



Top Eight Items To Consider When Recruiting New Staff Members

I have recruited potential applicants for a variety of staff positions over the past 20 years. In the nonprofit field, organizations generally have limited budgets. This can result in lower salaries and a high turnover in staff members. If you want to attract qualified individuals whose primary focus is on people and human service oriented work versus a higher salary, I have found there are certain steps supervisors should take prior to beginning their recruitment efforts. My top eight items to consider when recruiting potential candidates are as follows:

1. Prior to posting a job announcement, set aside time to carefully develop, or review and edit, an existing announcement, as it will serve as your preliminary screening tool.
2. Make sure the job announcement is current. Over time, the roles, responsibilities, expectations, and other requirements of a position can change; the job announcement should reflect this.
3. The job announcement should contain the name of the organization and its mission, the position's exact job title, the specific salary or salary range, and a brief summary of the organization's benefits. Providing this information upfront will help exclude applicants who are not interested in your specific mission, feel the salary is too low, or feel the benefits are not sufficient to compensate for the lower salary.
4. The job announcement should include the position's minimum qualifications, including education, experience, and skill requirements. For example, if the position requires a Bachelor's degree in Social Work, and the applicant doesn't possess a degree, s/he will automatically be excluded from proceeding any further in the application process.
5. The job announcement should itemize the position's job duties, with the first job duty being the most important, and the last duty being the least important. Make sure you clearly identify which job duties are essential functions of the position; functions the person has to perform, with or without reasonable accommodations.

6. The job announcement should state the position's expectations. This may include, but is not limited to, domestic and/or international travel, working evenings and/or weekends, attending specific events (e.g., fundraising), wearing professional attire, and working in cold or hot environments.
7. The job announcement should identify which items/documents need to be submitted to apply for the position. If you want candidates to complete an application, provide one or direct them to where they can complete and submit one. If you are requesting a cover letter and resume in lieu of an application, be clear about where and to whom these items should be sent.
8. Decide where you want to post your job announcement, keeping the following in mind:
 - a. You can post your announcement in a local, state, and/or national newspaper, or through any of the numerous online employment sites, such as Monster.com, Jobing.com, or Hotjobs.yahoo.com.
 - b. If you are trying to find a professional with a specific skills' set, such as an attorney, post your announcement with the local/state bar association or some other entity (e.g., Small Business Association, Chamber of Commerce) where you can find these types of professionals. As funding for recruitment activities is usually limited, you'll want to post your announcements where you feel you'll attract the most qualified individuals.
 - c. If you have a plan in place to recruit unrepresented or under-represented individuals, such as individuals from minority groups or persons with disabilities, post your announcement in publications, on websites, or in agencies that serve these populations.
 - d. Post your announcement in your newsletter and/or on your website. Also, ask your staff and board members to share the job announcement with interested individuals.
 - e. Make sure your job announcement specifies a closing date, in which all application related materials are due.
 - f. Ensure your job announcement provides sufficient information to let applicants know what the next step is, after their application and/or cover letter and resume have been submitted. For example, when will application related materials be reviewed and when can applicants expect to hear from you?

- g. The job announcement should state where applicants can find additional information about the position (e.g., email address, website address).

Although your need may be great to hire a new staff person, be careful not to rush through this process. By carefully crafting a specific job announcement and following the above steps, you are more likely to attract the most interested and qualified candidates. Remember, the job announcement is your initial screening tool. It can also expedite the recruitment process, saving you and your staff precious time and energy.

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If you want to make positive changes in your professional life, and create the job or career you desire and deserve, then working with Executive & Life Coach, Sharon L. Mikrut, is the solution. Although her specialty is in partnering with nonprofit executive directors and managers to maximize their resources in a competitive environment, she is passionate about working with all individuals committed to personal and/or professional growth. Visit her website at <http://www.createitcoaching.org> or Nonprofit Professionals blog at <http://www.createitcoaching.com>, and sign up for her free monthly newsletter that provides information and resources designed to help you manage your nonprofit organization in a more effective and efficient manner. You can also visit her Empowerment blog at <http://www.createitcoaching.net>, and sign up for her free monthly life coaching newsletter.