.

Recruitment agencies

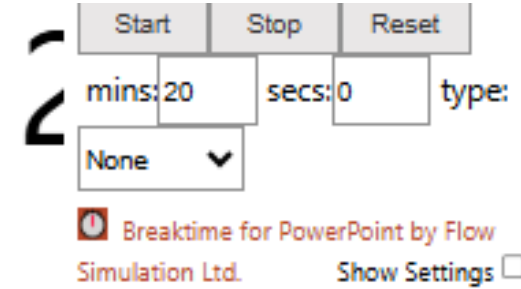
Use specialist recruiters to identify suitable applicants, while weighing up fees and value.

Best for: hard-to-fill or time-sensitive vacancies.

Which channel would you choose for a hard-to-fill specialist role, and why?

Case study: rapid growth, missing skills

BrightCart is a fictional online retailer. Orders have doubled in six months, but staffing has remained unchanged.



Current problems Customer enquiries are delayed, order errors are increasing, and staff are struggling with the workload. The owner also manages marketing and recruitment.

Available resources The business can afford one new full-time employee this quarter and short training courses for existing staff.

Your decision Identify the main skills gaps. Recommend one role to recruit for and which skills to develop internally. Justify your choices.

If BrightCart can recruit only one employee, which role should it prioritise, and why?

Assessment centres: seeing candidates in action

What is an assessment centre?

A structured selection process using job-related exercises to assess candidates against consistent criteria.

Typical assessment exercises

Group discussions, problem-solving tasks, presentations, interviews and workplace role-plays.

What can employers learn?

How candidates communicate, collaborate, prioritise, make decisions and apply skills in practice.

PRACTICAL EXAMPLE

Customer service adviser: role-play a complaint and assess listening, professionalism and problem-solving.

Why might observing someone complete a realistic task reveal more than an interview alone?

Choosing selection methods: strengths and limitations

Structured interviews

- ✓ Strength: comparable evidence against role criteria.
- x Limitation: answers may not reflect actual performance.

Work samples / assessment centres

- ✓ Strength: observe practical job-related behaviours.
- x Limitation: preparation and assessment can be resource-intensive.

From selection to onboarding: helping people succeed

01. Introduce the organisation

Welcome employees; explain values, culture, key policies and how their role contributes to business goals.

02. Equip and develop

Provide equipment, system access, role-specific training and clear expectations from day one.

03. Connect and support

Introduce colleagues, offer a buddy or mentor, and schedule regular check-ins to review progress.

KEY TAKEAWAY: Effective onboarding helps turn a good hire into lasting performance and retention.

From onboarding to probation: supporting early success

Probation provides a structured opportunity to review progress, give feedback and support development.

1

Agree clear expectations

Clarify responsibilities, performance standards, available support and review milestones.

2

Review progress regularly

Use check-ins and job-related evidence to identify achievements, challenges and training needs.

3

Provide feedback and next steps

Recognise strengths, agree improvements and make fair, documented decisions in line with policy.

Employee retention: creating reasons to stay

Retention begins with a positive employee experience — not just competitive pay.

Engagement and support

Listen to employees, recognise contributions and provide supportive, consistent management.

Learning and progression

Offer meaningful feedback, relevant training and clear opportunities to develop or advance.

Culture and working conditions

Promote fairness, inclusion, manageable workloads and healthy working relationships.

Beyond salary, which factor would most influence your decision to stay with an employer?

Why employee turnover is particularly challenging for SMEs

Losing one employee can have a big impact on a small business.

Financial costs

Advertising vacancies, recruitment time, onboarding and training all increase the cost of replacing staff.

Operational disruption

Smaller teams may face heavier workloads, lost expertise and reduced service quality while a vacancy is filled.

Morale and reputation

Repeated departures can lower team morale, affect customer relationships and make future recruitment harder.

Lesson Recap

Join at:
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Key takeaways

Plan and define the role

Start with workforce needs, job analysis, a job description and a person specification.

Attract and assess fairly

Select suitable recruitment channels and use consistent, job-related assessment.

Support and retain talent

Use onboarding, feedback, development and a positive culture to help employees succeed.

Next Week (Week 8)

Interviewing, equality and ethical recruitment

We will build on this week's selection methods and explore how to make interviews fair, structured and effective.

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Thank you

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